Making Measurement Work

Assessing Value Chains, Engaging Partners, and Informing Interventions

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Lessons Learned from Central Appalachia
Who is CAN?

- Network of six sustainable economic development organizations
- Combined 140 years of building sustainable economies in the region in a variety of ways and sectors
- Currently collaborating to build and strengthen sustainable agriculture value chains on the local and regional levels
Using the Wealth Creation Framework

- **Assessment** – what forms of wealth currently exist in a community or value chain? Which are the limiting factors for further growth or development?
- **Planning** – what interventions can we use to build high-priority forms of wealth?
- **Measurement** – how did the interventions work? Did we see increases in the forms of wealth we set out to create?
Assess/Re-assess

Measure

Plan
Example: Intellectual Capital

- **CAN’s assessment** – Farmers in Central Appalachia need increased skills and knowledge to ramp up production and sell into wholesale value chains
- **CAN’s intervention** – Technical assistance and training to producers
- **CAN’s measure** – Number of producers selling into wholesale value chains, amount of revenue earned through sales
Example: Intellectual Capital

Producer Revenue, in Millions of Dollars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Revenue (in Millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
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Example: Intellectual Capital

- CAN’s re-assessment
  - Our measure is increasing each year - our intervention seems to be working
  - In some sub-regions, intellectual capital is still a very high priority
  - In others, intellectual capital does not seem to be a limiting factor - training and TA will continue, but focus shifts to other forms of capital
Measurement Challenges

- As a network, CAN is collecting data from five different sub-regional value chains – very intense use of time and resources
- Producer data – some producers sell directly to PAD businesses owned by CAN members – others self-report the data
- Producer interviews – many producers are reluctant to speak with CAN coordinators, who they may not know directly, about sensitive/financial information
Engaging with Partners: Example

- **Challenge**: many producers are reluctant to speak with CAN coordinators, who they may not know directly, about sensitive/financial information.
- **Partners**: staff of the Greenbrier Valley Local Foods Initiative works have good relationships with the producers in their sub-region.
- **Benefit to CAN**: producers are more open to sharing data with people they know, better data is collected.
Engaging with Partners: Example, continued

- **Benefit to GBV staff**: add their own questions to interview guide, see their data in the context of the region
- **Engagement**: CAN provides support and training to interviewers
- **Resources needed**: staff time, CAN coordinator’s time
- **Potential downside**: data may be less consistent since multiple people are doing the interviews