

Discussion Group: **BUSINESS**  
Issue Area: **ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**What can be done to reduce poverty through economic and community development?**

- Business Development
  - Attracting more small businesses
  - Recruiting
  - Streamlining processes to start small businesses
  - Creating pathways to turn ideas into business plans ----actual businesses
  - Support more business incubation programs like one at UALR
  - Helping match local artisans with new markets (e.g. custom turkey calls sold not on the front porch but via EBay)
  - (Respect) Working to identify skills inherent in client population and build on those. Identify job opportunities that match (e.g., farmers markets: niche markets for frog legs, etc.)
  - Hire low-/moderate-income individuals
  - Development of I-49 corridor will bring jobs and facilitate fast/easy movement of people
  - More cooperation/planning with neighboring states
- Transportation
  - Improve mass transit systems
  - Subsidized passes
- Childcare Costs
  - Conditions for receiving subsidy at DHS eliminate too many families (i.e., 30+ hours/week of work to qualify)

**What is being done to reduce poverty through economic and community development?**

- Planning
  - Making planning decisions based on regional needs/markets – in state
  - Updating land use plans and traffic patterns in Conway to make communities more walkable and livable.
  - Ft. Smith Chamber of Commerce Committee developing action plans to address curb appeal and arts, quality of life issues.
- Incentives/Attraction
  - Economic opportunity zones encourage businesses to locate in low/mod/distressed areas.
  - Ft. Smith attracting new tech jobs and providing training

**What are the assets and strengths for economic and community development?**

- People

- Long terms residents (+/-)
- People who care (+/-)
- Expertise/knowledge/talent
  
- Institutions and Organizations
  - Community college
  - Church & community groups

**What are the challenges and barriers for economic and community development?**

- Community leadership
  - Effective first followers
  - Convincing people to give back
  
- Funds

Discussion Group: **GRASSROOTS/COMMUNITY**  
Issue Area: **INDIVIDUAL ECONOMIC SUPPORT/SECURITY**

**What can be done to reduce poverty through individual economic support/security?**

- Employment/Workforce Development
  - Education/Skills/Career Training
  - Job Development/Training for area jobs
- Supports
  - Listen to clients' needs
  - New target population
  - Teach money management
  - Continue community action activities

**What is being done to reduce poverty through individual economic support/security?**

- Education/Job Training Programs
  - ARRA Job Creation
- Financial Stability
  - Tax Preparation Training
  - IDA Programs
    - Success due to case management
- Services
  - Energy Programs
    - Increase energy efficiency
  - Food Programs
- Family Development Programs – Youth to Seniors
- Other
  - Information Sharing
  - Outcome Measurement

**What are the assets and strengths for individual economic support/security?**

- Client interaction
- Importance of regular assistance programs
  - Accessibility to agencies
  - Agency-wide knowledge of programs
  - Agency/community partnerships
    - Knowledge of resources

- Information sharing
- Senior Assistance
  - Several programs
  - Transportation/meals

**What are the challenges and barriers for individual economic support/security?**

- Lack of a truly reflective needs assessment
- Resources
  - Lack of funding
  - Lack of resource network/partnerships
  - Need for increased staff education on all programs
  - Lack of access to technology and technology training
  - Lack of utilization of available training resources

Discussion Group: **NONPROFIT/GOVERNMENT/EDUCATION**  
Issue Area: **HEALTH**

**What can be done to reduce poverty through health?**

- Coverage
  - Improve access to Medicaid for adults
  - Eliminate 2-year window between SSI and Medicare
  - Extend ARKids First to kids up to 25 if in college
- Personnel
  - Create and increase healthcare workforce/jobs
  - Lack of entry-level job training, help CBP's better provide
  - Access: Medical provider capacity challenges, especially specialists
- Access
  - Transportation challenges
  - Limited access to dental health services, especially adults
- Information
  - Better info/training for parents
  - Low health literacy levels, especially important for parents of SSI high-need kids
  - More info to Medicaid recipients on how to use

**What is being done to reduce poverty through health?**

- Health Care Reform
- Community Health Centers
  - Services and access
  - Enrollment/outreach
- Dental Services
  - Ft. Smith – free dental clinic
  - Conway – Interfaith Clinic – Dental
- Health Fairs (downside – not ongoing or sustainable)
- Child Find (EHS)
- Support for prescriptions – Pine Bluff
  - Area churches
  - Wal-Mart \$4 prescriptions; Target; Kroger
- Food Stamps

**What are the assets and strengths for health?**

**What are the challenges and barriers for health?**

- Funds
  - State
  - Federal
- Personnel
  - No dental school in AR (limits capacity – losing dentists)
  - PCP referral bottlenecks – not enough PCP's to refer.
  - High cost of setting up practices
    - No AR incentives
- Transportation/access barriers even if available (e.g. Medicaid)
- Need for more affordable plans – high premiums
- Raising community awareness, galvanizing community

Discussion Group: **NONPROFIT/GOVERNMENT/EDUCATION**  
Issue Area: **TAX POLICY**

**What can be done to reduce poverty through tax policy?**

- Ensure low-income folks do not pay taxes
- Many tax proposals (e.g. Value Added) do not have protection for low-income families
- Extended Support
  - “Cliff” – once families are no longer eligible for public support (Can’t afford to work with higher costs of child care, etc.
  - Need to offer more support to families reaching benefit “cliff” (e.g., EITC) OR
  - Extend benefits during transitions to employment or increase salaries
- Corporate Share
  - Companies get tax credit for hiring more people
  - Increase taxes on supersized companies
  - Some companies take advantage of tax loopholes
- Add tax to cigarettes and alcohol
- Get a portion of lottery \$\$\$

Discussion Group: **NONPROFIT/GOVERNMENT/EDUCATION**  
Issue Area: **EDUCATION**

**What can be done to reduce poverty through education?**

- Pre-K/Early Childhood
  - Good ABC program in the state
  - Good HeadStarts
- K-12
  - Year round school. Learn better and get fed.
  - Put basic living/trade skills in K-12 schools; add trades and tracks in K-12
  - Communities in Schools – After School Programs
- Postsecondary
  - Make a plan for training people for future needs like care for aging.
  - More free education for vocational/technical skills
  - SEARC in Pine Bluff met with business leaders about non-college skills training. Have set up training.
  - Everyone should have a chance to go to college.
- Supports
  - Resources to help parents help their child.



Discussion Group: **YOUTH**  
Issue Area: **EDUCATION**

**What can be done to reduce poverty through education?**

- Pre-K
  - Make Pre-K programs more available.
  - Encourage/promote Head Start participation.
- Encourage year-round education (year-round school year)
- More youth programs that are educationally focused (YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs, 4H, Junior Achievement, Summer Enrichment, Library, Summer Youth Employment)
- Emphasis of importance of education within:
  - Community
  - Youth/Young Children
  - Business
  - Family

**What is being done to reduce poverty through education?**

- ABC Program
- Arkansas Challenge Scholarship Program

**What are the assets and strengths for education?**

- K-12 test scores greatly improved
- Solid public education system – post 12<sup>th</sup> grade
- Increase in Child Nutrition Programs

**What are the challenges and barriers for education?**

- The Economy.
- Funding challenges – Pre-K
- Quality of education – math & sciences K-12
- Impress upon graduating seniors the importance/challenges and commitment needed to succeed and finish college within 6 years.
- Fear – going to, coming from and in school