

## How to Work Successfully Across Counties<sup>1</sup>

Part of our strength and brand is that we are in communities, we are known, and our work is relevant.

### Why Work Across Larger Areas?

As times, models of implementation and available tools change, areas of coverage can and have expanded. Such growth can make sense as work in one county is typically applicable in others and many of our clientele work across county lines. While working across large areas can come with challenges, it also presents unique opportunities and rewards. Here are 6 points for success in working across counties.



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### Tips to Successfully Work Across Counties

#### Build Relationships (Network)

- Use the multiplier effect. Identify leaders and influential groups. Work with and through others - e.g., regional coordinators, partners.
- Partner with others who you can learn from and who can extend your work.
- Do a simple network analysis – “who interacts (and trusts) whom?”

#### Identify Problems & Needs

- Tap leaders and key individuals
- Choose topics that have broad impact and implications.
- Validate findings with field and community observations.

#### Build Funding & Support

- Multicounty positions offer multiple sources of county support that varies by county. In addition, clientele often work across county lines. A broader coverage area lends itself to a broader understanding of clientele needs and opportunities to find partners for work and support.
- Talk about your work in terms of change and impact - not just activity. Find what others want to see in terms of change. Articulate where and how you can help them meet their (and your) goals.

Note: To date it can be easier working as part of Multi-county Partnership (MCP) as you only deal with one administrative unit (e.g., car, etc.); Thus, standardization of policies and procedures across counties will help multi-county non-MCP programs.

#### Do Your Applied Research Strategically

- Be driven by clear goals. Have a log frame or logic model to help structure your work.
- Use regional coordinators and partners as part of a research network - link to others doing related work.

<sup>1</sup> Developed with input from Mark Bell, Wendy Powers, JoLynn Miller, Brent Holtz and others. © UC ANR 2021

- Choose research sites strategically that represent broad areas affected by the main issues.

**Outreach – Extend Results for Impact**

- Getting people to the information they need in the form they want and can use is the key to success.
- Understand how your audience prefers to get their information (e.g., In person, Virtual, through others). Use the channels and formats that they prefer.
- Use existing media to reach your audience. Write regularly - this also helps you connect.
  - Roles may vary for different counties and different clients - virtual visits and meetings; local in-person visits, information provider through recognized medium.
  - Strategically choose meetings.
  - Create a strong virtual presence of credible practical information
- Take learning from the home community and apply to others. Look for where you can share “like with like”. (Note: Likely you will do more in the home county.)
- Direct client contact needs to be part of the role. However, to be successful, an advisor needs to tap multipliers - be they other people in other organizations and/or a strong virtual presence. Use the outputs from other UC ANR personnel.

**Evaluate & Report**

- Have clear goals - know where you are going and the relevant Public Value Statements (PVA) - and associated condition changes - you want to impact.

**Checklist**

<b>Element</b>	
<b>Build relationships (Network)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you identified and engaged with your community multipliers?</li> </ul>	
<b>Identify Problems &amp; Needs</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are your key informants for major needs and for problems that if solved have broad impact implications.</li> </ul>	
<b>Build Funding &amp; support</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who funds work? Who is influential in deciding what gets funded?</li> <li>• What can you do to support their impact goals?</li> </ul>	
<b>Applied Research – be Strategic</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you got clear goals? a log frame or logic model.</li> <li>• Who will you connect to as part of a research network - link to others doing related work.</li> <li>• Which research sites represent broad areas affected by the main issues.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outreach – Extend Results for Impact</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are your major audiences – how do they currently get their information?</li> <li>• What channels and formats that they prefer.</li> <li>• Where existing media can you tap to reach your audience.</li> <li>• Who are your multipliers - others to help share the word?</li> </ul>	
<b>Evaluate &amp; Report</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From your goals and logic model, what Public Value Statements (PVA) - and associated condition changes – do you want to impact.</li> </ul>	