

Civic Participation and Leadership Team Logic Model

Team Mission:

The role of the **Civic Participation and Leadership Team** is to build communities' capacity to engage a diverse range of community members in planning, decision-making, community action, or just simply building connections within the community (i.e. social capital). The team will also help community leaders to learn the skills that will enable them to empower individuals and groups to participate in their community.

CSREES Goal 5: Enhance Economic Opportunity and Quality of Life for Americans

- Performance Goal 1: Barriers to evaluating and making informed decisions will be identified for both youth and adults.
- Performance Goal 7: Youth and adults will learn and practice the skills in goal setting and attainment.....and leadership.
- Performance Goal 18: Communities will recognize the need for, request from Extension, and implement proven open, democratic processes. Examples include Community Profiles, Youth Profiles, etc. Implementation will result in the identification of the community's highest priority issues.
- Performance Goal 20: Each community that identifies high priority issues and creates action plans will implement 3 new practices, policies, or products within 12 months (i.e. youth representation on town boards/committees...).
- Other Performance Goals Addressed: (9, 11, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26).

Team Members:

Charlie French, Chair
Rick Alleva
Dorothy Burrows
Charlotte Cross

Michele Gagne
Becky Levesque
Deb Maes
Sadie Puglisi

Dan Reidy
John Roberts
Sam Stoddard

Number of Days Planned: 300 plus for the team as a whole (26 days per member and 52 for Team Chair):

Situation Statement: Information gleaned from GAP assessments held in all 10 NH counties, as well as needs identified as a result of 45 Community Profiles conducted in NH towns over the past 5 years, indicate that communities are finding it increasingly difficult to engage diverse citizens in community activities and decision-making processes. Furthermore, lack in volunteerism and deficiencies in leadership are exacerbating this so called decline in social capital noted by Harvard scholar, Robert Putnam. His book entitled *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of America Community* supports the findings of the Gap Analysis and Community Profiles in that participation in local organizations around the country has declined by as much as 50% over the past 3 decades. The following trends outline the situation that NH communities are facing:

- There appears to be a decreasing diversity of individuals participating in decision-making and community activities at the local level.

- There is a lack of support for activities that encourage diverse participation in local decision-making processes.
- The percentage of individuals that vote (particularly adolescents) is declining.
- Social networks between community citizens, organizations, and associations appear to be weakening.
- Volunteerism around community activities has declined due to increasing life-demands on individuals and families.
- Existing leaders lack the skills to engage and/or mobilize diverse participation in community activities and decision-making processes.
- It is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit and develop new community leaders in community activities.

External Factors: Changes in priorities of National Extension Organization may occur as Federal, state, and county support dwindles. Likewise, support for local Extension work may limit the scope of staff activities. Finally, disasters and economic conditions may change the short and long-term needs/priorities of NH residents with regard to civic participation and leadership.

Assumptions:

- The majority of community members care about the community in which they live.
- Communities value their ability to impact community decision-making and change processes.
- Communities understand the connection between choice and outcomes.
- There are potential leaders and volunteers in every community.

Barriers:

- Potential lack of buy-in from Extension staff due to expanding responsibilities, other priorities, and lack of time to commit to engaging citizens and building leadership skills.
- Potential lack of future funding for ventures that strengthen civic participation and leadership skills in communities.
- Potential lack of state, Federal, and local support for long-term community-building activities (as compared to short-term economic development activities).

Objectives (SMART):

- 25 community/organizational leaders in NH will learn new skills, techniques and processes to engage citizens in local decision-making via UNHCE Facilitation training.
- 4 or more pilot communities will access resources on the web that will enable them to strengthen local capacity to engage diverse citizens in decision-making and community activities, as well as strengthen leadership skills (via the Community Capacity Assessment tool).
- 5-7 communities will implement participatory planning processes around a variety of topics, such as natural resource protection, civic networks, arts, education, etc.

Impact (Long Term): A diverse range of community members (communities of place and/or communities of interest) will become more effectively engaged in planning, decision-making, and community action, or just simply building connections within the community (i.e. social capital). Through effective leadership individuals and groups will be empowered to participate in their community(ies).

Learning Outcomes:

1a) Youth and adults will learn the benefits of working together. Individuals and groups will realize that they can make a difference in their communities.

2a. Communities will become more aware of what resources are available to build civic participation and leadership skills

3a) Citizens will learn processes to engage the public (i.e. value of local produce, etc.)

4a) informal and formal community leaders will enhance existing and learn/gain new skills

5a) Citizens will recognize and/or value others' leadership skills

Action Outcomes:

1b) Participation by youth and adults in civic/leadership activities will increase.

2b) Communities will take advantage of available resources pertaining to improving civic participation and leadership in communities (materials, web-sites, trainings, grants, tech assistance)

3b) Communities will institute participatory processes to engage local citizens to address their needs, wants, visions, and/or concerns (building new school, making public kindergarten possible, making decision over land use).

4b) Community leaders will practice new leadership skills to address local issues.

5b) Relationships and opportunities for increased networking amongst diverse community citizens will be enhanced, thus strengthening communities socially, economically, and physically.

Activities:

1. Train teens (i.e. working with local officials, making phone calls, etc.)
2. Cut and paste media campaign so newsletters can incorporate information on the importance of voting. (across the board activity)
3. Support Youth as Partners training materials/initiatives in NH

4. Gather and make available resources on web that focus on engaging citizens and building leadership capacity (i.e. people can go to web with questions about soils, plants & animals)
 - a. inventory of what resources are out there
 - b. analysis of which are good
 - c. determine how to best disseminate it
5. Provide or arrange support/training to community members, enabling them to access and use resources
6. Provide trainings, workshops, etc to enable community leaders to implement an array of participatory processes.
7. Examine and make recommendations for potential collaboration or potential merger of existing teams that are addressing participatory planning processes (SNHC, CPIT)
8. Assistance and training to communities to help them implement participatory planning processes (i.e. Profiles, Master Plan Facilitation, Visioning for the Arts, etc.).
9. Social capital survey or mine existing data including asset mapping, develop web-based link to extension
10. Provide opportunities for community leaders to network/exchange information, ideas, etc.

Participants:

- Civic Participation/Leadership Team Members
- Community Leaders
- Community Profile Participants
- Facilitation Workshop Participants
- Leadership training workshop Participants (Deb Maes will work with Charlie French and Michele Gagne to develop a Facilitation/Civic Participation Techniques workshop series in the Plymouth area this coming year.
- Leadership Training Participants (Several team members are currently developing and will implement a leadership training program for *Leadership North Country*)
- Youth
- Communities of Interest (i.e. agricultural community, etc.)

Inputs:

- Time
- Money (to fund program development and resource development)
- Knowledge
- Volunteers
- Trained Trainers
- Community Leaders