

USDOL Microenterprise Demonstration Project: A White Paper

A meta-analysis of three successful microenterprise initiatives enabling farmworkers to explore entrepreneurship and self-employment as viable means to attain self-sufficiency

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I. Introduction

Background. The National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) is a nationally-directed program of job training and employment assistance for migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs). The NFJP was established by Congress under section 167 of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) to counter the impact of the chronic unemployment and underemployment experienced by migrant and seasonal farmworkers who primarily depend on jobs in agricultural labor. The NFJP assists farmworkers and their families to achieve economic self-sufficiency through job training and other related services that address their employment related needs.^{1, 2}

Overview. The Microenterprise Demonstration Project awarded by the USDOL in PY2002 required grantees to develop a microenterprise training and technical initiative to enable farmworkers enrolled in the National Farmworker Jobs Program to explore entrepreneurship and self-employment as viable means to attain self-sufficiency. Central Vermont Community Action Council, Inc. (CVCAC); Portable Practical Educational Preparation, Inc. (PPEP) and Rural Opportunities Inc. (ROI) received those awards.

As the projects neared the end of their performance period in June of 2004, the USDOL proposed a modification of the Microenterprise Demonstration Project. In effect, the Project was extended to enable CVCAC, PPEP and ROI to jointly document their processes in establishing successful microenterprise training and technical initiatives. The resulting white paper will be used by the USDOL for the purpose of review and replication by other National Farmworker Jobs Program grantees and possibly wider distribution to other national program grantees.

Contents. Immediately following this introduction is a description of the three grantees,

¹ <http://www.doleta.gov/MSFW/html/docs/00-03FINpreamble.cfm>

² <http://www.doleta.gov/msfw/> “Mission and Customers.”

CVCAC, PPEP and ROI. The remainder of this paper is organized to reflect the USDOL's requirements, as listed below:

- Steps taken in establishing the program,
- Strategies for partnering with the Small Business Administration and other financial institutions,
- Challenges and solutions in recruiting and training, and
- Strategies for ensuring sustainability of the microenterprises.

Conclusions and Recommendations. Since these three Demonstration Projects were quite different in their approach and implementation, each has produced unique learnings. In addition, there have been learnings applicable across these Projects. The final section of this paper summarizes these unique and overall conclusions and recommendations yielded from the meta-analysis of these three Demonstration Projects.

II. THE GRANTEES (and Existing Delivery Systems)

Central Vermont Community Action Council

Central Vermont Community Action Council (CVCAC) is a 39 year old, nonprofit community action agency and community development corporation providing advocacy, programs and services for low-income individuals and families in rural north central Vermont. CVCAC implements innovative programming to help low income families move out of poverty and, as a community action agency, its work is governed by a tri-partite board comprised of low-income, public and private representatives of the community.

Since 1988, CVCAC has managed a microenterprise program—the Micro Business Development Program. In 2003, in partnership with the well-established Farmworker Program, serving migrant and seasonal farmworkers throughout Vermont, CVCAC launched the Farmworker Microenterprise Program throughout the State of Vermont. Key to the success of farmworker microenterprise participant success were the varied services and programs available through a community action agency—for example, the Micro Business Development Program is part of the Community Economic Development program—dedicated to increasing the knowledge, wealth and assets of low income people and the Vermont communities in which they live. CVCAC also offers participants a variety of other services: Head Start and Early Head Start, Teen Parent Program, Crisis Fuel Assistance, a Food Shelf, Weatherization (energy conservation through home weatherization), a Family Community Support Program featuring homelessness prevention, free tax preparation and Earned Income Tax Credit promotion programming, a Working Wheels car loan program, a Donated Car Initiative and a full service garage—Community Action Motors, and a federally funded Wellness on Wheels program.

CVCAC's Farmworker Program has served the entire state of Vermont and its fourteen counties (see Figure 1) since the program's initial funding from the Department of Labor in 1979. Focusing on displaced farmworkers, CVCAC's Farmworker Program assists

workers who usually find themselves out of work due to the decline in the privately owned dairy farm industry. Another factor addressed in the program is the modernization of dairy farm operations – low skill levels for farmworkers are no longer sufficient for successful dairy farm employment. Flexibility and comprehensive skills are now a necessity.

Figure 1: Farmworker Program Service Area



The DOL-funded Farmworker Program utilizes a range of resources from CVCAC and other linkages in the community, which have developed over the agency’s long and successful history. The CVCAC Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program staff has the experience and the partnerships to meet both the labor market demands and participants’ goals. Through the years, the program staff have negotiated contracts, made presentations, performed ongoing outreach and developed methods for dealing with the special needs of the Vermont farmworker population. Staff also work closely with partner programs in the One-Stop system for opportunities for co-enrollment for the participant. They have been successful

working with Reach-Up (TANF) and the Department of Employment and Training in co-enrolling individuals into joint On-the-Job Trainings and classroom training.

CVCAC’s Community Economic Development (CED) Program includes programming and services designed to help low income Vermonters in increasing their economic self-sufficiency. The specific efforts of the CED Program include *Tangible Assets*, Vermont’s first Individual Development Account (IDA) matched savings program; the Micro Business Development Program and the statewide Vermont Women’s Business Center (an

SBA funded initiative); and Community Capital of Central Vermont, an alternative lender for micro and small businesses.

CVCAC's Micro Business Development Program (MBDP) In 1988, Vermont's five Community Action agencies developed microenterprise training and technical assistance as a job creation strategy suited to a state with a dispersed population and strong values around protecting its natural environment. Vermont was the first in the nation to launch a statewide microenterprise program.

Micro business development began simply, offering basic training in starting or expanding small businesses and provided business counseling about obtaining business capital. Since 1992, the MBDP has grown in significant ways. The training core has been enhanced with the addition of marketing assistance groups, pre-self-employment readiness training for people facing multiple barriers, mentoring, round table discussions and, recently, post loan technical assistance. In addition to business training, the development of soft skills such as communication and customer service are also emphasized. Experience has taught CVCAC that business training or counseling must be complemented by personal supports in order for people to be successful. As members of Community Action, referrals can be made to other Community Action programs such as Head Start, food shelves, fuel assistance, family development programs, Weatherization and asset-building Individual Development Account programs, or external programs provided by county mental health departments or the childcare services division. CVCAC's MBDP is a member of MicroTest, the Association for Enterprise Opportunity and has been awarded prestigious grants from FIELD, JOLI, etc. Since its inception, the statewide MBDP has provided business counseling and education to over 7,000 low income Vermonters striving to start or expand microenterprises. The MBDP has helped participants launch or expand over 900 businesses and, in the process, leveraged nearly \$8 million in financing.

Intake and Orientation. When participants enter the Micro Business Development Program at CVCAC, they meet with an Intake Specialist to work through a guided assessment that

helps to identify various participant strengths, resources and needs on both personal and business levels. This guided process enables discussion to occur about the types of resources needed to stabilize the individual and family as they pursue business development. It also enables the Intake Specialist to outline the various business development training and technical assistance options to the participant and make direct referrals to more specialized staff resources. This process helps to design a specific course of training and/or counseling that will help the participant decide if business development makes sense for her/him now and how she or he will get there.

Business Development Technical Assistance. Once the intake has been completed, most participants work individually with a business counselor to develop a business plan in order to raise the capital necessary to start their business. The business counselor helps the participant assess the feasibility of their business idea by taking them through a series of counseling sessions designed to help the participant determine if this is the right business idea, if now is the right time (both personally and from a market standpoint) and to determine if the individual has the necessary skills to operate the business. Additionally, very early on, the business counselor helps the participant draft a preliminary cash flow (budget) to see if the business idea makes sense from that perspective. Once feasibility is established, the participant can continue working on his/her business plan with the counselor. The business counselor also provides assistance with referrals to likely lenders and loan application packaging.

Business Readiness. Readiness is a comprehensive overview of business ownership and the process by which a business is researched, planned (including planning for capitalization) and launched. Participants also embark on self-assessment of their own readiness for self employment including their potential to manage a business enterprise. Participants may work through Readiness individually with a business counselor or via a Readiness Workshop in a small group.

Nxlevel Business Plan Basics for Micro Entrepreneurs. Using the *Nxlevel* manual,

through classroom training modified to incorporate adult learning techniques like those detailed by Jane Vella³, a comprehensive program is offered for determining the feasibility of a business idea and engaging in the process of writing a business plan. Topics like the following are included: business visioning and goal setting, establishing a target market, market strategies, pricing, personal budgets, cash flow projections, financial statements, recordkeeping, communication, legal structures, taxes, management issues and networking. Guest speakers as well as other local resources are brought in to give people a sense of the realities of being in business. Participants use the class as a forum for refining ideas, connecting with other entrepreneurs and moving ahead with business goals and objectives.

Economic Literacy Training. Since 1998, CVCAC has offered an economic literacy curriculum, *DollarSense* (developed by CVCAC and distributed nationwide), that trains participants in money management; repairing or building credit; working with a financial institution; communication about money, taxes and insurance; and other topics. By participating in this 16-hour training, individuals learn and practice personal financial management skills and how those skills can be translated into healthy business financial management practices.

Networking Events. Through the statewide Vermont Women's Business Center (VWBC), CVCAC sponsors monthly networking events that provide opportunities for beginning entrepreneurs to meet others, receive mentoring, make connections and learn new skills.

Internet & e-Commerce Training. The VWBC Internet Representative teaches Internet marketing and e-commerce techniques through a variety of classes around the State. Forty different workshops are offered on topics ranging from Internet Marketing to Planning an e-commerce venture to Design workshops.

Financial Assistance. MBDP staff have extensive experience helping beginning entrepreneurs to access capital. Participants are screened to determine the best source

³ Vella, Jane. Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach. The Power of Dialogue in Educating Adults. Jossey-Bass Inc., 1994.

likely to grant or lend them money. MDBP has had a strong partnership with the Vermont Job Start program since its inception as Vermont's first micro lender. The MBDP was, in fact, created to be the technical assistance arm of Vermont Job Start. MDBP also partners and works with several area micro lenders including Community Capital (CDFI), Vermont Community Loan Fund and the Vermont Development Credit Union (SBA Micro Lender); banks and other local loan funds. In addition, MDBP's partnership agreement in place with the Trickle Up Program enables low-income entrepreneurs to access \$700 seed grants.

Matched Savings Business Grants. For farmworkers served under this project, the budget included additional direct financial assistance for their business capital needs—a matched savings grant program. As they participated in the economic literacy training, participants developed a savings plan to make up to \$500 in deposits to a savings account over at least a four month period. Funds were matched at a rate of 4:1, thereby turning each participant's \$500 into \$2,500 of direct capital assistance for their business. To access the funds, participants submitted a withdrawal plan showing how they would use the capital.

Support Services were provided in a variety of ways. Participants enrolled in CVCAC's Farmworker Program continued to work with a case manager through that program to access needed services. CVCAC's Farmworker program has excellent partnerships in place with community based organizations as well as good relationships with medical service providers, vendors and others in a position to donate needed goods and services. In addition, MBDP leveraged its existing partnerships with Vermont's TANF agency, the Department of Economic Benefits, Employment and Training, Adult Basic Education, the Vermont Refugee Assistance Program and the Welfare to Work Program. MDBP also enlisted its business service partners, the statewide Micro Business Development Program located at the other four Community Action Agencies in Vermont; the Women's Agricultural Network; programs of the U.S. Small Business Administration, such as SCORE, the SBDC and the Vermont Women's Business Center (which CVCAC administers); and area lenders, including SBA micro lenders.

Road Map to Success is a new training product designed to help people who have initiated their business, but are having difficulty focusing and making concrete steps toward their business goals. The group is facilitated by a professional personal coach, who helps each person set individual goals and learn to meet them. A business counselor provides additional support.

Business Operations Training is another new training product that has been offered post start-up to provide the new business owner with needed skills in money management (cash flow, recordkeeping, taxes, collections, etc.) and management issues including human resources, marketing, image, branding, production and fulfillment.

Ongoing Post Start-Up Technical Assistance. After a business has started up, business counselors continue to be available to provide support, resources, referrals and technical assistance for beginning business owners. MBDP's resource library and computer lab equipped with scanner, color printer and a ready supply of paper stock for brochures and business cards are available as are the resources of the VWBC with its complete lending library of reference materials for the entrepreneur. The VWBC can help with government procurement and contracting opportunities, particularly for HUB zones, in Vermont.

Portable Practical Educational Preparation, Inc. (PPEP) and PPEP's Micro business and Housing Development Corporation (PMHDC)

Portable Practical Educational Preparation, Inc. (PPEP), founded by Dr. John David Arnold, began to offer services to farmworkers and individuals in the rural areas of Arizona in August 1967 with a grant from the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). PPEP's first outreach was via an itinerant, converted 1957 Chevrolet school bus called "La Tortuga" (The Tortoise). PPEP was officially incorporated on December 10, 1969, in Nogales, AZ with a governing Board of Directors representing various rural communities. Today, PPEP and its affiliates continue to be guided by a community-based Board of Directors. Numerous grassroots groups also have been organized and empowered through community action to

ensure input and continuity of service. Now headquartered in Tucson, the PPEP family has grown to approximately 570 employees in some 42 field offices, 17 group homes and 13 charter school facilities. PPEP's services have been recognized as national models seven times in the U.S. Congressional Record.

PPEP's current programs include the **National Farmworkers Jobs Program**, offering farmworker employment and training opportunities; the **ENCOMPASS Program**, enhancing the lives of individuals with disabilities throughout Arizona; **PPEP TEC High School**, providing programs and services to meet the needs of all students enrolled in the school; **PMHDC**, offering financial services and business management technical assistance to small businesses, including rural and home-based businesses; and the **Human and Social Services** department, offering food, clothing, rental assistance, dental care and other services to the elderly and others.

PPEP's current and future goals remain true to the spirit of its original bylaws: to continue to improve the quality of life for the rural and underserved. PPEP's commitment to these goals can most easily be summed up in our agency's motto: "Si se puede!" (Yes we can!).

PPEP Micro business and Housing Development Corporation (PMHDC), a non-profit affiliate of PPEP, has been helping low-income individuals and small, minority- and women-owned home-based businesses succeed for 19 years. PMHDC is dedicated to providing micro business development through various professional consulting and technical assistance services including hands-on business start-up and organizational capacity-building services, affordable financial products and loan fund assistance, educational opportunities, seminars, workshops, mentoring and other related services targeted to low-income populations in rural Arizona.

PMHDC's mission is to foster dynamic communities of opportunity through greater access to financial products and business and community development services that empower low-income individuals and their families—particularly minorities, women and

youth—to build and sustain a higher standard of living and a better quality of life in the rural Southwest region.

PMHDC was founded in 1987 as a 501(c)(3) private nonprofit corporation. In 1999, the U.S. Treasury Department and the Community Development Financial Institution Fund certified PMHDC as a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI). Since then PMHDC has held contracts with SBA, HUD, DOL and USDA, as well as the Economic Development Administration (EDA). In addition, PMHDC serves as the lead agency and regional technical assistance provider under various government housing programs across the eight states of Arizona, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming.

In 1999, PMHDC received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Microenterprise Development and in 2000 received the New Markets Award from the U.S. Department of Commerce. PMHDC, one of the largest SBA/Microenterprise lenders in the United States, has received numerous SBA awards and has been cited five times in the Congressional Record for exemplary work.

PMHDC has assisted over 3,000 micro and small businesses and has provided over 60,000 hours of technical assistance. In its 19-year history, PMHDC has loaned over \$14,000,000 to rural communities and is currently managing a \$4.5 million portfolio with 265 micro borrowers.

Over the past two years, PMHDC has obtained funding in excess of \$4.5 million from sources including the Small Business Administration, CDFI Fund, U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Commerce (EDA) and U.S. Department of Agriculture. In addition, PMHDC has partnerships with four major banks and several social investment funds.

PMHDC was recently awarded a Hewlett Packard grant in excess of \$200,000 to provide extensive training to low-income entrepreneurs via four computer labs. The labs, staffed by volunteers, were available to all low-income micro business owners. PMHDC also received a

Wallace Foundation grant to fund four computer technology instructors for low-income borrowers. Through these efforts, low-income entrepreneurs will start the new year with extensive technical and management training.

PMHDC has mobilized a professional staff team comprised of loan fund administrators and proactive community development professionals. The majority of these skilled and diverse team members are bilingual and bicultural. Community Development Officers have comprehensive knowledge in the 'real world' needs of their respective communities, coupled with extensive backgrounds in finance and microenterprise development.

Rural Opportunities, Inc.

Rural Opportunities, Inc. (ROI) and Rural Opportunities Enterprise Center, Inc. (ROECI), an ROI affiliate, jointly developed and implemented this technical assistance and training initiative for Section 167 farmworkers who wished to pursue micro-level entrepreneurial opportunities in selected areas of Ohio, Pennsylvania and Puerto Rico.

ROI is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) regional community development corporation organized in 1969 to provide services to and advocate on behalf of disadvantaged migrant and seasonal farmworkers and other low-income families and communities. Since its inception, ROI has successfully operated as a grantee for federal, state, local and private funds, currently continuing its mission in six states and Puerto Rico through 42 year-round and seasonal program locations. ROI is governed by a 38-member Board of Directors comprised of representatives from Advisory Councils, ROI Affiliate and Subsidiary Corporations, and Collaborative Organizations. Farmworkers retain majority control of the Board of Directors as required by the ROI Corporate By-laws.

ROI's Mission Statement incorporates proactive involvement in the communities served:

- ◆ Create and provide opportunities for farmworkers and other disenfranchised people to confront and overcome barriers that systematically prevent them from gaining

access to economic, educational, social and political resources.

- ◆ Advocate for empowerment and social justice for low-income individuals and families, and promote responsible development of communities in which they live.
- ◆ Develop and operate programs, with guidance from low-income individuals and communities that create positive change for those ROI serves.
- ◆ Have as its foundation a diverse, committed and skilled farmworker-governed Board of Directors and staff.

Farmworker Program. Rural Opportunities Inc. has, as dictated by its mission statement, always worked with Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers and has operated the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) since its inception. ROI's farmworker program has expanded to serve farmworkers in Indiana, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Puerto Rico via 12 service categories:

- Adult Training and Employment
- Advocacy and Public Policy
- Child Development Services
- Economic Development
- Emergency and Supportive Services
- Health and Safety
- Home Ownership
- Housing & Real Estate Development
- Housing Services
- Property Management
- Resident Services
- Youth Education and Training

The following sections highlight a sample of ROI's farmworker program service categories.

Adult Training and Employment. During the last 5 years, ROI has placed 1,196 farmworkers into full-time jobs outside of seasonal agriculture and have achieved a retention rate of 80% among those farmworkers in new employment. Each of those farmworkers served was extremely low income, faced multiple barriers to employment and possessed severely limited educational skills. The average educational achievement of these participants served was less than the 6th grade and most had no job experience outside of

agriculture. Over 86% of the farmworkers served in this most recent program year were Hispanic and 65% considered themselves to be limited English speaking. ROI successfully recruited and provided support services and/or training and placement services to 5,649 individuals in PY 2003, and in PY 2004 is already serving over 1,800 participants.

Youth Education and Training. ROI provided youth services to farmworker youth participants in nine states in the North East in 2003 as it has since its selection by the U.S. Department of Labor to administer this successful youth consortium project. In this effort, ROI delivers services directly in four states and subcontracts with farmworker service agency partners in five states. Each of these programs relies, as do nearly all of ROI's farmworker programs, on extensive outreach by skilled staff who know the target population and have strong linkages with rural communities and organizations.

Health and Safety. ROI has been continuously funded to provide HIV prevention services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers and other rural minorities for over ten years. Services have included peer-delivered outreach, information and referral, prevention education and, more recently, structured prevention interventions and HIV counseling and testing. ROI also delivers prevention and outreach to at-risk populations and supportive services to people living with HIV and AIDS. Programs include ADAP Outreach and Enrollment, Housing Opportunity Program, Emergency Rent and Utility Assistance, Peer Education and Women's Prison Initiative. Since 2001, ROI's HIV Prevention Network has been funded by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to provide capacity building assistance to community-based organizations and health departments throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. Services are designed to assist these providers in reaching at-risk migrant and seasonal farmworker populations with culturally and linguistically appropriate HIV prevention services. Delivery strategies include building collaboration between and among HIV prevention service agencies and farmworker service agencies. This effort has enhanced services provided via collaborators at the local, regional and state levels.

ROI also has more than ten years of experience in delivering occupational safety

training to farmworkers. In 1987, ROI's New York Migrant Occupational Safety Training (MOST) program began delivering pesticide safety training and has since expanded to address other preventative measures, specifically hearing loss, heat stress and back injury prevention. Through bi-lingual workshops at work sites and in camps, MOST annually provides education and information to an average of 5,000 migrant and seasonal farmworkers, their families, agricultural employers, community residents and other agencies. ROI's curriculum is sanctioned by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and ROI is authorized to issue cards certifying competence in pesticide safety in accordance with the Agricultural Worker Protection Act.

Other services provided to farmworkers include the following:

- Domestic Violence Prevention
- Case Management
- Transportation
- Emergency Assistance (rent, food, etc.)
- Citizenship Education
- ESL and GED/ABE classes
- Tax Counseling
- Financial Literacy
- First Time Home Buyers Program
- Migrant Head Start
- Small Business Loans
- Translation

Microenterprise Programs.

ROI's economic development affiliate, Rural Opportunities Enterprise Center, Inc. (ROECI) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) community-based development finance and training organization. ROECI operates a well-seasoned microenterprise development program that has provided technical assistance, training and financing to hundreds of micro businesses and entrepreneurs since 1991. (Prior to the incorporation of ROECI, micro business development activities were conducted directly under the ROI corporate umbrella.)

ROECI's mission is to provide access to credit and resources to low-income entrepreneurs and communities. ROECI has demonstrated success over its 13-year history of delivering microenterprise services to disadvantaged entrepreneurs.

- ◆ *Micro loans* to businesses and entrepreneurs, primarily those businesses operated by low-income individuals in distressed communities. ROECI is an SBA Micro Loan Intermediary in 23 counties of upstate New York. ROECI also operated a microenterprise development program in Stark County, Ohio.
- ◆ *Small business loans*, primarily those creating jobs for low-income individuals and/or providing needed goods and services in rural areas. ROECI, an intermediary for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Intermediary Relending Program, has also received Rural Business Enterprise Grant funds from USDA.
- ◆ *Training and technical assistance* services to small and micro business borrowers. These services include training in fundamental business concepts, assistance with preparing and modifying business plans, assistance with developing and formatting reasonable cash flow projections, training in bookkeeping and financial management software, general business counseling, marketing assistance and network development.
- ◆ *Contract services* to organizations and communities for loan fund underwriting and administration.

Overall, ROECI has made 286 loans to 190 businesses and entrepreneurs since 1991. Sixty-seven percent of those 190 borrowers were low-income individuals. ROECI has provided financing for nearly 60 start-up businesses and has provided assessment services, technical assistance and/or referrals to hundreds more. As ROECI is primarily a rural development organization, this statistic is particularly significant. In comparison to their urban counterparts, low-income rural businesses have historically found it more difficult to access start-up financing because of the overall dearth of community development resources in small, rural communities.

ROECI/ROI was one of the original 35 SBA Micro Loan Intermediaries designated by the SBA in 1991. ROECI has closed its third loan from the SBA and has booked over \$1 million in SBA micro loans. Each micro loan closed by ROECI has been accompanied by a technical

assistance program customized for the individual micro borrower.

ROECI's outreach to micro businesses and entrepreneurs reaches approximately 500 businesses and entrepreneurs each year. Ninety-eight percent of ROECI's business loans have benefited its target market of low-income individuals.

ROECI's business loans have created over \$14.8 million in new investment since 1991, of which \$6.3 million was provided directly by ROECI through its lending programs. The businesses financed by ROECI have collectively created and retained over 1691 permanent jobs, for a RLF job cost ratio of just \$3,772.

ROECI has been providing training and technical assistance to micro businesses and entrepreneurs since 1991. As ROECI is predominantly a financing entity, the overwhelming majority of initial inquiries involve requests for business financing. For ROECI, historically, successful access to financial services has usually been the goal of initial technical assistance engagements and ROECI has put a strong emphasis on providing post-loan technical assistance to micro entrepreneurs.

ROECI has provided technical assistance to 123 micro borrowers under the SBA Micro Loan Program. Eighty-two of those 123 were low-income or very low-income borrowers and received both pre-loan and post-loan technical assistance from ROECI. The technical assistance ROECI provided has included business plan review and enhancement; preparation and analysis of cash flow projections; training in financial management and accounting; marketing assistance; general business management information, and referral to strategic partners and others.

In addition, ROECI has provided training and technical assistance to low-income and very low-income micro entrepreneurs participating in HUD Small Cities Microenterprise programs. ROECI operated a microenterprise program for rural Wayne County in New York for three years. During that time, ROECI organized classes and seminars, conducted outreach, prepared and closed micro loans and provided intensive pre- and post-loan technical assistance to low-income micro businesses and entrepreneurs. ROECI presently

administers Allegany County's Microenterprise RLF, providing intensive pre-loan and post-loan counseling and technical assistance to micro borrowers.

ROECI also has provided training and technical assistance in conjunction with the provision of financing through the USDA Intermediary Relending Program and Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program. For the past several years, ROECI has received funding from the New York State Empire State Development Corporation CDFI Assistance Program to provide training and technical assistance to women- and minority-owned businesses and entrepreneurs.

ROECI provides technical assistance, training, referrals and information to more than 500 small and micro businesses every year. As a result, the agency has developed a body of knowledge and internal statistical data reflecting the needs of micro entrepreneurs that complements the data base developed for the industry as a whole.

Outreach, Marketing and Recruitment. ROI has over 30 years of history identifying and working with the farmworker population. The agency's outreach, marketing and recruitment provide extensive coverage throughout the ROI states via home and camp visits, walk-ins, media, promotional literature, personal staff contact, word of mouth and cross-referral with state and local agencies and community- and faith-based organizations.

ROI implemented the DOL Farmworker Microenterprise program from its offices located in Kennett Square and Reading, PA; Liberty Center and Alliance, OH; and Adjuntas, PR. These offices were established in rural areas where the largest numbers of farmworkers are identified, live and work. Outreach and recruitment targeted 167-eligible farmworkers in Ohio and Pennsylvania, and eligible farmworker youth aged 17 to 21 in Puerto Rico.

In order to establish personal contact with the farmworker community, each of these offices employs one or more case managers who provide the initial outreach and direction for training and business development. Staff works a flexible, 40-hour week to include nights and weekends when the farmworker population is more readily available. ROI staff distributes posters that describe available services and include office locations and toll-free numbers to

locations frequented by the farmworker community (i.e., laundromats, health clinics, grocery stores, churches, garages and other Hispanic social service agencies).

When striving to reach farmworkers, it is important to remember that recruitment must be non-traditional, and that it must be individualized and personal. Understanding the culture, goals and aspirations of the target population is essential to successful recruitment. Throughout its long history of serving migrant and seasonal farmworkers and other immigrants, ROI has made a practice of hiring staff from the client community. Approximately 60% of ROI's staff and Board are bi-lingual, with Spanish being the first language of the majority. ROI serves approximately 102,000 individuals agency-wide on an annual basis and the majority of the individuals served are Spanish speaking. The organization has developed and trained a cadre of outreach staff, many of whom are former program participants. This staff is capable of building the bonds of trust that enable them to work successfully in immigrant and farmworker communities, where trust is vital. Staff members do not sit in their offices and wait for farmworkers to find them—they outreach directly to the camps and communities where farmworkers live and work. The primary relationship that ROI has established with the communities and farmworkers in its rural service areas is vital to participant success and to meeting program goals. ROI's bilingual and culturally-sensitive staff ensures that services are at the quality level that farmworkers deserve.

Intake and Orientation. ROI used its standardized formal eligibility determination process to identify eligible program participants, based on guidelines established by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA—Section 167 of the Act) and the WIA final rules. Applicants who did not meet these criteria were referred to other partners able to meet their needs. Staff also presented an overview of all the available ROI, One-Stop and One-Stop partner services. Eligible participants received Related Assistance/Core Services for completion of their initial needs assessment and developed an Individual-Family Development Plan (IFDP) to address their emergency and short-term objectives.

Milestones Toward Self Development is ROI'S comprehensive, agency-wide delivery model that generates partnerships between participants and the organization. The IFDP documented this contract and established measurable, time-driven goals that were designed to improve the economic, social and living conditions for those working towards micro enterprise in this program. Computer technology enabled ROI staff to track progress and support customers through an integrated, on-line service center.

The IFDP was used to provide a uniform format for the determination and prioritization of participants' needs and interest. The process set goals at each level of participation and allowed participants to see progress made towards their goals. Staff individually customized the IFDP and coordinated activities with other partners as needed. The IFDP is a living document that changed as goals were met and farmworkers expanded their vision to new possibilities.

The IFDP (Level 1) began at entry into the Core service level. Emergency and initial needs were determined with the participant and addressed through either direct services or referral to the appropriate entity. For example, farmworkers possessing a high school or higher level of education and only interested in loan applications were referred to community resources such as the SBA. Follow-up ensured services were received.

Computers set up in each ROI office enabled participants to perform necessary activities, such as researching labor market information. Farmworkers received help in learning how to access the Internet. In addition, case managers provided business counseling, information on One Stop-certified Training Providers and other information to facilitate business development and loan access.

Objective assessment, used to determine participant skills, interests and capabilities, enabled staff to facilitate the most effective approach to microenterprise development. Careful assessment was critical to participant success. Objective assessment and testing in combination with the IFDP (Level 2) were completed with all participants needing Intensive Services.

Unemployed farmworkers who warranted further training and who were unable to develop a business plan through Core services or employed farmworkers in need of services to retain or enhance employment were offered Intensive services. These services include Objective Assessment, Testing, IFDP, Case Management, Individual Counseling, Career Planning/Exploration, Short Term Pre-Vocational Training, Adult Basic Skills, ESL, GED and Training-related Supportive Services. After completion of Objective Assessment and IFDP (Level 2), participant and staff determined goals, objectives and plan of action.

Entrepreneurial Training was implemented under Training Services, as was customized training, training-related Supportive Services and follow-up. Farmworkers experienced hands-on development of a business plan; obtained financial information and assistance; received individualized counseling; and pursued other services designed to give them a competitive edge in securing and retaining a new career based on business ownership.

III. ESTABLISHING THE PROGRAM

STEPS TAKEN BY CVCAC

CVCAC's project design integrated services between the agency's Farmworker Program and its Micro Business Development Program (MDBP). To accomplish this, CVCAC undertook the following actions:

- ◆ Trained MDBP staff about farmworker eligibility criteria
- ◆ Trained Farmworker staff about MDBP programs and services
- ◆ Met with state level DOL staff
- ◆ Planned marketing and recruitment strategies

Farmworker Eligibility Criteria. As a group of clients, "farmworkers" have a distinct set of eligibility criteria that MDBP only had limited experience in understanding. Prior to embarking on farmworker microenterprise development, MDBP eligibility criteria were related only to household income. With funding primarily from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. Small Business Administration and a state

appropriation, maximum income eligibility ranged from a low of 100% of federal poverty guidelines adjusted by family size to 70% of HUD's median income also adjusted by family size. MBDP staff was trained about USDOL definitions for farmworkers eligible to be served with USDOL funding.

Staff Cross Training. Soon after grant notification, the Farmworker case managers and MBDP staff met to begin to train one another in their programs and approaches. The goals for the training were (1) for MBDP staff to better understand the farmworker population and the challenges that they face (such as isolation, lack of social, educational and job skills and unfamiliarity with new farm techniques and operations), and (2) for the Farmworker case managers to learn more about the business development process, the characteristics of successful entrepreneurs and the possibilities for self-employment. This training enabled the case managers to successfully describe the self-employment option to all the farmworkers with whom they had contact.

Met with State-level DOL Staff. CVCAC's project management met with the Vermont Department of Employment and Training staff in both the central and district offices to explain the targeted effort to extend micro business development services to the farmworker population. The components of the business development process and project goals were reviewed, definitions of the population compared, and marketing materials distributed to increase referrals and the knowledge base of the staff.

Marketing and Recruitment Strategies. CVCAC MBDP staff systematically began alerting its strategic partners in a variety of ways about the new Farmworker Microenterprise program. Once alerted, these partners served as a field force to recruit and refer participants to the program. Brochures, leaflets and mailings were used as principal outreach tools. Methodology included presentations, canvassing, displays at events like Farm Shows and leveraging relationships with strategic partners to bring new participants into the program. The principal referring source was the existing Farmworker program, which continued to recruit eligible participants.

Financial Literacy Strategies. CVCAC MBDP staff invested a significant amount of individualized technical assistance with farmworkers, helping with the development of financial literacy skills. Participants were encouraged to review and learn about their credit reports and to develop personal financial management skills.

Integrating Two Pre-existing Programs. MBDP staff worked closely with Farmworker program staff to recruit, monitor participant activity, and help participants stay focused and true to their goals. Staff employed personal coaching strategies to encourage participant development and used frequent communication through phone calls, notes and cards of encouragement, as well as enrolling participants on the newsletter mailing list so they could stay informed about events, workshops and classes that might be of interest. MBDP staff invited farmworkers to all networking events offered through the program so that participants could meet other small business owners. Often, if participants work together to meet challenges and concerns, they can help one another to be more successful.

STEPS TAKEN BY PPEP

Outreach, Recruitment, and Selection. Drawing on past experiences, PPEP NFJP and Micro business staff combined energies to focus outreach and recruitment efforts in the designated communities where farmworkers live, work and congregate. Outreach and recruitment was enhanced through established agreements with the One-Stop Career Center system, three small business centers, and a network of over 70 public agencies, community-based and faith-based organizations operating on the Arizona Border Region. PPEP has offices in the three communities anchoring the region: San Luis in Yuma County, Nogales in Santa Cruz County; and Douglas-Wilcox in Cochise County. From these offices, NFJP and PMHDC used PPEP's *circuit-riding model* to reach farmworkers in smaller communities dotting the region. PPEP offices in Wilcox and Somerton were targeted because of the high concentration of farmworker families in Cochise and Yuma counties. Highly visible and well regarded in the Arizona Border Region, PPEP's NFJP and PMHDC staff

initiated extensive marketing through the local bi-lingual media, responded to direct inquiries at NFJP offices and distributed Spanish/English flyers among all community organizations. Because migrant and seasonal farmworkers rely on a complex social network to share information and help, PPEP also capitalized on “word of mouth” endorsements from previous and current NFJP participants and PMHDC loan customers.

Selection Process. The following criteria were used to select those farmworkers most likely to succeed in starting and operating their own micro enterprise:

- ◆ Those eligible farmworkers. already operating an informal “changarro” or home-based, family-run enterprise;
- ◆ Those eligible farmworkers entering PPEP’s NFJP with specific goals for starting a micro or home-based enterprise;
- ◆ NFJP participants who identified micro enterprise (self-employment) goals through the case management process.

Targeted Recruitment and Service Areas. PPEP proposed to outreach, recruit and deliver TAT services throughout the Arizona Border Region, stretching 361 miles from San Luis in Yuma County at the extreme southwestern edge of the state, through Nogales in Santa Cruz County, eastward to Douglas and north to Wilcox in Cochise County. A unique cultural mix in this border region encompasses a potpourri of American franchises like McDonalds alongside Mexican style “mom and pop” craft stores and cafes. The Arizona Border Community, a designated a federal Enterprise Community, has compelling, unmet needs for increasing micro-enterprise development activity.

Linkages to Enhance Outreach Efforts. PPEP’s NFJP and PMHDC have well-established working relations with the One Stop Career Centers, three small business development centers, an extensive network of 70 community-based agencies, grassroots groups and faith-based organizations operating along the Arizona Border Region. As part of the outreach efforts, PPEP and MPHDC developed and distributed flyers and brochures in

Spanish and in English to our community partners. In several instances, flyers were distributed door to door in San Luis where there is an extensive farmworker population. Community presentations were presented to community organizations such as Charter Schools and Food Banks were provided with flyers for their recipients. Staff out in the fields where the farmworkers were taking breaks presented workshops about PASEO.

PPEP's TAT Services Plan included the following:

Core Services. NFJP staff in PPEP's border region offices conducted intake and eligibility determination for NFJP participation, following established USDOL WIA 167 regulations and used its highly accurate eligibility determination system to confirm eligibility. Farmworker clients had to enroll in the NFJP program to receive the range of services and activities that lead to entrepreneurial success.

Since farmworker micro-enterprises tended to be family-run enterprises, PPEP staff looked at every opportunity to engage entire families as the process moved from intake to core intensive services. Stabilizing the entire family by providing needs assessments using case management and supportive services (e.g., transportation, day care, food vouchers) is one of the most important strategies that helped eligible families start and succeed in operating and managing a small enterprises. Risk factors such as poverty, disabilities, substance abuse and other behavioral health problems had to be addressed in the context of the family and the family-run business.

Intensive Services. PPEP's NFJP staff provided comprehensive case management to the identified farmworker entrepreneurs as they transitioned into the mandatory 48 hour training classes to obtain a rudimentary business plan. Objective assessment assisted each client, the case manager and PMHDC staff to assess the entry point of each entrepreneur's assets, skills and entrepreneurial background using a 50-question Needs Assessment. The assigned case manager worked in consultation with PMHDC staff to ensure that assessments relevant to the family's background became part of the assessment process.

Following the needs assessment process, an individual employment plan identified the

client's goals and what steps needed to be taken to achieve the goals of starting the family-owned enterprise. Sources were also identified for supporting the client along the way. The family then created a budget through the IEP process. Supportive services needed to stabilize the client's family financial situation were identified. The assigned case manager worked closely with PMHDC staff throughout the case management process to transition clients to the actual entrepreneurial training classes and through business start-up.

PPEP's Training Services included the following:

Microenterprise classroom training. Farmworker entrepreneurs and potential entrepreneurs enrolled in PMHDC's Program for Advancing Self Employment Opportunities (PASEO) a program designed to offer hands-on workshops in self-employment opportunities held in Spanish and in English. The six-week training course consisted of 48 hours of classroom instruction and covered the following topics:

- ◆ Introduction to the Business Idea and Ownership
- ◆ The Business Needs Assessment
- ◆ Marketing and Outreach Plan Development
- ◆ Business Plan Development
- ◆ Business Management and Operational Development
- ◆ Recordkeeping and Fiscal Management
- ◆ Inventory Control
- ◆ Human Resources, Procurement and Asset Management
- ◆ Internet/Web Page Development
- ◆ Import/Export Business Development

PMHDC hired trainers with grant proceeds. All trainers were bilingual, seasoned micro entrepreneurs with experience in finance and business management training.

Family members as well as case managers were highly encouraged to attend classes with the clients. Using a train-the-trainer model, selected NFJP case managers participated in trainings to strengthen the linkages between PPEP NFJP, PMHDC and farmworker

customers. Working with PMHDC staff, NFJP case managers arranged for additional training services based on the farmworker's IEP. Long-term training in computer skills and English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) trainings were made available to the newly established entrepreneurs.

Supportive Services Linkages. PPEP NFJP works with over 70 WIA partners, community agencies, faith-based and community-based organizations to pool needed supportive services for farmworkers. The supportive services offered included the following:

- ◆ Emergency assistance, health care and child care
- ◆ Workplace safety and farmworker pesticide safety training
- ◆ Housing development assistance
- ◆ English language and basic education classes for family members not enrolled in intensive or training services
- ◆ Clothing/uniforms for work
- ◆ MICRO related transportation services

Generally at the time of the objective assessment/IEP, the PPEP staff (1) worked directly with grassroots organizations and eligible farmworker members for basic-needs/emergency assistance; (2) shared costs of supplementary/supportive services for eligible farmworkers and their families with faith-based and community-based partners, (3) collaboratively intervened with faith-based partners during crises such as preventing eviction or quickly arranged for crisis intervention, (4) used state and local funds to support food banks and provide emergency aid to farmworkers in the key border communities.

Linking Training with Business Financing Assistance. PMHDC made available \$180,000 in micro enterprise loan funds for eligible farmworkers who completed business plans after completing the 48 hours business training course. The following loan resources were used to fund start-up loans:

- ◆ Small Business Administration \$100,000 For loans of \$1000 to \$25,000

◆ Rural Development	\$30,000	Grant for micro loans to very low income participants
◆ Campaign for Human Development	\$50,000	Loan dollars for farmworkers not eligible under WIA regulations

PMHDC anticipated making micro-loans up to \$5000 for each farmworker enrolled in the PASEO Project. Working with PPEP NFJP, PMHDC staff assisted the farmworker family to identify social services, legal services and other funding sources as well. PMHDC utilized a highly innovative economic development approach which provided a flexible financing mechanism to fill a critical gap in credit availability. As was the case with all PMHDC borrowers, micro enterprises targeted by this initiative were below-equity or were denied credit from a conventional lender. In addition, PMHDC will continue to support successful farmworker enterprises by using a “bridge fund” that will loan from \$25,000 to \$75,000 for businesses seeking expansion capital and Rural Development and Intermediary Relending Program (IRP) for larger loans of \$75,000 to \$150,000 for fixed assets and working capital.

Assistance with Loan Application Procedures and Development of Business Plans. Once a PMHDC Community Development Officer (CDO) confirmed the completion of the Business Plan Course, the client was issued a Certificate of Completion. The CDO developed a comprehensive understanding of the needs of the client and worked with the farmworker (and family, if appropriate) to develop a financing needs assessment targeting the range of loan products offered by PMHDC. The CDO assisted the client in preparing a complete financing package which included the business plan, the loan application itself, and all other required documentation.

After the loan documents were completed and the loan package analyzed, the CDO moved for approval. If within the officer’s specified lending limit (\$7000), the CDO approved the loan. If the amount of the loan exceeded the CDO’s limit, the loan package was forwarded to the PMHDC’s Internal Loan Review Committee in Tucson.

Further Review by the Internal Loan Review Committee. The PMHDC Internal Loan

Review Committee reviews the completed loan package and all of the supporting documentation for approval. Throughout the process, PMHDC and PPEP NFJP staff acted as ombudsmen to overcome barriers that may have prevented the farmworker from successfully utilizing the financial loan products offered. This problem solving ranged from interfacing with local planning departments, to solve zoning issues and helping to arrange clearances for imported goods from the U.S. Customs Service, to stabilizing family crises during the financing period.

In addition to standard underwriting criteria, the PMHDC Loan Review Committee considered the following factors when evaluating proposed financing for a farmworker entrepreneur in the PASEO Project:

- ◆ A reasonable assurance of loan repayment, demonstrated by historical performance and or proper margin of cash flow;
- ◆ The borrower had sufficient amount of their own funds (10% maximum required);
- ◆ The borrower was capable of collateralizing the loan with a combination of business and personal assets (typically a discounted coverage ratio of 75% or better);
- ◆ The borrower demonstrated good character, as evidenced by personal history;
- ◆ Special consideration in equity and collateral evaluation was given to low-income participants;
- ◆ Special consideration was given to businesses that demonstrated all of the above, and would contribute to job creation.

Post-Training/Follow-Up. PMHDC provided the following post-training and follow-up:

Microenterprise Technical Assistance. PMHDC provided extensive technical assistance to the farmworkers who received loans from PMHDC to start their business. The CDO served as the assigned counselor helping the farmworker businesses make the most of available business opportunities, within the limitations of their market potential. Access to revolving loan funds, combined with comprehensive support and technical assistance, enabled the

farmworker enterprises to develop and grow their businesses, while building working relationships with mainstream private sector business institutions.

PMHDC and PPEP NFJP staff placed high value on providing migrant and seasonal farmworkers with appropriate counseling and support to help assure that they are able to successfully access and use PMHDC's financing instruments.

The CDOs worked directly with the customer during the application documentation process. The officer met individually with each farmworker entrepreneur and family over the term of the loan to make sure that the farmworker was following the business plan.

Microenterprise Peer Technical Assistance. In collaboration with the Micro business Associations (MAS) established by PMHDC, staff assisted in the formation of one-to-one business mentoring and peer support groups for each farmworker customer and family. Farmworker entrepreneurs were encouraged to join MAS as soon as they classroom training. Drawn from association members, an experienced mentor was matched to each new farmworker entrepreneur. Mentors provided valuable encouragement and support for up to six months, depending on the need of the new entrepreneur. These mentors shared their own perspectives and experiences in areas such as basic bookkeeping, inventory control, marketing and networking. To acknowledge the value of the micro business mentoring, each business mentor received up to \$789 as a stipend for their time in mentoring a new entrepreneur.

Participant Monitoring. PPEP NFJP staff worked closely with PMHDC staff to ascertain the status of the farmworker entrepreneurs. Follow-up was noted in the participant files as established for NFJP and was entered into the NFJP MIS System. After business start-up, the farmworker entrepreneurs' profit and loss statements were tracked for three to six months. Additional case management was also conducted. When a quarter showed satisfactory progress and the farmworker made an income equivalent to or higher than the minimum wage, PPEP NFJP considered the farmworker to be placed. It is not unusual for farmworker entrepreneurs to take up to one year to achieve placement. PPEP has developed an

appropriate support mechanism through this period of time.

STEPS TAKEN BY ROI

ROI's project design integrated entrepreneurial training and microenterprise services into the existing framework of ROI's Adult and Youth Farmworker programs. This integration began during proposal development, when Farmworker Program staff and Microenterprise staff collaborated in the design and writing of the grant application.

Outreach and recruitment of farmworkers, an on-going process for ROI staff, included (a) locating farmworkers interested in training, (b) establishing a trusting relationship, and (c) offering training opportunities. In this case, training efforts focused on successfully equipping farmworkers with skills and assistance to develop a business and marketing plan, secure financing, and successfully start and manage a for-profit enterprise.

The project was designed to leverage the existing strengths of each program and minimize need for start-up activities.

Profile of Success. Based upon past experience, staff compiled and shared the profile of a farmworker most likely to succeed as an entrepreneur as one who has (1) an interest in improving their economic status; (2) the vision for creating their own business; and (3) the perseverance to attend training, develop a successful business plan and secure a loan.

Staff Competencies. The project design required that Adult and Youth Farmworker Program staff perform their established outreach and recruitment, intake and eligibility, case management, service referral and supportive services advocacy procedures, with which they were very familiar. The Microenterprise staff, already familiar with the farmworker population and its unique challenges, as well as the ROI process for outreach and recruitment, intake and eligibility determination, case management, service referral and supportive services advocacy, required no training in these arenas.

Entrepreneurship and Financial Literacy Training. ROI's farmworker program staff

strives to help farmworkers move beyond their current economic status to better jobs, higher education, more financial stability and more prosperous futures. To accomplish these goals, staff often finds a need to educate farmworkers in the basics of financial literacy and entrepreneurship. Of unsolicited inquiries that came into the ROECI system last year, well over 30 per cent disclosed during initial assessment personal credit problems severe enough to impede their ability to access financing. A significant proportion of those credit problems consisted of unresolved medical bills, defaulted student loans and other reparable credit problems, clearly demonstrating a need for financial literacy training. Unfortunately, most financial literacy and entrepreneurship programs are not appropriate for farmworkers.

To address this need, ROI obtained the support of JP Morgan Chase and contracted for the development of a farmworker-focused, web-based training model called *Seeds of Success*. JP Morgan Chase selected *Seeds of Success* as a model program, showcased at Chase's Financial Literacy Forum held in NYC in May of 2003. This training model was central to ROI's microenterprise TAT implementation and is discussed further in the following section.

Within 30 days of grant notification, Adult and Youth Farmworker Program staff from Ohio, Pennsylvania and Puerto Rico and Microenterprise staff from New York participated in a three-day *Seeds of Success* training session to ensure that everyone understood the basic training that would be offered to farmworkers and that a standardized starting-point was established.

The Microenterprise services—including *Seeds of Success* training, personal coaching, technical assistance and loan process—therefore became a new set of services offered to Farmworker Youth and Adult Program participants via an internal partnering process.

The IFDP process included a series of interest surveys and prior work history reviews. (The IFDP is structured to follow the participant flow authorized under the WIA

Act and is the ROI equivalent of the ISS or IEP.) In the course of these activities, staff explored both the aptitude and interest of participants for Small Business Development. Following eligibility determination and program enrollment, an IFDP record was automatically created in the case management system for each participant. ROI's IFDP provides structure for the participant and staff to discuss the participant's interests, aptitudes and abilities, specific individual and family needs, and short- and long-term goals. Building on established objectives and responsibilities, the staff and the participant developed a plan to meet these goals and service needs. This plan was entered directly into the participant record enabling consistent follow-up. Staff then printed a copy for the participant. The participant was thus engaged and had ownership for the ultimate success of their plan. The IFDP was reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis, providing a mechanism for measuring and sharing progress information. This methodology enabled participants, often for the first time in their lives, to set achievable goals and take the necessary positive steps to reach them.

The IFDP was reviewed by the service staff, their supervisor and those involved in the review and authorization of intensive and training services. The system tracked all core, intensive and training services provided at the individual participant level, and generated a series of reports on a monthly (or on-demand) basis for monitoring and follow-up. The system also generated a report by participant, office, state and total agency that compared the planned goals to the actual goal achievements. All training contracts were reviewed and approved by the Executive Director of the respective state service delivery area. The automated case management system allowed each Director, regardless of where they were at any point in time, to review via Internet any participant's IFDP and approve a training contract. Staff therefore developed and implemented training with significantly reduced time for prior approval. Cross-referral and dual enrollment with One-Stop and One-Stop partners was actively pursued to extend the scope of the NFJP seamless service continuum.

After determining client interest, local field service staff facilitated *Seeds of Success* training. Each segment of this training assessed readiness through hand-on activities, such as opportunity exploration and business plan initiation. In addition, the *Seeds of Success* training prepared participants for real-world microenterprise start-up. Within the training modules, lessons and activities guided participants through business feasibility analysis, building an actual business plan, preparing for financial applications, recognizing legal issues and identifying resources such as the SBA and other agencies.

Participants completing the training and desiring to pursue actual business start-up formalized their business plans, which were forwarded to the staff at ROECI for preliminary review, underwriting and due diligence, packaging, closing and post-closing TA.

Upon receipt of the Plan, the ROECI staff initiated an interactive dialogue with the Farmworker program staff and participant, consistent with the ROI case management model. Incoming applications were reviewed for eligibility, completeness and initial feasibility. ROECI staff also was available as a "Help Desk" to provide assistance to ROI caseworkers and participants to guide them through the application process and provide referrals to other community resource partners.

The purpose of the preliminary review was to formulate a recommendation for follow up on the request, which included a response back to the assigned caseworker and participant. Specific areas to be reviewed and addressed were; Are the business and proposed use of funds both eligible purposes? Does the application package contain sufficient information (financial and narrative) to make a preliminary determination? Does the applicant's credit report contain information that warrants immediate decline? Does the proposed use of funds appear feasible? Does the business plan appear realistic?

Following the preliminary review, the ROECI staff provided either 1) Short-term technical assistance such as refining the cash flow projections, fine tuning the business

plan and obtaining the remaining necessary information to complete the package; or 2) Long-term technical assistance, such as assistance with modifying the business plan, preparing cash flow projections and/or working with a business to resolve specific issues.

When an applicant was approved for a loan, ROECI staff prepared commitment letters and loan documentation, and provided assistance to caseworkers and participants to facilitate completion of the closing process. If the participant's financing needs fell outside our proposed small business start-up fund parameters, staff provided the necessary guidance to locate other alternative financing sources.

Financial Assistance. As an intermediary for SBA Micro Loans in New York and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Relending Program and recipient of Rural Business Enterprise Grant funds from USDA, ROECI served as the loan provider for this microenterprise development program. The intent was to provide small or micro loans that participants could easily repay and use not only for business start-up but to position themselves favorably for future direct loans from lenders such as the SBA if needed for expansion.

ROI/ROECI targeted microenterprises for this development effort, recognizing that the nature of these microenterprises was highly speculative and high risk, leading traditional lending entities to steer clear of these efforts. A \$20,000.00 small business start-up fund was identified and made available for this unique farmworker entrepreneurship effort based upon the belief that, without this fund, there was little likelihood of NFJP participants gaining access to start-up capital. However, past experiences with non-traditional business start-ups and those of welfare to work efforts where micro loan models have been tested indicated that an integral part of the success and repayment of these loans would be the follow-up and on-going assistance provided by the case management staff as participants planned, launched and managed their new ventures.

Post start-up technical assistance. Given that ROECI was the lender, individualized plans for resources, referrals and technical assistance, including monthly financial reviews, were incorporated in the participants' IFDPs and loan agreements.

Case Management of farmworkers was ongoing and involved a series of standards and techniques. It permitted the monitoring of each participant's progress through training, planning, staff interaction and coordinated service delivery. ROI's case management was designed to ensure service delivery that was (1) fully responsive to the individual needs of participants and (2) adaptive as participants' needs changed. After needs and goals were discussed, participants received recommendations regarding what they could expect from the agency and from a variety of other sources, as well as what they could do for themselves.

Seamless Continuum of Care. For participants co-enrolled with multiple programs and/or agencies, meetings were held to discuss issues and prevent duplication of services. All partners meet and plan the steps necessary. Given the wide range of internal and external programs and components ROI provides to participants, case management was key in that it enabled a number of different staff to work with the same individual in a coordinated manner. In this effort, case management was led by the farmworker staff and supported by the microenterprise program staff.

Supportive Services. Similar to the approach described by CVCAC, participants enrolled in ROI's Adult and Youth Farmworker Programs worked with case managers throughout the process to access needed support services. ROI staff in each program service area has long-standing partnerships with State and local agencies, including CBOs, FBOs, healthcare and other service providers.

Seeds of Success. ROI used the *Seeds of Success* Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship training model and curricula, developed through a grant from the JP Morgan Chase Foundation, as the foundational training for this farmworker microenterprise

effort.

The *Seeds of Success* training development model initially targeted Hispanic farmworker youth aged 12 to 18, reading at no higher than 6th grade level. This development criterion produced curricula well suited to the average grade level achievement of the adult farmworker population served by ROI's National Farmworker Jobs Program. In PY 2001, objective assessment of Training participants across ROI's service area revealed their average reading and math grade levels to be 4.3 and 4.4, respectively. In this same program year, statistics reported to the USDOL through the Standardized Participant Information Records (SPIR) showed that 84 percent of the farmworkers enrolled in ROI's NFJP program dropped out of school before or during high school and 73.7 percent of these participants had only limited English language skills.

Given these academic and language characteristics of ROI's adult farmworker population, there were several significant advantages to using the *Seeds of Success* program.

1. The training model and curricula had already been developed, tested and proven effective, so their use for the purposes of this grant entailed leveraging of private funds previously spent. All of the *Seeds for Success* lessons meet or exceed educational standards for financial literacy recommended by the Jump\$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy. The Jump\$tart Coalition is a non-profit organization in Washington, DC founded in 1996 and now recognized as the leading coalition of financial literacy advocates and experts in the United States.
2. The curricula had been developed, tested and successfully delivered in both English and Spanish. The curricula are actually bi-lingual, in that they allow simultaneous presentation and interaction in both languages. This feature enabled participants to enhance their English proficiency in the key Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship arenas. In the operation of its 167 programs, ROI also provided English-as-a-Second Language services/referrals for interested participants.

3. The Seeds of Success site is organized into two independent tracks. Track 1, Mastering Money, is comprised of 10 lessons on financial literacy. Track 2, Learning to Earn, is comprised of 10 lessons on entrepreneurship. (The full Seeds of Success curriculum outline is presented in Appendix B.) Therefore, farmworkers were able to focus on their area of interest or need without having to complete one track before the other.
4. Each of these 20 lessons in Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship required approximately 1½ to 2 hours for the trainer to present and each has real-world, hands-on activities designed for practice outside of the classroom. Given the work schedule and family demands faced by most farmworkers, this type of curricula was ideal in that it could be delivered while a farmworker was employed.
5. As participants moved through these two tracks, they had fun testing and demonstrating their new financial skills on the Game Channel. This edutainment tool reinforced all the terms and financial principles learned in the curriculum and also provided success experiences to offset farmworkers' negative financial experiences and learning expectations.
6. The development of Seeds of Success Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship included not only creation of the bi-lingual participant training curricula, but also a train-the-trainer process to certify ROI's Case Managers to provide the training to participants in their respective service areas. Therefore, in this Microenterprise initiative, ROI's case managers were fully capable of delivering Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship training targeted to these farmworkers' specific needs.
7. Given the above-noted reading, math and English-language levels of ROI's NFJP participants, few farmworkers possess the requisite skills for successful entrance into or graduation from programs currently offered at local community colleges. For those few who are candidates, staff facilitate entry into existing entrepreneurship programs offered by local One-Stops and One-Stop partners and into appropriate programs at local colleges, such as the Reading Area Community College, the College of Agricultural

Sciences in Adjuntas, and Northwest State Community College and Owen's Technical in Ohio. However, no such candidates were identified during this program.

8. An additional benefit gained by using the Seeds of Success training with farmworkers was that these curricula are culturally appropriate, incorporating relevant Hispanic role models, examples and anecdotes that inspired achievement. ROI's staff also reflected the ethnicity and personal experiences of the participants.
9. The Seeds of Success curricula is web-based and learner-led. This design provided the opportunity to guide the participant through a lesson, identifying and emphasizing the key points as they appeared on the participant's workstation. Each lesson's activities tested and complemented the lesson's content. Via links, the instructor also guided the participant to other web sites that expanded or reinforced lesson content. The participant was tested at the end of each lesson or after a series of lessons. Testing identified any concepts posing particular challenges that needed to be reviewed, insuring that each lesson was grasped before participants moved on. This adaptability had a two-tier benefit: In the Train-the-Trainer sessions, staff developed a deeper knowledge base for use in providing training to participants; and participants were able to demonstrate to themselves and staff their understanding of key concepts necessary for success as entrepreneurs.
10. The web-based learning process provided basic computer and Internet skills as an added advantage. As was described with regard to ESL, ROI's normal 167 program operation includes providing services/referrals to enhance computer skills for Training participants. Each ROI office has access to complete computer lab facilities. (However, the Seeds of Success financial literacy and entrepreneurship curriculum also can be learned offline, if necessary.)
11. When participants are enrolled into 167 Training programs, staff always ensures that childcare and transportation needs are addressed prior to the start of training. Need for a stipend to offset lost wages also is determined prior to the start of training for all 167

program participants. However, ROI staff strongly prefers and actively pursue enrolling NFJP participants in training scheduled during evening and other available non-working hours to facilitate participants' continued employment, and this was the case for the majority of the microenterprise program participants. The flexibility of the *Seeds of Success* model was well suited to that practice.

III. PARTNERING STRATEGIES (with the SBA and other financial institutions)

CVCAC'S PARTNERING STRATEGIES.

CVCAC's MBDP (like its Farmworker Program) maintains extensive partnerships to benefit low income Vermonters, principally due to being located within a Community Action Agency. CVCAC is tied into essential partnerships, including Vermont's TANF-designated agency—the Division of Economic Benefits, the Department of Employment and Training and their One-stop Centers, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Basic Education and Community Action services, to provide the varied kinds of support for low income people. Building upon this base of social supports, the MBDP also maintains partnerships with strategic economic and business partners like Job Start (Vermont's loan program for low income business owners) and other micro lenders, SBA resource partners including SCORE, the District Office of the SBA, the SBDC and the VWBC, the Economic Development Councils, Regional Development Corporations, UVM Extension and its Women's Agricultural Network, the Vermont Commission on Women and more.

CVCAC's strategies encompassed the following:

Inform strategic partners about services. The project director informed each of CVCAC's partners about the new initiative with the farmworkers program. This was accomplished through a variety of methods and media, from electronic mail to phone conversation to mailings of new brochures about the initiative.

Build upon pre-existing partnerships with alternative lenders. CVCAC had pre-existing partnerships with alternative lenders such as Vermont Job Start, Community Capital, Vermont Development Credit Union and the Vermont Community Loan Fund, which could finance business efforts.

Close partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). CVCAC manages the Vermont Women's Business Center (VWBC), a service partner of the U.S. SBA and also has received funding under the SBA's non-lending technical assistance program. Therefore, CVCAC had a pre-existing relationship with the SBA at the local level and good access to the

district SBA staff.

Capacity to Serve Farmworkers Statewide. CVCAC has collaborative working relationships with other microenterprise service providers statewide through the Micro Business Development program at the four other Community Action Agencies—the Micro Business Development Program at Northeast Kingdom Community Action (NEKCA), Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA), Bennington-Rutland Opportunity Council (BROC) Community Action of Southwestern Vermont and Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO)—across Vermont, thereby providing local services statewide.

Additionally, the network of service providers in Vermont is extensive and partnerships exist at all levels. CVAC's MBDP collaborates with the Small Business Development Center and the Women's Agricultural Network, among others, for training, networking and business counseling. Computer training is available through the Community College of Vermont system and other vendors.

All these groups partner and maintain relationships through Vermont's Technical Assistance Provider's Association, a state microenterprise association of micro lenders, business counselors, colleges, extension programs and government bodies all working collaboratively to better the training and technical assistance resources for Vermont's entrepreneurs. CVCAC has provided staff support for nearly 10 years for TAPA and used this network to benefit farmworkers starting businesses. The TAPA group meets monthly, engages in professional development and also keeps in frequent communication with partners through a list serve that CVCAC maintains.

Over the past fifteen years, CVCAC's MBDP has worked with its colleagues across Vermont to offer microenterprise training and technical assistance services. CVCAC has taken on a leadership role in managing this system and referring participants to services in other areas of Vermont. The statewide MBDP integrates its activities in several different ways:

- ◆ The MBDP directors at each Community Action Agency (CAA) meet monthly to exchange progress and practice.
- ◆ The CAAs Executive Directors meet monthly to ensure that the MBDP and other joint programs are working well.
- ◆ The CAAs Executive Directors have hired a Statewide MBDP facilitator whose job it is to manage a statewide data base, fundraise and market the statewide effort.

PPEP'S PARTNERING STRATEGIES.

In 1995, PMHDC became an SBA Intermediary and, as an SBA lender, has provided more than \$9 million in micro loans with an average loan of \$6,500. These micro loans have helped hundreds of microenterprises in the rural parts of Arizona. Using four loans from the SBA, PMHDC has helped clients under the DOL-WIA projects with start-up and expansion capital.

PMHDC made 18 loans using the SBA micro loans during this grant with ETA. PMHDC was able to lend over \$180,000 in loans that averaged \$5000. These loans were made to eligible farmworkers who had completed their 48-hour training curriculum.

In the eastern part of Cochise County, farmworkers work for huge tomato plants—and their work is hard. These farmworkers seek better opportunities to improve their quality of life. In the Wilcox area, wages are better and the working conditions are much better than working in the fields. Many of the farmworkers here are males and their families live in an enclave called Perra Flaca (skinny dog). Even though the men are eligible to work here legally, their families are illegal and must be careful not to be caught by the Border Patrol. The living conditions of these families are deplorable, but PPEP and PMHDC cannot offer help because of the families' illegal status.

The Campaign for Human Development (CHD) in Washington, D.C. provided a \$50,000 loan fund to help these families with microenterprise development services. The challenge has been that the families living in these deplorable conditions have not trusted PPEP staff

enough to generate interest in these development services. PMHDC has not been successful in outreach and in identifying men or women from this enclave. These people are scared and do not want to do anything that would attract attention, like opening a small grocery store or a tire repair shop, although these services are needed in this enclave of 50 to 75 families. CHD provided a \$10,000 grant to identify these families, many of whom are farmworkers, and aid them in starting their own microenterprises. PMHDC works with other state agencies, including the Department of Economic Security, for referrals.

ROI'S PARTNERING STRATEGIES.

ROI's strategies included (1) informing our partners about the farmworker microenterprise program; (2) leveraging available resources and referrals, and (3) positioning clients for future relationships with alternative lenders capable of financing business efforts.

ROECI, ROI's economic development affiliate, works cooperatively with the SBA District Offices and has a Memorandum of Understanding in place with the Rochester office to conduct outreach for targeted populations including Minority- and Woman-owned Business Enterprises (MBEs and WBEs). ROECI brings to the relationship with the SBA a service delivery system that reaches disadvantaged and under-served rural and urban populations on a consistent and effective basis. In addition, ROECI has developed linkages with the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) chapters through jointly-sponsored training workshops and classroom training. This relationship allows potential entrepreneurs access to an additional source of business assistance during the growth stages of their enterprises.

ROECI also has developed strong strategic partnerships with regional and national banks including Citibank, JP Morgan Chase Bank and other financial institutions. Some banks are investors in ROECI's Business Loan Fund, some contribute to ROECI's loan loss reserves and some contribute funding to technical assistance and outreach. The funding of loan loss reserves is a critical element in being able to provide financing to higher risk

microenterprises.

The One-Stop Center is the cornerstone of the Workforce Investment Act and brings together a number of mandated and “other” partners in the provision of employment and training-related services to the general community, farmworkers included. By law, and as identified in the Act, employment and training programs funded by NFJP have been designated mandated partners of the One-Stop Centers. In addition, each of ROI’s service centers has developed extensive community linkages to assist in its efforts to serve farmworkers throughout ROI’s 35 years of operation. These linkages include social services, public schools, health departments, colleges, migrant health clinics, community centers, other not-for-profits, police agencies, departments of labor and faith-based organizations. Each of these entities plays a key role in meeting the needs of the rural, Latino and farmworker populations. Often confronted with assisting participants in meeting basic human needs, ROI has developed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and referral mechanisms with numerous organizations, resulting in a network of well-established linkages that provide vital and effective components of ROI’s service delivery.

ROI coordinates services to aid participants making the transition from migrant or seasonal farmwork to full-time, unsubsidized employment. Information about local labor markets, job leads, small businesses and entrepreneurship is shared. Program staff is members of local area Chambers of Commerce, human services councils, social services coalitions and boards to facilitate open communication and cross referrals. Cooperative networking with job placement associations, One-Stop Centers and other services enables ROI to effectively collaborate and ensure successful service linkages are achieved.

The Seeds of Success training model was readily folded into ROI’s case management process. The IFDP, Level One, led participants and staff through a needs assessment process. Staff directed participants and their families to area resources for assistance as needed. In all service areas, ROI staff has worked with other service providers to develop protocols for assistance and cross-referral. Participants’ needs may lead to referrals to

education programs, domestic violence centers, year-round child care resources such as Head Start, Legal Aid, community transportation, Department of Family Services, community action agencies, etc. Follow-up of these referrals with the participant and the referred service provider ensure that a clear linkage was established.

In summary, partnering strategies utilized by all three grantees included the following:

- ◆ Informing and leveraging pre-existing partners as resources.
- ◆ Providing capital from loan funds obtained specifically for low income entrepreneurs.
- ◆ Positioning clients for future credit worthiness and relationships with alternative lenders.

IV. CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS (in recruiting and training)

CVCAC'S CHALLENGES.

The primary challenges faced by the MBDP at CVCAC in working with farmworkers occurred in three areas: learning where farmworkers frequent in order to get their attention to consider and pursue self-employment; convincing farmworkers that self-employment is a realistic path to achieving self-sufficiency; and focusing on individual counseling as opposed to group training.

Finding Farmworkers. CVCAC's initial recruiting plan was to access farmworkers based upon referrals from the existing Farmworker program. Because of this plan, the strategies that CVCAC employed—cross-training with the agency's Farmworker program and talking to workers in Vermont's district and central offices—were logical and productive. To generate increased interest and improve enrollment, it would be beneficial to travel throughout the state to county and state fairs, feed stores, farms, farmer's markets and other venues that the target population might frequent and engage in one-on-one conversations with the farmworkers in these more familiar surroundings. The MBDP did post notices and flyers describing the program in local feed stores, but the project recognized that more in-depth

recruiting might yield more productive results in terms of recruitment.

Convincing farmworkers that self-employment is a realistic option for them to use to achieve economic self-sufficiency. Even in a rural state like Vermont with one of the highest rates of self-employment in the nation, the belief that low income and limited resourced people cannot start a business is a common one. Farmworkers and their families tend to be fairly unstable economically and, therefore, the self-employment option can look particularly daunting. While the MBDP finds that those participants who are the least stable are the ones that have the most difficult time pursuing self-employment, this does not mean that individuals who lack stability can not begin the business development process; in fact, the business development process can often provide the structure and goal orientation necessary to help the non-business segments of someone's life become more stable. However, recruitment can be an even longer process because of the farmworkers' lack of stability and their resulting tendency to find it difficult to plan and envision a different future.

Self-employment group training is not a practical program design. Farmworkers in Vermont are distributed throughout various areas of the state and often have severe transportation barriers. These two situations mean that group training is most likely not a viable program design feature. CVCAC ended up focusing business development services through intensive counseling as opposed to group training, which resulted in increased staffing costs.

PPEP'S CHALLENGES.

In the recruiting efforts, there were no major challenges. With the assistance of Project PPEP's ongoing recruiting efforts, finding interested clients was not an issue.

Farmworkers cannot attend training during traditional hours. The challenge for PMHDC was for the farmworkers to find the time and energy to attend the mandatory

entrepreneurial training classes. Classes had to be scheduled in the off-growing season (July, August and September), as well as on Saturdays.

Standard curricula are not appropriate for use with farmworkers. A specially designed curriculum had to be aimed at a third- to fourth-grade level for comprehension. Many of the farmworkers did not have much of an education while growing up, making it difficult for our curriculum developers to create the right type of lessons. The curriculum was further developed to keep the interest of the students.

Recruiting eligible farmworkers who could commit time to completing the curriculum. One of the most critical challenges that faced PPEP and PMHDC during the entire 18-month project was recruiting the right type of clients (certified DOL participants) who would be successful in completing the extensive 48-hour curriculum. Maintaining interest in the class was not an issue. However, time away from the family caused concerns for many female clients. Family issues became a major hurdle for many farmworkers who did not finish the prescribed curriculum.

In several instances, female students reported to the instructor that they would have to drop the classes because of lack of support from their family, husbands or significant others. This lack of support caused marital problems in many instances.

Since many of the farmworkers worked during the daylight hours, most of the training classes had to be scheduled during the evening hours as well as on Saturdays. The trainers had to work off hours and in many cases, they had to work one-on-one as the clients could not attend many of the critical classes. Even with these intensive efforts, approximately ten potential clients have not finished the business plan and thus have not qualified for their initial micro business loan.

ROI'S CHALLENGES.

Due to ROI's strategy of having the Farmworker program staff lead the effort, the primary challenges encountered in this initiative were not in recruiting or training.

However, ROI and ROECI staff did encounter challenges at subsequent steps, as follows:

Convincing farmworkers that microenterprise is a realistic option for them to use to achieve economic self-sufficiency. Starting a micro business with money that must be paid back to a lender was not perceived as desirable by many farmworkers. The belief that business size is correlated with success was a barrier for some serious candidates.

The mobility of migrant farmworkers hinders planning, loan application and technical assistance. The mobility of migrant farmworkers does not lend itself to the long, iterative process of refining the cash flow projections, fine tuning the business plan and obtaining the remaining necessary information to complete the loan application package. The process was not hastened by the farmworkers lack of experience in long-term planning. Several serious candidates left for their home base states prior to completing their loan applications.

Fear of negative consequences. Fear of debt and loss was a barrier for potential entrepreneurs. Farmworkers were not immune to anxieties regarding potential negative consequences such as the inability to repay their loans and the loss of their meager personal assets. Such fears were not easily allayed in a population with only negative experiences of the banking industry.

In summary, whether incorporated into initial program design or emerging as challenges, barriers experienced by all three grantees included the following:

- ◆ Finding farmworkers required intensive outreach.
- ◆ Farmworkers had to be convinced that self-employment was a realistic option for self-sufficiency.
- ◆ Delivering business development services to farmworkers required intensive counseling as opposed to group training, which increased costs.
- ◆ Employed farmworkers cannot attend training during traditional hours.
- ◆ Farmworkers required curricula specially designed for their low education level—standard curricula are not appropriate.
- ◆ The length of time required for business start-up, including training and loan

application, was a significant barrier to success in the time frame allowed.

V. STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABILITY (of the microenterprises)

CVCAC'S SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES.

CVCAC'S MBDP pursued the following strategies designed to help microenterprises begun or expanded by farmworkers to sustain their businesses.

Help new microenterprises learn how to manage money and credit. Staff worked with participants to learn how to manage money and credit. Like most Americans, farmworkers have not been provided with the opportunity to learn how to manage money and credit through the formal education system. CVCAC staff worked with participants specifically in the areas of tracking spending, developing a spending plan (budget), learning how to use credit wisely and other financial management skills. As part of the business planning process, farmworkers received specific counseling in these money management areas.

Help new microenterprises with credit repair. Most participants had credit problems ranging from no experience with credit to tremendous debt and ruined credit. The business counselors are also trained in credit counseling and are able to work with participants to establish credit and develop plans clean up their credit. Both of these areas must be addressed before a business owner can secure additional financial support for its business start-up or for developing the business through the next stages.

Provide pre-start-up training and technical assistance to ensure well thought out business plans. While many potential business owners consider a business plan only a necessity in order to access financing, by engaging the potential business owner in a guided business planning process, the business owner has an opportunity to test out potential ideas and research product ideas and the markets for the product or services, all of which result in a well thought out business idea and plan.

Provide training and counseling to improve/increase sales and marketing efforts. Business development is a process, not a discrete outcome. CVCAC's MBDP is designed to provide training and counseling services throughout the business development process,

from helping participants assess their readiness, to access to financing, post financing, next stage financing and operation. Marketing is an ongoing challenge, especially for participants who have limited off-farm experiences and contacts. Working with a professional marketing counselor, broader ideas can be considered and tested.

Provide access to capital. CVCAC's strategic partnerships provided access to capital in a variety of ways including matched savings, small grants through Trickle Up, loans starting as small as \$500 through Community Capital's Steps to Success all the way to the upper limits of micro lending at \$35,000.

Provide training and networking opportunities. Connecting business owners with one another and helping new business owners to practice new skills with public speaking (necessary to sales and marketing) assisted new entrepreneurs to gain confidence and build self esteem.

PPEP'S SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES.

Following are the strategies PPEP used to sustain farmworker microenterprises:

Provide Technical Assistance and Training Services. Under the DOL grant, PMHDC and its partners provided the following technical assistance and training services:

- ◆ Structuring the Business Idea
- ◆ Program Participant Needs Assessment
- ◆ Operational Capacity Building
- ◆ Access to Business Loans and Services
- ◆ Professional and Specialized Resource Development
- ◆ Compliance with Federal Performance Standards

Use a variety of delivery systems including formal training sessions (48 hours), informational meetings, one-on-one site visits and group mentorship to start or expand a self-employment activity.

Provide credit directly to low-income populations.

Offer a holistic approach to interventions for individual and family economic self-sufficiency.

ROI'S SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES.

ROI's strategies to sustain farmworker microenterprises included the following:

Leverage Milestones Toward Self Development contracting via the IFDP to establish measurable, time-driven goals. This specificity and clarity ensured that clients were focused and expectations were realistic.

Deliver Seeds of Success Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship assessment, training and activities. This curriculum provided a basic knowledge foundation for entrepreneurs and hands-on activities that engaged the client at each step in the development process.

Create access to funding through ROECI micro loans. Traditional lenders have expectations and requirements appropriate to their traditional clientele and seem unable to bridge the gap to assist the very low-income individual attempting business start-up. The traditional role of lender in the banking world is not intensive, one-on-one counseling assistance to uneducated, ESL clients to facilitate completion of loan applications. Therefore, agencies such as ROI and ROECI must provide this assistance if farmworkers are to succeed as entrepreneurs.

Provide post-planning technical assistance. The traditional approach of laying out requirements for the client to meet is not likely to succeed with farmworker entrepreneurs. These new business operators require extensive follow-up throughout the first two years of new business development to address routine needs such as reviewing financial reports as well as to manage issues that arise in the course of business operations.

Facilitate access to resources, such as computers, financial software, etc. Farmworkers, due to the multiple barriers previously discussed, are not well-positioned to access small business resources. On-going assessment, education, plans for access, matching needs to available resources and referrals are necessary to insure that new micro businesses obtain

the help they need to survive.

In summary, the sustainability strategies commonly used by these three grantees were as follows:

- ◆ Use a holistic approach to address multiple barriers to economic self-sufficiency.
- ◆ Teach money and credit management.
- ◆ Help with credit repair.
- ◆ Provide specialized training.
- ◆ Provide intensive technical assistance before, during and after start-up.
- ◆ Counsel to enhance sales and marketing efforts.
- ◆ Create access to capital and/or credit.
- ◆ Facilitate access to resources, networks, etc.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

CVCAC'S CONCLUSIONS.

From the experience of conducting the Farmworker Microenterprise project, CVCAC concludes that engaging farmworkers in a microenterprise project is well worth doing. Benefits can be achieved by the farmworkers developing business ideas that will increase their likelihood of achieving economic self-sufficiency.

However, as noted above, business development is a challenge even for the most secure and financially stable individuals. Farmworkers, because of their often marginal economic situations, can find self-employment particularly daunting and may not believe that it is a realistic option for them to pursue. This, in turn, can make recruitment particularly difficult; a situation that must be ameliorated through intensive recruitment and seeking out farmworkers in venues familiar to them.

Additionally, experience shows that the business development process can be a longer process than that of job placement. In light of the barriers and obstacles that farmworkers

face, such as precarious economic situations, developing a business will take some time—maybe even longer than for someone with fewer barriers to overcome—and success will require more intensive support and counseling.

However, self-employment may offer the farmworker greater earning power over the long term, greater development of assets through business ownership, greater flexibility in responding to family care issues and the ability to supplement income from more traditional employment. For many people, self-employment can feel like their only remaining option.

PPEP'S CONCLUSIONS.

Self-employment can be a successful strategy for individual farmworkers and create jobs in low-income communities. Low-income populations are economically active and are good candidates for microenterprise development strategies. The cost associated with job development is under \$10,000 per full-time job. The return on this investment can be measured in the amount of taxes that these micro businesses will begin paying. (See Appendix C: Micro Test Data Collection and Reporting Tool for Fiscal Year 2003.) These micro businesses provide essential services and products to their communities. Farmworkers receiving entrepreneurial training are better off because they are able to secure better jobs and to operate a family budget to better their financial status.

One negative aspect of microenterprise development services is the high expense associated with training and technical assistance. The cost of training is substantial because those at the entry level stage of development typically require the greatest amount of dedicated advice and guidance, over an extended period of time, to achieve the highest rates of success. Funding is scarce relative to the need. The microenterprise industry has found the technical assistance funding gap to be a nationwide problem, particularly in the very low-income sector.

Low-income people and communities are credit worthy. Local access to affordable credit

is a necessary antidote to poverty, economic disenfranchisement and community economic stagnation. Efforts to overcome chronic poverty depend on access to credit and resources for capacity building available from and for individuals and organizations.

Microenterprise development is a proven strategy that has the potential to change people's lives in most economically disadvantaged communities. Those low and moderate-income people who are able to start in business do move out of poverty, decrease their reliance on public assistance and increase their household income.

ROI'S CONCLUSIONS.

Having carefully designed this project to leverage the existing strengths of its farmworker and microenterprise programs and minimize need for start-up activities, ROI concludes that the allotted funding of \$150,000 would never permit this type of an initiative in the absence of well-established farmworker and microenterprise programs. The infrastructure for both of these programs must be pre-existing or the funding level must be significantly higher.

In comparing this DOL farmworker entrepreneurship project to eleven years of experience in providing microenterprise services to low-income and disadvantaged micro businesses and entrepreneurs, ROI and ROECI noted the following observations relevant to administering a microenterprise development effort that produces positive results for the participants:

1. Create a positive credit rating. Disadvantaged micro entrepreneurs, including those of low income and those who lack adequate access to capital, typically have past personal credit problems that are a very significant barrier to their ability to access financing. The need for financial literacy training and information and credit repair assistance is critical and paramount. Credit understanding and repair are the largest common denominators among low-income micro entrepreneurs. This observation is fully applicable to farmworkers, who typically lack a positive credit rating.
2. Provide basic business training. Micro businesses and micro entrepreneurs need

information, training and technical assistance first and foremost. Many low-income micro entrepreneur candidates have had little or no exposure to core business concepts and the skills required to successfully manage businesses. Before financing can even be considered, low-income micro entrepreneurs require assessment and basic training, business planning, skill development and, often, credit repair. This observation is fully applicable to farmworkers, who typically have had little education and no business training.

3. Remove non-business barriers. Low-income and very low-income micro entrepreneurs face additional obstacles in developing their businesses and those obstacles must be addressed through intensive training, service referrals and technical assistance. Many low-income entrepreneurs must not only address core business issues of planning and financing, but simultaneously address non-business issues such as safe and affordable childcare, transportation and family and personal issues. Microenterprise technical assistance and training programs must take these issues into account, as they represent barriers to business success. In addition, microenterprise programs must make provisions to ensure that other benefits that participants may be eligible for or actually receiving are not negatively affected by business training and start-up activities. This observation is fully applicable to farmworkers, who typically face multiple non-business barriers.

Finally, ROI has concluded that microenterprise is a viable path to self-sufficiency for farmworkers provided that the staff and program are suited to the unique needs of this population.

In summary, all three grantees concluded that

- ◆ The farmworker population, due to lack of education and multiple barriers, has unique needs at the outset of a microenterprise program.
- ◆ Farmworkers' unique needs increase the requirements for time and assistance,

thereby increasing cost, even in the presence of well-established farmworker and low-income microenterprise service delivery systems.

- ◆ Microenterprise, over the long term, offers farmworkers greater earning power, greater development of assets, greater flexibility and the ability to supplement income from more traditional employment.
- ◆ Microenterprise is a viable path to self-sufficiency for farmworkers. (See Appendix D: *Profiles of Farmworker Entrepreneurs*.)

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS jointly proposed by CVCAC, PPEP and ROI

Recommendations to Grantees

1. *Plan and Budget for Customized, Intensive Training.* In order for any entrepreneurial training to be effective with the farmworker population, it must be targeted to an elementary school reading level. Further, the training must be extensive, covering not only the development aspects of business start-up, but also the specific local requirements, such as licensing, taxes, permits, etc. of which the participant may not be aware. The microenterprise program must spend an adequate amount of time teaching about product and market needs assessment, i.e., you may have a great idea, but what will make it go here in this area and market? Time is required to research industry standards to familiarize clients with their proposed ventures. These examples only begin to illustrate the intensity required to make microenterprise training effective with this population.
2. *Plan and Budget for Long-term Technical Assistance.* Microenterprise training will need to be followed by technical assistance to aid new entrepreneurs in understanding the purpose of the business plan process, reconciling the intricacies of a business plan and guiding the participants' thought processes as they plan contingencies for all the obstacles that might arise. The traditional approach of laying out requirements for the client to meet is not likely to succeed with farmworker entrepreneur candidates. Plan to provide extensive follow-up throughout the first two years of the new business development to help these new entrepreneurs address issues that arise.
3. *Actively Pursue Staff Development for Caseworkers in microenterprise planning and implementation.* In a microenterprise program geared to farmworkers or other very low-income clients, appropriate staffing is tantamount to success. Staff must have the business and financing knowledge plus the language and cultural competencies to put the information into the hands of these participants. Typical banking skills

may have relevance for staff in a credit-led microenterprise program, but traditional banking attitudes are not useful for staff to possess. Microenterprise program staff must be able to focus and invest the necessary time on the very low-income participant attempting business startup. In the banking world, the typical aloof attitude and superior demeanor may be attractive to the traditional clientele. However, that image is not an asset when working with very low-income individuals, who perceive these attitudes and behaviors as a lack of interest in assisting them. Since the skills profile required to successfully serve farmworkers in a microenterprise endeavor is not commonplace, farmworker service organizations and their microenterprise partners will need to invest to augment staff skills rather than hoping to identify this profile already existent in the banking community. Training programs must be designed for field staff to provide the tools to seek out potential loan projects and guide clients through the underwriting process. Field staff also needs to understand the basics of visitations with clients, what to look and ask for, as well as have a basic understanding of "red flag" issues when dealing with their clients after a loan is made.

4. *Plan and Budget for Non-traditional Loan Portfolio Development.* Farmworker service organizations and their microenterprise partners must work closely with current sources of loans to develop a portfolio of micro loans that tolerate and carry a much higher risk rating. Although CVCAC, PPEP and ROI have associations with key lending entities, it continues to be relatively difficult to locate appropriate \$5,000 and \$10,000 loans and to secure these small loans.
5. *Plan and Budget for a Lengthy and Iterative Loan Application Process.* Guidelines for loan funds must be explicit, including; maximum loan amount, use of funds, expectations of clients and identification of loan loss reserve funds. Field staff should be trained on the use of existing loan applications. Business plan templates relevant to farmworkers should be developed including detailed expenses such as loan

repayment (debt service) and rent, average revenue per sale and cost of marketing the venture.

6. *Plan and Budget for a Herculean job in loan follow-up.* Intensive post-loan follow-up is required for farmworkers given their limited education, business experience and income prior to business development. Since farmworker service organizations and their microenterprise partners must be the proactive force in bridging these gaps, staff training and planned interventions are essential to ensure long term success.
7. *Build and Strengthen Formal Coalitions and Collaborative Networks.* Encourage strong linkages with existing business planning and microenterprise programs and determine a set of realistic prerequisites for enrolling farmworker candidates into these programs. Create Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with these programs and providers for long-term partnerships.
8. *Identify Best Practices and Standardize Processes, Applications and Guidelines.* To enhance sustainability, farmworker service organizations and their microenterprise partners should further explore successful practices, standardizing processes, applications and guidelines to create efficiencies and a contiguous, measurable process. Given that there are regional differences between grantees and participants, it appears that there is sufficient common ground to justify additional efforts to enhance the potential for replication and expansion to other areas of the country.
9. *Pursue joint development.* Together, farmworker service organizations and their microenterprise partners can enhance the microenterprise component of farmworker program mix through development efforts that integrate and surpass the expertise and creativity of the separate programs. As these grantees have concluded, farmworkers have unique needs that traditional microenterprise processes were not designed to address. Work is needed to actively envision potential service needs and then generate plans to address these needs in programs at all levels. Joint

development efforts will increase the likelihood of participant and program success.

10. *Incorporate microenterprise into farmworker program services.* Adding self-employment as a job strategy requires adaptation of current farmworker service delivery systems, including adding micro business development to case management program options. Again, farmworker service organizations and their microenterprise partners can best accomplish these changes through joint efforts.
11. *Incorporate microenterprise into farmworker program reporting.* Providing micro business development services to farmworkers will require the development of methods to identify evidence of success and to include such in farmworker reporting systems.

Recommendations to USDOL

1. *Promote Micro Business Development as a Farmworker Self-Sufficiency Strategy.* Take a proactive role by addressing microenterprise development in USDOL SGAs, and through deliberate regulatory change clarifying the allowability of microenterprise training and activities for farmworkers. Microenterprise development serves the Administration's ETA goal of linking employment, education and economic development. (See Appendix E: Taking Action in 2004: Micro enterprise in the U.S.)
2. *Incorporate Micro Business Development into the NFJP.* With reauthorization of WIA, take the opportunity to enhance program activities and services descriptions to include and allow micro business development and related support costs. Determine what percentage of program mix realistically should target micro business start-up. Microenterprise development is a cost effective strategy—it has created jobs for less than the federal national average.⁴ (See Appendix F: Micro Enterprise Development

⁴ www.microenterpriseworks.org (Association for Enterprise Opportunity: Micro Enterprise Development in the U.S.—Economic Independence through Self-Employment). *Included as Appendix F of this paper.*

in the U.S.) A strategy that can reduce tax payer costs and provide this type of return on tax dollars warrants further investigation and investment.

3. *Continue Funding for Microenterprise Development to Benefit Farmworkers.* In rural areas, self-employment and business development are extremely viable methods for participants to achieve economic self-sufficiency. Microenterprise programs create jobs, generate income, build assets and enhance skills. These results are particularly impressive considering the fact that a significant number of assisted micro entrepreneurs are individuals facing multiple barriers presented by race, gender, ethnicity, income, job market fluctuations and isolation. Whether the small business is the sole source of or a crucial supplement to family income, microenterprise development has put many low-income families on the road to self-sufficiency.
4. *Provide Funding at Levels Capable of Yielding Success.* When reviewing and rating budget submissions, USDOL staff will need to understand the challenges faced by staff and farmworker participants when pursuing microenterprise as a strategy for self-sufficiency. Successful programs are those that are flexible, design counseling and training to be responsive to participant needs, undertake intensive counseling with participants, and have sufficient funds for participant support and counseling.
5. *Set Realistic Timelines for Microenterprise Outcomes.* Since the business development process can be lengthy and the farmworker population is dispersed, microenterprise development requires sufficient funding periods to ensure that the effort is successful. Recognize that a farmworker educated at the 6th grade level and beginning on the ground floor is unlikely to achieve successful micro business start up within 12 months. A more realistic time frame—that would greatly increase the success rate—for micro business start-up would be 18 to 26 months.
6. *Recognize Farmworkers Must Surmount Unique Barriers to Business Success.* Health crises, changes in family circumstances, isolation from lucrative markets, and encroachment from larger competitors are common barriers faced by farmworkers—

barriers that can be overcome by providing/allowing assistance for access to:

- a. Health insurance.
 - b. Savings tools and other asset building strategies to build financial security.
 - c. Specialized legal, managerial and marketing assistance to solve the real problems of stabilizing or growing a business.
7. *Pursue Microenterprise Development in Concert with other Federal Agencies.*
Microenterprise development should be seen as holistic, embracing poverty alleviation, human development and self-sufficiency attainment. For this reason, a wide range of institutions, including several federal agencies, should remain involved in supporting microenterprise development. (See Appendix G: Making the Case for Micro Enterprise, AEO 2004 Legislative Agenda.)
8. *Provide Leadership to Farmworker Service Organizations and their Microenterprise Partners Pursuing Micro Business Development for Farmworkers.*
- a. Encourage, organize and facilitate staff training to include introduction to micro business planning and development.
 - b. Organize a work group comprised of USDOL staff plus farmworker service staff and their microenterprise partners to brainstorm potential program and reporting needs, gaps and glitches, and changes required.

Appendices

- A: PMHDC: Policies and Procedure Manual
- B: ROI's *Seeds of Success* Curriculum Outline
- C: Micro Test Data Collection and Reporting Tool for Fiscal Year 2003
- D: Profiles of Farmworker Entrepreneurs
- E: Taking Action in 2004: Microenterprise in the U.S. (an advocacy toolkit)
- F: Association for Enterprise Opportunity: Microenterprise Development in the U.S. Economic Independence through Self-Employment: Overview of a Successful Strategy
- G. Making the Case for Microenterprise, AEO 2004 Legislative Priorities

Appendix B:

Seeds of Success Curriculum Outline

Developed by Rural Opportunities, Inc. with the support of J P Morgan Chase

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Track 1: Mastering Money (Financial Literacy)

Section 1: Can You Handle Money?

- What is financial literacy? Why is it important?
- Trends and statistics regarding general knowledge about money
- Goals for financial literacy/taking charge of money
- Hands-on application activities
 - #1: Start a money management notebook
 - #2: Take the survey (pre-test) on financial literacy
 - #3: Read about well-known Hispanic financial leaders

Section 2: Income/Earning Money

- Three types of income: wages, business profit, investment income
- How to prepare a resume
- Launching a job hunt; job interview tips
- Net pay and gross pay: what to expect on payday
- Hands-on application activities
 - #4: Prepare a resume
 - #5: Practice figuring take-home pay

Section 3: Career Decisions

- What's the difference between a job and a career?
- Importance of education: how education influences income
- Financial planning actually begins with career choices
- Steps in the planning for education expenses
- Hands-on application activities
 - #6: Research costs for education
 - #7: Create a plan for paying for education

Section 4: Creating a Budget

- What is a budget? Why is it important?
- Fixed expenses and flexible expenses; needs versus wants
- Short-term goals & long-term goals

- What a budget should include; tips on writing a budget
- Hands-on application activities
 - # 8: Take the Jump\$start Reality Check
 - # 9: Write short-term goals & long-term goals
 - #10: Create a list of your fixed expenses
 - #11: Prepare a personal budget

Section 5: Smart Shopping

- The lure of advertising; recognizing “hype”
- Tips on recognizing and avoiding scams
- 12 tips for smart shopping
- Cautions on signing contracts for loans
- Saving money on transportation and housing
- Hands-on application activities
 - #12: Keep a money diary for 7 days; evaluate wants and needs
 - #13: Evaluate ads for 5 things you want to buy
 - #14: Research the hidden costs of car ownership

Section 6: Controlling Credit

- Pros and cons of using credit
- Predatory lending warnings
- The importance of building a good credit rating
- What to do if you get into trouble with credit
- Hands-on application activities
 - #15: Estimate the cost of credit on 5 purchases
 - #16: Reading & comparing credit offers

Section 7: Banking Basics

- Why it makes sense to keep your money in the bank
- How to research and choose the bank that’s right for you
- Typical terms on savings accounts and checking accounts
- Other services such as safety deposit boxes and financial counsel
- Hands-on application activities
 - #17: Comparing banks and their services

#18: Practice filling out deposits and checks

#19: Practice keeping a running balance in a check register

Section 8: Saving Money

- Importance of starting now to save for your future (delayed gratification)
- Start a life-long habit of paying yourself first
- Good places to keep short-term savings
- The magic of compound interest
- Possible savings vehicles for long-term savings
- Hands-on application activities

#20: Compare interest rates on various savings vehicles

#21: Use a compound interest calculator to compare options

Section 9: Power of Investing

- Beat inflation by investing for long-term goals
- Don't keep money under your mattress
- Rule of 72 shows how fast money can multiply
- An introduction to the stock market
- Researching stocks and investments – where to start

(Continued)

- Hands-on application activities

#22: Practice using the Rule of 72

#23: Choosing companies to watch for investing purposes

#24: Track the prices of 3 stocks for two weeks

#25: Questions to ask when you read an annual report

Section 10: Keep Learning!

- Evaluating your accomplishments; setting new financial goals
- People you should know: CPA, CFP, EA, stockbroker, banker
- How to find a good consumer credit counselor if you need one
- Further resources and further reading

- Hands-on application activities
 - #26: Take the post-test; compare pre and post-test scores
 - #27: Goals for the next financial steps you need to take

Track 2: Learning to Earn (Entrepreneurship)

Section 1: Are You Ready for Business?

- What is an entrepreneur? What is free enterprise?
- Examples of entrepreneurs in agriculturally related businesses
- How are you like successful entrepreneurs? (Entrepreneurship traits)
- Advantages of self-employment & quotes from entrepreneurs
- Hands-on application activities
 - #1: Start a business notebook
 - #2: Take the pre-test on entrepreneurship
 - #3: Read about successful Hispanic entrepreneurs

Section 2: Growing into Business!

- How can my work experience be used to start a business?
- Special talents, interests and work experience can be marketable skills
- Youth who used previous skills and experience to start a business
- Overview of the seven steps to business ownership
- Hands-on application activities
 - #4: Take a personal survey of skills and experience
 - #5: Research feasibility of these business ideas

Section 3: How to Find Moneymaking Ideas

- Got a Clue? How to see money-making opportunity wherever you go
- How to create goods and services to match the opportunities you see
- Four types of business: manufacture, wholesale, retail, service
- Retail sales: A look at several successes

- Service businesses: Low-cost ways to get into business
- Hands-on application activities
 - #6: Take a neighborhood survey for business needs
 - #7: Research business ideas related to customer needs

Section 4: Choosing the Right Business for You

- Researching the feasibility of a business idea
- Evaluating products for their profit potential (buy low, sell high)
- Matching your talents & interests with feasible business ideas
- Hands-on application activities
 - #8: Rate your top five business ideas for profit potential
 - #9: Choose a business and give it a name

Section 5: Planning to Succeed

- Why business plans are important
 - Three big topics covered in a business plan
 - Tips on writing a successful business plan
 - Tips on setting business goals
 - Hands-on application activities
- #10: Use 3-page template to write a business plan
#11: Use goals worksheet to set goals for the business

Section 6: Solving Legal Needs

- Common business structures (sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation)
 - How to register a business name
 - How to research the legal requirements for your business
 - It may be legal, but is it ethical?
 - Hands-on application activities
- #12: Checklist of legal steps and research
#13: A code of business ethics

Section 7: Financing your Business

- Know the going rate or competitive price for your product
- Set the right price for your goods and services
- Estimating start-up costs; tips for saving money on start-up
- Using sales projections to calculate cash flow
- Finding start-up money
- Hands-on application activities

#14: Price setting worksheet

#15: Calculate your profit zone

#16: Estimate start-up costs

#17: Start-up money worksheet

Section 8: Finding Customers

- What is marketing?
- Identifying target customers

- Top advertising tools for young entrepreneurs
- Tips on low-cost, creative ways to advertise
- How to plan a sales talk; negotiation
- Getting the order in writing
- Hands-on application activities

#18: Design a business card

#19: Design a flyer

#20: Create a sign

#21: Sample order form

Section 9: Managing Your Business

- Making sure you get paid
- Basics of record keeping; tax awareness
- Hiring help: Will I need employees?
- How to expand your business
- Hands-on application activities

#22: Practice creating a bill for a customer

#23: Practice record keeping

#24: Practice writing receipts

(Continued)

Section 10: Where can you GROW from Here?

- Evaluating your accomplishments; setting new goals
- Time management tips
- What to do when you need advice about business
- Further resources and further reading
- Hands-on application activities
 - #25: Take the post-test; compare pre- and post-test scores
 - #26: Goals for the next stage of your business

Game Channel: The game channel is a tool for reinforcing all of the financial concepts and terms presented in the 10 lessons on financial literacy and the 10 lessons on entrepreneurship. Participants play the games individually or compete against each other in teams.