

Change Agent States for Diversity Evaluation Study Interim Summary Report

Introduction

The Change Agent States for Diversity (CASD) Project was created to address organizational change and the need to transform the Extension System into a more contemporary and diverse organization. It is a consortium of seven states dedicated to supporting greater cultural diversity in land grant universities, by bringing the needed technical skills and training to each of the member states. The overall *goals* of this project are as follows: 1) To build the capacity of Land Grant universities to function inclusively and effectively in a multicultural world; and 2) To set standards and implement a vision for supporting healthy, thriving, culturally diverse communities through Extension, research and academic programs.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Change Agent States for Diversity Project. This evaluation will assess states' movement in three organizational change initiatives: Organizational Profile, Valuing Differences Education, and Managing Diversity Skill Development. The evaluation will span a five-year period with two phases. Phase 1 (project beginning) includes the following components:

- Profile assessment of workforce
- Workplace climate assessment
- Written survey of professional development, hiring, promotion, retention, evaluation practices
- Review organizational mission statements, policy statements, strategic plans, and diversity plans
- Key extension administration interviews
- State Coordinator interviews regarding catalyst team activities

Phase II (project ending) will be similar to Phase I with the exception that Phase II will include face-to-face interviews with the key extension administrators and catalyst teams. This report summarizes data collected during Phase I of the evaluation.

Summary of Organizational Workforce Profile for CASD States in 2002

Position By Gender

Position	Total	Males		Females	
		Number	%	Number	%
Administration	460.00	224.00	48.70	236.00	51.30
Specialist	765.08	565.08	73.86	200.02	26.14
Field Faculty	1,947.35	886.75	45.54	1060.60	54.46
Paraprofessional	1,101.25	120.00	10.90	981.25	89.10
Support Staff	1,849.73	362.00	19.57	1,487.73	80.43
Other	532.00	263.00	49.44	269.00	50.56
Totals	6,655.41	2,420.81	36.37	4,234.60	63.63

Position By Race/Ethnicity

Position	White		Black		Hispanic		Am Indian		Asian	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Admin	418.00	90.87	28.00	6.09	5.00	1.09	6.00	1.30	3.00	0.65
Specialist	729.54	95.35	14.00	1.83	8.04	1.05			13.50	1.76
Field Fac	1,766.10	90.69	129.00	6.62	22.55	1.16	11.00	0.56	18.00	0.92
Parapro	897.25	81.48	154.00	13.98	3 8.00	3.45	8.00	0.73	4.00	0.36
Support	1,546.85	83.63	110.00	5.95	166.13	8.98	15.75	0.85	11.00	0.59
Other	414.00	77.82	16.00	3.01	47.00	8.83	5.00	0.94	50.00	9.40
Total	5,771.74	86.72	451.00	6.78	286.72	4.31	45.75	0.69	99.50	1.50

Summary of Workplace Climate Assessment for CASD States (2002)

- People of color and women were less comfortable than whites and men with both the organizational and workplace climate.
- **35%** of employees had participated in diversity training within the past year.
- **81%** had not heard any employees make disparaging remarks about various populations.
- **20%** had experienced harassment (25% due to age; 40% due to gender).
- Underrepresented groups reported harassment more often than majority groups.
- **23%** observed hostile, intimidating, or offensive conduct (25% due to race; 39% due to gender)
- **Few** respondents reported observing discrimination in hiring, firing, or promotion.
- **One-third** of respondents had no contact with American Indians or Middle Easterners.
- A **majority** would feel comfortable being a close friend of, sharing an office with, or being supervised by people different from themselves. This percentage was considerably lower for a transgendered man or woman, openly gay person, person with HIV, or person with mental illness.
- Respondents were **most likely** to believe their organizations addressed the following diversity-related issues: ethnicity (67%), gender (63%), physical disability (63%), and age (61%).
- Respondents were **least likely** to believe their organization addressed the following issues: gender identity (40%), mental disability (43%), sexual orientation (40%), and religion (48%).
- **71%** felt their organizational leadership visibly fostered diversity.
- **56%** made adjustments in programming strategies as a result of increased diversity in clientele.
- **Three-quarters** believed the following:
 - Management in their work units demonstrated a commitment to diversity
 - Diversity among staff and clients created increased benefits for the organization, and
 - The workplace environment was welcoming for clients and employees from underrepresented groups.
- **61%** felt programming within the organization represented contributions of people from underrepresented groups.
- **Three-quarters** indicated the overall climate was accepting of most underrepresented groups.
- **Fewer** believed the climate was accepting of:
 - openly gay, bisexual, and transgendered persons (45%);
 - persons with mental disabilities (51%); and
 - Middle Easterners (65%)

Summary of State Responses to Written State Administrative Office Survey (2002-2003)

Since participation in CASD:

- **Changes in employment policies and practices**
 - Institutions have developed or revised hiring, retention and promotion goals and policies to reflect diversity interests.
 - Vacancy announcements have been revised to appeal to more diverse populations with a wider range of qualifications.
 - Sexual orientation has been added to the EEO Statement and Policy.
 - Hiring policy statements have been strengthened to reduce potential adverse impact on racial, gender, or ethnic groups.
 - Training has been developed for search committee chairs and members to assure non-biased searches.
- **Valuing Differences Education**
 - Administrators and educators have been in-serviced on the state's demographic make-up.
 - Demographic information has been used to identify new audiences, plan programs, and determine representation needed for extension advisory boards and committees, and to review employment targets for diverse groups.

- An increased number of institutions have a planned strategy for involvement of extension professionals in valuing differences training.
 - Valuing differences training is included in new staff orientation, new supervisor orientation, and offerings in state-wide professional development programs.
 - Most diversity programs are offered on a **voluntary** basis.
 - Training topics fall under a broad definition of diversity, beyond race and gender.
 - All states provide incentives for participation in diversity-related programs in the form of registration fees and paid time for attendance.
 - Although opportunities for diversity training exist outside of the university, promotion of outside opportunities are somewhat limited.
- **Evaluation/Appraisal System**
 - An increased number of states have included diversity competence as a core performance factor in the evaluation/appraisal system for individuals.
 - Training to assist supervisors in evaluating diversity competence is not in place in all institutions.
 - **Mission, Vision, and Core Value Statements**
 - While “diversity” was not mentioned in the mission statement of the participating organizations, the “related statements” (Organizational Values, Fundamental Principles, Organizational Commitments, Guiding Principles, Core Values) clearly include diversity as an important value of the organization.
 - The strategic plans of most institutions have specific references and goals for diversity.
 - Most institutions display Civil Rights posters in every county office, include nondiscrimination statements on publications, and use buildings that are accessible to persons with disabilities.
 - Few institutions maintain documentation that volunteer boards review civil rights requirements annually and sign nondiscrimination statements.

Summary of Key Administrator Telephone Interview

- Directors typically rated their level of experience in managing diversity as “somewhat experienced.”
- Directors considered the following as important business incentives for managing diversity: enhanced educational and academic environment, increased retention of diverse employees, more relevant programming for diverse communities and industries, and better, more inclusive decisions.
- The key diversity issue identified by administrators was the need to diversify the staff. Other issues included representation on councils and advisory groups, acceptance of differences among employees within the organization, and the environment of the outlying community for diverse employees.
- Directors model their support for diversity by “talking about it,” being visible among diverse populations and programs, hiring diverse staff, and including diversity within organizational plans.
- Directors use the following strategies to support the employment of diverse groups: care in the development of the position announcement, attention to how and where announcements are advertised, and composition and preparation of interviewing teams.
- Few strategies were offered for the development or promotion of diverse groups.
- The largest barriers inhibiting employment of diverse groups relate to salary competition, organizational resistance to change, perceived level of discomfort for diverse populations within the community, and the perceived “social stigma” attached to agriculture.
- Directors typically believed that diversity training has been “very useful” in preparing extension professionals to serve diverse population and to work in a more diverse workforce. They agree, however, that more work is needed.
- Most directors believed their administrative teams have the appropriate skills to manage organizational change on diversity to “some extent.” Several rated their teams to “a great extent.”
- Extension administrators were more likely to have received training in areas of: managing the implementation of legal compliance as a foundation of diversity work, conducting and overseeing bias-free hiring and human resources processes; and positioning the organization to build community partnerships and stakeholders.

- Extension administrators were **least likely** to have received training in the areas of: creating inclusive environments; managing the organizational change process; and implementing practices to affirm people's culture in the workplace.

Summary of Interviews with Catalyst Team Coordinators

- All catalyst teams have representatives from all organizational levels; some include representatives from community and student organizations. All are ethnically diverse.
- All include high level administrators as members, and most include the Director of Extension or Extension Administrator. Administrators participate regularly at meetings.
- All teams receive financial support from the Directors office.
- The following are **selected** examples of recommendations made by the catalyst teams in one or more states that have been implemented within the organizations **and have not been mentioned elsewhere in this report:**
 - Devote the state-wide in-service to diversity-focused topics AND make it mandatory attendance.
 - Create an appointed position from the Catalyst Team on the state-wide conference planning team to insure diversity-focused offerings.
 - Develop a committee, charged by administration, to recommend steps to create a more welcoming and inclusive environment for staff and program participants.
 - Increase opportunities for recognition of diversity accomplishments through special "diversity-focused" awards. Incorporate "diversity effort" into selection criteria for extension and college/university awards.
 - Formalize a system for exit interviews.
 - On a county-by-county basis, identify the diverse target audiences that reside within the counties.
 - Build a special interview with the diversity team into the interview process for all candidates for College administrative positions.
 - Include a diversity component in every individual Plan of Work and appoint a Catalyst Team member to each of the six core area professional development planning committees.
- The following are **selected** examples of recommendations that have been approved in one or more states and are ready to implement:
 - Create and develop a CES Diversity Administrative Fellow Program.
 - Require that each educator participate in a minimum of 8 hours of diversity-focused professional development experiences each year AND document it in the Staff Review Development Program.
 - Provide a system-wide training in diversity issues related to recruitment and retention of underrepresented employees.
 - Train an Ombudsman in issues of diversity.
 - Establish a mentoring program to work with new underrepresented employees.
 - Educate staff on the difference between diversity and affirmative action.
- Four of seven Coordinators rated the impact of CASD on their organizations to be "Very High" or "High." Three coordinators felt involvement in CASD has had "some impact" on their organization.
- Examples of reasons for high ratings include: greater awareness around diversity issues; more openness to discussing diversity issues; a new organizational philosophy and agreement to make systemic change; reason to look at who we are, how we look, and how we behave.
- Examples of reasons for lower ratings include: diversity is yet to be integrated into the thinking and planning at the county level; everyone does not recognize that there is a problem with diversity in the organization; fear of making recommendations in support of diversity.
- A number of benefits exist for working as a consortium as opposed to working as individual states. Some include: support, accountability, competition, motivation, and leverage; richness of ideas, strategies, and resources shared among states, emotional and professional support from others having similar struggles; opportunities from the diverse cultures in the various states; access to training and tools not available to individual states; connection to USDA; grant-writing skills.