
Focus on Rural Poverty

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HELLO
AND
WELCOME

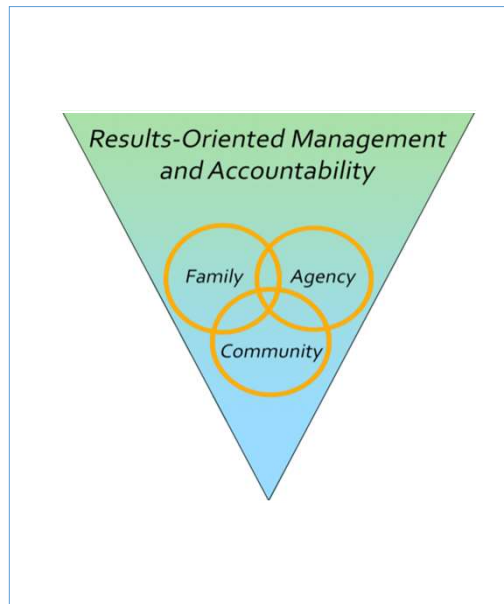
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Focus on Rural Poverty



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Our Presenters

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What's a "Rural Community"?

A county that does not have a core urban area of at least 50,000 people.

OR

An area of at least 400 square miles with a density of less than 35 people per square mile.

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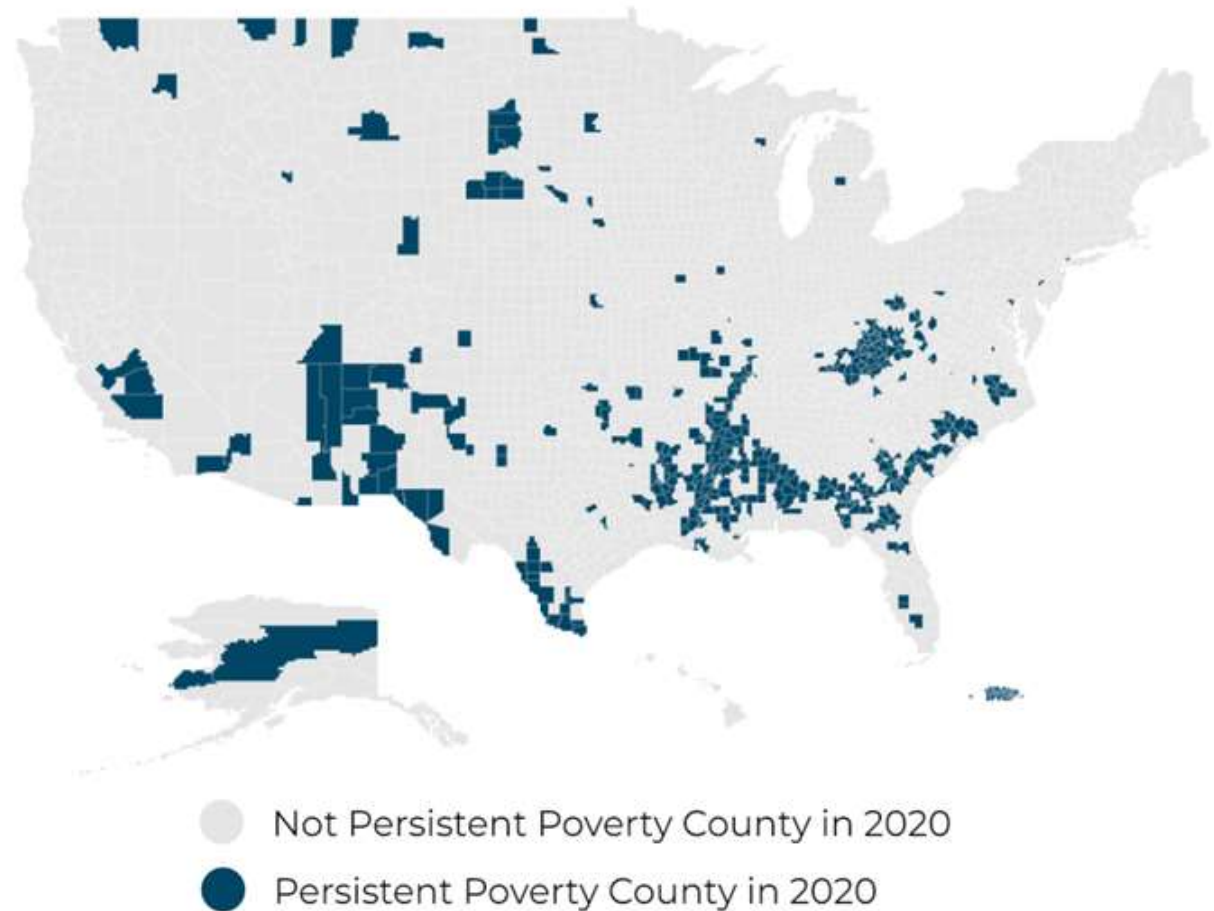
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Persistent Poverty

Persistently poor counties are classified as having poverty rates of **20 percent or more for three consecutive decades.**

There were approximately **377 persistently poor counties** in 2020.



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Lack of Resources



CHILDCARE



TRANSPORTATION



FOOD ACCESS



HEALTH
SERVICES



BROADBAND
ACCESS



EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITIES



LOCAL
PARTNERS

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State Management Work Group 2.0



Purpose:

Help ***states*** address the challenges facing low-income families in rural communities, and the agencies that serve them.

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Other Structural Challenges



STAFF
CAPACITY



CONFLICT OF
INTEREST



LIMITED LOCAL
RESOURCES



LACK OF
SERVICES



CULTURAL
FACTORS



COST
CHALLENGES



POLITICAL
CLIMATE

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Practices to Prioritize

- Flexible board member recruitment policies
- Audit report requirements--streamline
- Assist agency with grant applications
- Client application requirements--streamline
- Use discretionary funds for rural-specific needs like disaster relief and TTA
- Streamline administrative requirements and reporting
- Increase state-level funding and resources for rural agencies
- Rural community workgroup
- Utilize State Association to distribute discretionary funds more quickly to CAAs
- Organizational Standards yearly review—sample vs. full list
- Update state funding formulas to better account for rural factors
- Standardize tools and templates for CAAs (i.e., for Organizational Standards, CNAs, CAP Plans, Strategic Plans, etc.)

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Focus for 2025

1. Streamlining administrative requirements (i.e., reporting, board member recruitment policies, audit report requirements, client application requirements, etc.)
2. Standardizing tools and templates for CAAs (i.e., for Org Standards, local CNAs, CAP Plans, Strategic Plans, etc.)
3. Rural community work groups (including linkages, etc.)

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Challenges in Addressing Poverty in Rural Areas

Suggested Strategies

Survey Responses



Challenges that agency, association, or office have encountered when providing anti-poverty services in rural areas

1. **Funding challenges**, with federal allocations to states and state allocations to agencies, including minimal funding based on the current funding formula

2. **Staff capacity**, including workforce shortages, locating qualified staff and contractors, or having a 'one- or two-person shop'

3. **Limited local resources** (i.e., lack of local hospital, health department, other service providers, etc.); **poor internet access**

4. Lack of full time, living wage **employment opportunities**.

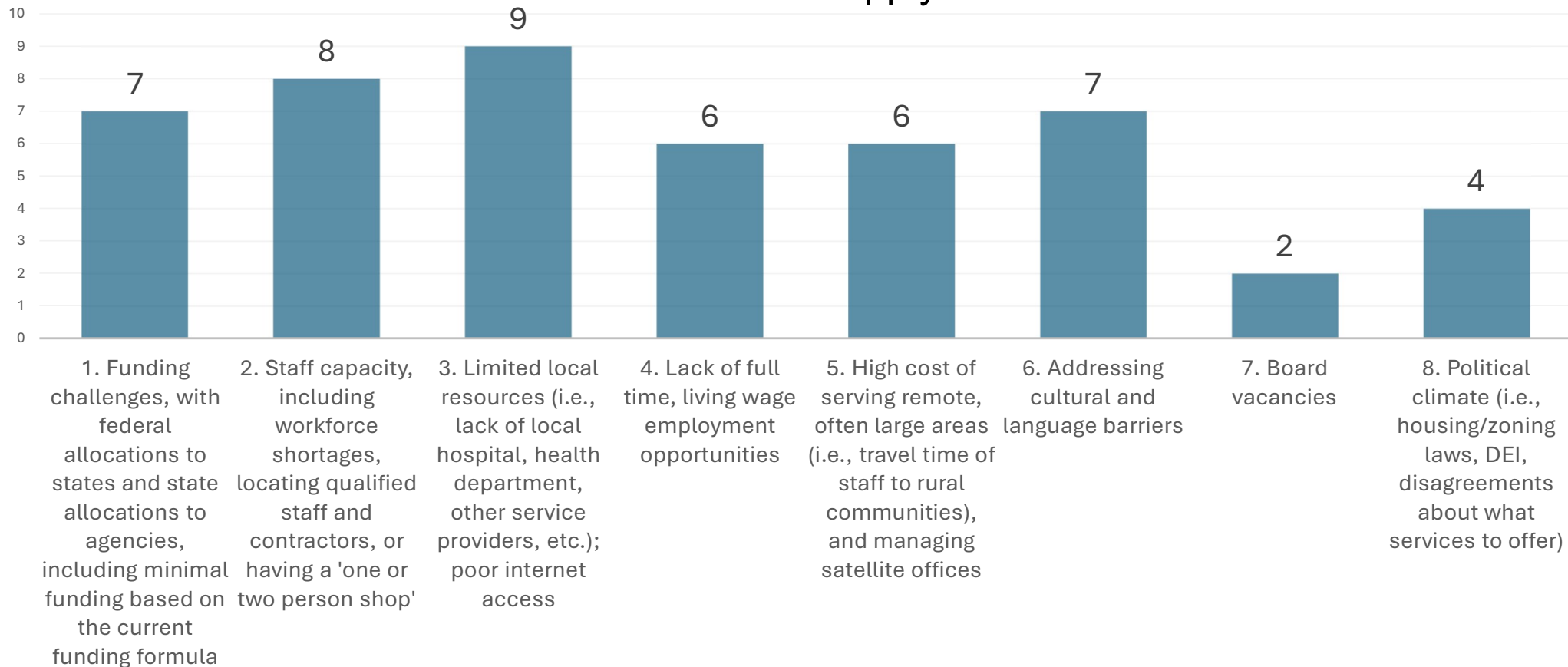
5. **High cost of serving** remote, often large areas (i.e., travel time of staff to rural communities), and managing satellite offices

6. **Addressing cultural and language barriers**

7. **Board vacancies**

8. **Political climate** (i.e., housing/zoning laws, DEI, disagreements about what services to offer) ; **policies that favor non-rural areas**

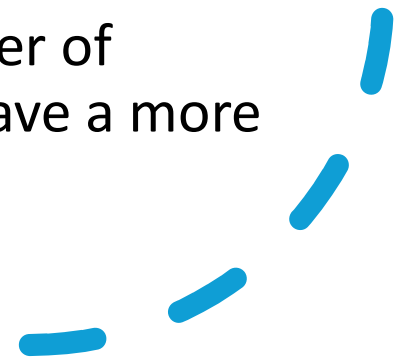
Please identify the challenges that your agency, association, or office have encountered when providing anti-poverty services in rural areas. Check all that apply.



Item 1- Funding Challenges

Education Issues

- We know that higher education is one way individuals in rural communities can become eligible for living wage jobs.
- Cost of education has increased and yet budgets for grants have not.
- We have tried to connect more with other local community partners but help with higher education is limited.
- We have had to reduce the number of participants we serve so we can have a more affects on success rate.



Item 1- Funding Challenges

Seek local support

- Local county funding allows us to be able to serve more senior citizens.
 - Note: We serve multiple rural counties and we applied for funding with each county but were only successful with one county.
- In rural areas the CAAs are driving economic engines for the local economy. Information about the dollars pumped into the community (salaries, services, etc.) can be shared to improve local support.

Item 1- Funding Challenges

Funding Formulas

- Rural areas have lower populations.
- The % of funds awarded equals the % of the state's CSBG eligible population that resides in the CAAs's service area.
- Updated state funding formula (base +%) in 2014 to increase base, helped rural areas. Information about the value of this kind of revision of formula should be pursued.

Item 2-Staff capacity, 'small shop'

Shared Staffing and Admin

- State association hiring staff to manage multiple agencies (while offering same programming).
- Shared admin staffing amongst smaller agencies like IT, Finance, HR, etc.
- Partnering with larger healthcare entities in the state for a combined community assessment.



Item 2-Staff capacity, 'small shop'

New Staffing Patterns

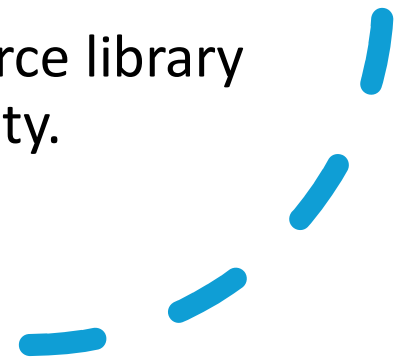
- One staff person is currently assigned to responsibilities formerly completed by two or more others.
- We have become mostly remote with interactions which cuts down time and expense of travel.
- We have been thinking about training outside of the norm to provide competent staff with new duties.



Item 3- Limited Local Resources

Community Resources

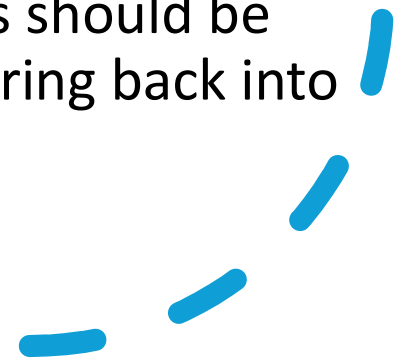
- Building formal partnerships with every provider in the community
- To increase buy-in by the community we have to let everyone know about our successes and our low cost of providing services.
- Having a drop-in center and resource library that is shared across the community.



Item 3- Limited Local Resources

Supporting Community Development

- Homelessness and lack of shelters is a huge need in our rural community. We have partnered with the two local shelters to provide food and other resources so they can keep their doors open.
- Rural residents receiving our funds should be committed to some degree of pouring back into the needs in our community.



Item 4-Lack employment opportunities

- Most county residents are seeking employment out of our area due to poor paying jobs in our community.
- If they can travel a little further, they can make 2x as much



Item 6- Addressing Cultural and Language Barriers

First, we need to identify that limited English proficiency and cultural differences can be a barrier to families in rural areas.

Then we can work on ways to build cultural bridges and broker services that are culturally appropriate.


We can also employ individuals with translating abilities to reduce barriers.





Items 1, 2,
and 3

Strategy:#1/#2/#3

- Build statewide maps and resources and continue to build linkages and bridges with other programs to maximize capacity, reduce duplication, and ensure needs are met.
- 



Suggestions for policy changes that could help address these challenges

- Policy issue: increase of eligibility from 125% to 200% PLG
- Challenge: increasing eligibility to a higher level of poverty is going to increase the money spent
- The reality is so few people live below 125% due to the increasing wages taking place everywhere that the people in need are above that level.
- Due to the cost of living rising, people who are making more money still remain in place. They can't afford to move and are in need of support services.




Suggestions
for policy
changes that
could help
address these
challenges

- More flexibility for use of funds throughout the year would help. There are community needs that come up within the fiscal year that were not identified in planning.
- Reduction of paperwork required and faster response to requests for revisions.
- Increased funding will always help. Particularly for minimally funded states/CAAs



Suggestions for
policy changes
that could help
address these
challenges

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- Use the outcome data provided by an agency to create rewards for achievement.
 - If an agency is producing the results and meeting goals, they should be provided additional funding to help their programs grow.

Strategies not matched to a specific barrier:



Developing training opportunities for those who are in poverty on leadership, employment training, and other activities that will address barriers



Working with the city councils, county commission, and economic development entities to be at the table when discussions and decisions are being made



Being more involved with local businesses through the Chamber of Commerce

The background of the slide features several white paper cutouts of human head silhouettes. Most of these silhouettes contain a large black question mark. In the center, one silhouette contains a blue line drawing of a lit lightbulb, with short lines radiating from it to indicate light. The silhouettes are layered, creating a sense of depth. The overall color palette is muted, with the white of the paper, the black of the question marks, and the blue of the lightbulb and text.

What ideas do you have?

Please scan
here to
complete the
evaluation for
this session!



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