Setting the Stage for Success

2016 NACo Rural Action Caucus Symposium

Chad Maisel
White House Rural Council
cmaisel@omb.eop.gov
Survey Results

• Series of 5 questions asked of rural NACo members at early 2016 convening

• Touch on barriers and challenges to meaningful progress on poverty in rural counties
What is most needed to combat poverty in your home county?

- Jobs: 22%
- Housing: 19%
- Economic Development or Growth: 15%
- Other: 15%
- Public Transportation and Infrastructure: 6%
- Broadband: 8%
- Commitment by the public and elected officials: 9%
- Public Transportation and Infrastructure: 6%
- Broadband: 8%
- Commitment by the public and elected officials: 9%
- Other: 15%
What is the greatest barrier to addressing poverty?

- Lack of Commitment and leadership: 24%
- Limited resources and authority: 16%
- Economic development: 11%
- Coordination and communication: 10%
- Education and employment opportunities: 8%
- Other: 8%
- Low Agriculture Pricing: 5%
- PILT: 5%
- Intergovernmental Partnerships: 5%
- Bureaucracy: 5%
- Mental Health: 3%
What are your State Barriers?

- State legislation or executive inaction: 18%
- State policy or regulations: 14%
- Lack of focus on rural issues: 14%
- Lack of resources available to counties: 12%
- Partisanship: 11%
- Other: 9%
- Lack of knowledge about counties: 7%
- Bureaucracy: 5%
- Unfunded mandates: 5%
- Lack of county authority/state control: 5%
What are your Federal Barriers?

- Burdensome application process: 56%
- Lack of staff and resources to apply: 25%
- Depth, complexity and/or number of programs available: 15%
- Inaccessible information or lack of outreach: 4%
What is most helpful to addressing these issues?

- Technical assistance: 56%
- Peer-to-peer learning opportunities: 23%
- Webinars: 8%
- Case studies: 7%
- Publications on key issues: 6%
Re-thinking the Way We Do Business

- Locally-led
- Focused on the long-run
- Data-driven
- Streamlined and cross-cutting
Aligning Efforts to Support Local Progress

- Corbin, KY: Population 7000+; poverty rate of ~33%; long suffered from high poverty, depopulation, and disinvestment.
- Enter Local Food, Local Places: coordinated TA to re-envision downtown around local foods.
- Federal agencies participated in local planning process and identified loan and grant programs for implementation of concrete projects.

**IMPACT:**

Turned downtown farmers market into business incubator; launched Buy Local campaign.

In two years, **Corbin’s vacancy rate on Main Street has dropped from 40% to 5%**, as farmers market vendors moved to store fronts and brought foot traffic downtown.
Targeting Highest Need

- 2012 USDA assessment: one of greatest correlates to USDA Rural Development investments is proximity to a USDA office

- Rural Development launched effort to more strategically invest resources in poverty areas via (1) New tools and resources to empower staff; (2) Discretionary levers to redirect existing funding; (3) Data-driven feedback and accountability

**IMPACT:**

Since launching this effort, **RD has directed ~$2.5B in additional investments to high-poverty areas** than they likely would have absent intervention.
Building a Partnership That Lasts

- Sustainable Federal investments in staffing, capacity, and technical assistance
- Share what works—no greater validator
- Advocate for a more accessible, outcomes-oriented Federal government
Chad Maisel
cmaisel@omb.eop.gov