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Best Practices in Volunteerism: A Case Study of Scott County, Indiana

by Frank Antonucci¹

In a world of increasing economic challenges and limited public budgets, many rural Illinois communities must rely on volunteers for community and economic development efforts. Every day in rural Illinois, tens of thousands of volunteers work to improve their community's future by contributing to a wide variety of projects. Community beautification, economic development, youth work, park

management, and social services are only a few examples of their volunteer efforts. Local leaders, including some elected officials, work for little or no pay and provide leadership and public management skills to the community. In some cases, small civic organizations with a limited budget that are made up entirely of volunteers perform important work in rural community improvement.

The Need for Volunteer Training

During the 2001 Governor's Regional Development Strategy Program, citizen participants from across west north central Illinois identified "concerns about a growing shortage of volunteers and a need to develop leadership skills and to find ways to provide incentives for volunteers to serve" (Walzer 2001, 16). The VOLTS (Volunteer Training and Support) project was created at the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs (IIRA) in response to citizen concerns about a volunteer shortage for community development work. Staff from the VOLTS project developed a Best Practices Volunteer Survey that was developed and conducted with the collaboration of the University of Illinois Extension to further study volunteerism in north central Illinois and assess the need for training in volunteer management practices.

Several different studies have been conducted to gather information on the need for training in volunteerism. The Best Practices Volunteer Survey was conducted during a March 2003 conference on volunteerism in west north central Illinois. Supporting data collected from the survey and a focus group confirms the need for volunteer training in the region. Preliminary data from telephone interviews

conducted by the IIRA MAPPING (Management and Planning Programs Involving Nonmetropolitan Groups) program in over eighty rural communities also identified concerns across the State of Illinois about a shortage of small civic organization volunteers for a number of different community and economic development projects.

Obviously, most people must work to support themselves and their families and are limited in the time and effort that they can dedicate to volunteer projects or fundraising. The main challenge of any community improvement project is to effectively manage the volunteer efforts of people to avoid overwork and burnout. Civic organizations that do not effectively lead their volunteers are more likely to face burnout and limited success in community project implementation. In order for rural community organizations to be effective, they must pay close attention to the best practices of volunteer leadership and management. Effective volunteer programs recognize the limits of volunteer time and focus their efforts on building consensus and implementing projects that will have the most potential for improving community life.

¹ The author is an Economic Development Specialist with the IIRA MAPPING program and has worked with Thom Anderson and Linda Lee Blaine on the VOLTS project, funded by the Illinois Governor's Five Year Strategic Planning project. The author would like to thank Kathy Brown from the University of Illinois Extension for her assistance on the Best Practices Volunteer Survey.

Research Objective

This research seeks to direct local citizens to field-tested best practices for organizing and managing volunteers in rural communities. In addition to using information from published literature on volunteerism, this research

will focus on evidence gained from a case study of volunteerism in Scott County, Indiana. The findings will be used to design the VOLTS project for rural Illinois.

Methods

The need to improve the practices and techniques of volunteer management in rural Illinois was established by gathering supporting case study data from several focus groups. Three researchers conducted the review of literature from a wide variety of volunteerism sources to gain an understanding of the core concepts of volunteerism. The core volunteer management concepts from the literature review were then adapted into a set of interview questions

for use in the study of an award-winning volunteer program in Scottsburg, Indiana.² In-depth key informant interviews were conducted with participants from several different volunteer groups in Scott County. The practices of several different volunteer groups are then compared to the core management concepts of the literature review to identify field-tested best practices.

Core Concepts

A careful review of published research on volunteerism reveals a body of core management concepts that can be applied to almost any civic group that implements community development efforts with unpaid labor regardless of their size or level of organization (Dwyer 2003). Every volunteer group from formal nonprofit agencies to ad hoc civic organizations must plan how they will recruit, supervise, evaluate, recognize, and retain volunteers. The following core concepts outline the basic stages of volunteer leadership and management and have been compiled from multiple sources from the body of knowledge on volunteerism (Dwyer 2003; Maryland Governor's Office 2003; McCurley and Lynch 1987). The identified core concepts provide a guideline on the challenges of organizing volunteers. The in-depth interviews from Scottsburg then investigate how different volunteer groups use the core volunteerism concepts according to their goals and organizational structure.

Core Volunteerism Concepts	Organizational Challenge
Organizational Planning/ Visioning	Why does the organization need volunteers?
Recruitment	How do volunteers enter the organization?
Supervision and Management	How is the work of volunteers guided to fit the goals of the organization?
Evaluation and Recognition	How do volunteers know that they are doing a good job?

A review of the core concepts in volunteer management starts with a clear understanding of the mission and vision for the future of the civic organization. Once leaders

² The Appendix contains a list of the key informant interview questions that were used to gain data about the volunteer best practices in Scott County.

understand the mission of their organization, they can then plan for volunteer recruitment and management. Leaders must be able to understand their organizational mission before they can formulate their future development plans. The complexity of the organization's mission determines the scope of planning efforts. Volunteer community groups that have a simple mission will be required to plan less than more complex organizations. The vision and mission of the civic organization needs to be created to inspire and motivate potential volunteers.

The next step in the planning process is to develop a multiyear work plan that will fulfill the mission and vision of the organization. The volunteer organization can then use the plan to draft job descriptions for various volunteer projects and start to plan for recruitment activities. Potential volunteers are looking for ways in which they can make a difference in their community (McCurley and Lynch 1987). An organization needs to start their recruitment efforts by having a strong vision and detailed work plan for using volunteers in the future. Mission statements or strategic visioning can take many forms, but they should leave no doubt about the organization's plans to improve the community and their commitment to volunteerism. In order to promote future success, everyone on the team needs to understand and be able to explain his or her personal commitment to the civic organization.

Best practices in volunteer recruitment strategies should take into account the personal needs of people along with the organization's need to complete projects. Since most people volunteer because they want to make a difference in their community, recruitment messages should promote the positive contributions that can be made to the community through volunteer work. Recruitment efforts should not misrepresent the role or work of volunteers, however. The crafting of a clear recruitment message helps people to understand the mission of the organization, the importance of volunteer contributions, and the specific nature of the work performed by volunteers. The recruitment message should specifically tell people what to expect when they arrive on the job so that there are no misconceptions about the role of volunteers.

The volunteer recruitment message can be targeted to a certain audience with specific skills or serve as a general appeal for assistance based on an assessment of the job requirements. Projects that require few specific skills can be promoted with a general recruitment message while more specialized work requires a targeted message to people who have certain professional skills. Volunteer projects such as playground construction that might require both skilled labor and generalist workers should take a two-pronged approach to recruitment. In the case of

construction, one targeted recruitment message should be formulated for potential volunteers who have specific skills in the building trades and would be willing to assume an advisory or leadership role. Another recruitment message should be shaped into a general appeal for volunteers to perform manual labor. The reviewed volunteer literature identifies written job descriptions as an important tool for delineating the role of volunteers in the organization (McCurley and Lynch 1987).

The most basic function of volunteer management is to provide leadership and guidance on the job and to coordinate work activities. The role of a supervisor is to enable and support volunteers to do their jobs, thus helping the organization to be a success. The amount of supervision that is required of a volunteer depends on the complexity of their job, work experience, and maturity. Volunteers should be expected to act like unpaid staff who perform their duties with hard work and dedication. An effective volunteer management program will use volunteers to the greatest extent possible. Volunteers who are not kept busy with work during their time might not come back.

Much of the reviewed literature for volunteerism is designed for nonprofit programs that train, supervise, and manage volunteers for the delivery of complex social services over an extended period of time (Dwyer 2003; Maryland Governor's Office 2003; McCurley and Lynch 1987). Civic organizations that use volunteers on a less frequent basis for less complex projects, such as community improvement work groups, will probably be able to use informal techniques; they still need to supervise and manage volunteers, however. Organizations that work with volunteers should select practices that best fit their level of organization and the availability of resources. Organizations that use mainly temporary volunteers for general labor have different needs than social service volunteer agencies that use long-term volunteers to provide services to clients.

Initial supervision of volunteer work requires the establishment of clear work responsibilities and expectations for all volunteers. Volunteers who are considered long term but who are not contributing to the work of the organization should not be included in future activities. Every position requires some degree of on-the-job training, and supervisors should work hard to ensure that new volunteers are comfortable and effective on the job.

The guidance required for a new volunteer, who is unsure about his or her role is more frequent than a volunteer who has worked for a civic organization for many years. Supervisors need to help new volunteers to ease into their new work role in the civic organization. Since most

volunteers only work part time, they might take some time to become comfortable in their new role and might require additional supervision. Once volunteers are trained, trusted, and comfortable in their jobs, supervisors should allow them more discretion and responsibility in their work.

Since most individuals volunteer for civic organizations to make a difference in their community, evaluation activities should provide them with the opportunity to measure their progress and accomplishments on the job. Both annual evaluations and informal feedback are valuable tools for providing volunteers with an assessment of the value of their efforts. The form of evaluation can differ according to the complexity of the civic organization and type of work. For example, social service agencies might need to complete formal evaluations of their programs and work to satisfy their funding sources. In the case of volunteer civic groups, a simple checklist can be developed for the completion of work responsibilities. Informal meetings with civic volunteers provide the opportunity for everyone to exchange their views about the organization and their work progress.

When considering recognition, the most important aspect of any volunteer awards program is to motivate volunteers by linking achievement and hard work with tangible rewards. In some cases, small but frequent recognition and rewards are more effective than a large annual recognition event. Volunteer supervisors must know what motivates their volunteers; they need to provide an appropriate

recognition to fit each person. Recognition provides volunteers with a measure of personal satisfaction for a job well done.

Inexpensive, informal, and simple recognition techniques can be just as effective as more expensive practices when correctly implemented. For example, a hard-working but shy volunteer would probably not appreciate a large public gathering to present him or her with a plaque, but might be comfortable with a presentation at a smaller and less formal occasion. Another example of recognition is a special luncheon for all the volunteers in an organization. The luncheon replaced an annual awards ceremony that was more expensive and poorly attended by volunteers.

Retention is an important component for creating a sustainable volunteer program with lasting community results. Civic organizations that are not able to retain volunteers waste considerable resources recruiting, training, and supervising new volunteers. Every effort should be made to recognize and retain experienced, hard-working volunteers for as long as possible. Since volunteers receive little or no pay for their work, supervisors need to make sure that their experiences on the job are positive and personally fulfilling. Volunteers who have the same work responsibilities for a long period of time might become bored with the job. If the civic organization is able to meet their expectations and volunteers are satisfied with their experiences, most people will stay on the job on a permanent basis.

A Community of Volunteers

Scott County, Indiana, has been recognized as a successful example of a rural community that has risen to meet its considerable social challenges through the use of local volunteers. Bill Graham, the mayor of Scottsburg, Indiana, recently led a session at the Illinois Rural Economic Development Conference in 2003 where he attributed much of his community's success to the effective use of volunteers. Other leading rural development groups have consulted with the people in Scottsburg in order to get ideas on how to implement their own effective volunteer efforts. The National Rural Development Leadership Conference visited Scottsburg, Indiana, in 2002 to learn from their community and their economic development efforts. The Mayor of Scottsburg testified before the U.S. Congress in 2000 on his local work in rural development (Graham 2000).

Scott County, Indiana, has many social challenges linked to a poor economy, including the lack of a skilled workforce, a high dropout rate, teen pregnancy, and other

social barriers to economic success. The people of Scott County have come together to work on a wide variety of community development efforts. Several different volunteer organizations have formed a partnership to provide social services to needy people and complete community and economic development projects. Volunteers in Scott County perform many functions, including teaching people how to read, building ramps for handicapped people, and planting flowers. The most dramatic example was the construction of a food distribution clearinghouse for needy persons that was built in one day by 200 volunteers. Several local building contractors worked on the project.

The following list contains some of the volunteer groups in Scott County that were studied to gain some understanding of their volunteer practices. All of the studied volunteer groups are affiliated or work closely with the Scott County Partnership, an umbrella organization of social service and economic development groups.

Volunteer Group	Purpose
Mayor's Beautification Committee	Improves appearance of public spaces.
Literacy Council	Teaches basic skills to learners, including GED exam preparation.
The Clearinghouse	Provides food, clothing, and rent assistance to needy people.
The Caring Construction Company	Builds ramps and completes other construction projects for needy people.

Source: Author Interviews (2003).

Organizational Planning

The Scott County Partnership has an annual retreat every year to plan and coordinate the volunteer activities of the local civic organizations. The Scott County Partnership Strategic Plan outlines the goals and strategies for the umbrella organization, including benchmarks for evaluation. Each partner group maintains their own identity but works together for greater effectiveness. For example, the social service projects of all of the participating volunteer groups are marketed together and promoted as a single network of opportunities.

The Strategic Plan clearly states the participatory values of the organization and outlines a coordinated plan of work for the overall organization. The strategic planning process helps the various volunteer groups to better understand their roles and responsibilities in the network of social service and community development organizations. The

Mayor of Scottsburg, along with several local leaders, sits on the Scott County Partnership board of directors. He also conducts his own strategic assessment with community representatives.

In fact, in conjunction with his other responsibilities, the Mayor coordinates a community self-assessment every few years with a core group of twenty volunteers. Leaders in the community are interviewed and asked to identify volunteer projects to be completed in the future. Medical, financial, industrial, business, and other groups are asked to identify what they like about the community and what areas need improvement. The responses are used to identify community projects that can be completed using volunteers. In some cases, the only way to complete a project is to use volunteer assistance.

Recruitment

Several techniques are used in Scott County to find and recruit volunteers for community development and social service work. Word of mouth was mentioned several times by the interview participants as the best way of getting volunteers. In the case of the Mayor's Beautification Committee, several individuals cited the Mayor's enthusiasm as a key factor for getting people to join the effort. People see the Mayor and his group working out in the community and want to get involved in the project because they can see the results. The Beautification Committee sometimes runs an ad in the local newspaper for help. The least effective method reported by the Beautification Committee was a booth at the county fair. People signed up and later would not commit to working.

The Clearinghouse found that targeted recruitment through churches and other social service organizations was an effective tool for getting volunteers. Face-to-face personal invitations are the most effective method used by the Clearinghouse. The Beautification Committee contacts local service groups to adopt public spaces in Scottsburg. Local civic groups, including young people, take pride in being responsible for the beautification project and work hard to complete their tasks. One of the interviewed respondents felt that getting young people involved in beautification projects helps them to have a stake in the community. This individual even mentioned that young people who work on beautification projects will report their friends to the authorities if they vandalize the project.

The Literacy Council has had success with recruiting through the local media. It periodically contacts the local newspaper to write a story about its work as a way of getting volunteers. Volunteering for the Literacy Council requires a substantial time commitment so it is important for people to understand this up-front. Volunteers are required to teach for at least one hour a week over a time span of six months. The offer of free literacy teacher training is also included in the news story. Most of the literacy volunteers are retired teachers.

The use of a computer database as a recruitment tool to keep track of potential volunteers and to match volunteer

interests with certain jobs has been identified as an important method in the core management concepts of volunteerism (McCurley 2002). Only one group in Scott County reported the use of a database to keep track of volunteers, but they didn't find it to be a useful tool. The staff time required to update and maintain the database was too time consuming for the volunteer organization. Volunteer organizations need to analyze their resources and capabilities before adopting new technologies to make sure that they fit their resource capacity. No volunteer organization should feel pressured to implement methods that do not fit their level of expertise or resource level.

Supervision and Management

The Literacy Council and Clearinghouse have a professional staff member that is responsible for supervising volunteer work and managing the overall effort. Volunteers sign up for a regular time slot to work and are provided with orientation and training sessions to help them understand their roles and responsibilities. Each position has a job description to help volunteers understand the nature of their work. People who wish to volunteer are interviewed to gain some understanding of their personality and motivation. Volunteers are provided training in topics such as how to teach someone to read or how to manage difficult clients. Before starting to work, an orientation is also provided to discuss work roles and expectations on the job. In comparison, the Beautification Committee and Caring Construction groups interview and orient their volunteers using informal methods.

The Mayor's Beautification Committee and the Caring Construction Company use volunteer leaders to organize projects and supervise the work of other volunteers. Much of the training and supervision is done informally at the job site. The Mayor's group uses donated flowers from a

local retail store for planting in public spaces. Since flowers are highly perishable, one large retail store in Scottsburg sometimes donates extra flowers at the last minute to the Beautification Committee. The group is constantly working to recruit volunteers who can respond quickly and plant flowers that are donated at the last minute.

The Mayor of Scottsburg felt that volunteers need to know exactly what to expect when they arrive on the job, how long the job will take, and what tools to bring with them to complete required tasks. He stated that proper organization was required to make sure that volunteers are kept busy during their work hours. Experienced volunteers are assigned a specific public area or space for beautification. The Caring Construction Company participates in the Annual Day of Caring that mobilizes many volunteers for a one-day effort that performs work for needy people, including building ramps. The leader of the construction group praised the willingness of her volunteers to accomplish a wide variety of tasks and thought that not knowing what would be asked of them made work more interesting for volunteers.

Evaluation

When considering ways to evaluate their work, all of the key informants in Scottsburg expressed pride in their contributions to volunteer efforts and pointed to personally satisfying and highly visible accomplishments as the motivation to continue working for the community. Whether cleaning up trash, handing out food to needy people, or teaching someone to read, the volunteers of Scott County work to make a visible difference in the lives of their fellow community members. Several of the interview respondents have worked for years at the same volunteer organization

and, over time, have assumed positions of leadership and job site responsibility. The Scott County interviews demonstrate a willingness to volunteer for many years if the work is personally satisfying and challenging.

There were a number of different informal and formal evaluation measures identified in the case study. Each volunteer group pointed to several visible accomplishments as an evaluation of their efforts. The Beautification Committee measures their progress by monitoring

feedback from citizens. The group also keeps track of other groups and individuals in the community who start their own beautification efforts. Individual homeowners and business owners also started to improve the appearance of their property in response to the beautification effort. The Literacy Council counts the number of students that graduate from their program as a way of measuring success. Official assessments of the volunteer teachers

are also required to measure their performance. The Caring Construction Company keeps track of the thank-you notes and cards that clients send them. The Clearinghouse counts the number of people who are helped with food or clothing donations and rent assistance. Both social service organizations, such as the Literacy Council, and civic groups, such as the Beautification Committee, have found ways to measure their progress over time.

Recognition

All of the Scott County organizations studied provide some form of recognition to their volunteers for their hard work and dedication. The recognition activities and events in Scott County are considered to be an important way of expressing gratitude but are also major social events in the community. The Mayor's Beautification Committee has a Good Neighbor Banquet every year to recognize the contributions of local citizens. It is the largest annual volunteer recognition event of the year. The Literacy Council has a recognition ceremony for volunteers at their GED graduation ceremonies. They also offer more frequent and less formal onsite parties to recognize volunteer efforts. The Clearinghouse recognizes volunteers by sharing a meal with them and gets sponsors to pay for the event. Board members for the Scott County Partnership receive a plaque or certificate for their efforts. Volunteers from the Caring Construction Company are invited to an annual recognition breakfast.

Every year for the last twelve years over 400 people have gathered for the Mayor's Good Neighbor Banquet in Scottsburg. All of the nominations for the different categories are read at the banquet, and the event is broadcast live over the local cable station. Nominees are provided with a free meal, and their photos are published in the local newspaper. The most prestigious award is the Good Neighbor of the Year. An evaluation committee that is not connected with the Mayor evaluates all of the nominations and selects the award winners. One of the respondents felt that how an award is presented and not the actual award is the most important aspect of recognition. This individual also felt that the banquet promoted volunteerism by recognizing the good work of people in the community.

Findings

The study of Scott County provides some interesting insights into best practices for volunteerism when compared to related volunteer literature. Scott County, Indiana, is an ideal place to study volunteerism since several best practices have been identified from the key informant interviews. Data from the interviews suggests that volunteerism is strong in Scott County, and several organizations in the community have been successful in the use of volunteers. The core concepts of volunteerism that were identified in the academic literature are useful for explaining the volunteer best practices of Scott County.

In the core concept of organizational planning and visioning, the reviewed literature suggests that having a clear mission and vision for the organization is an important aspect of clarifying the work roles of volunteers and helps to motivate people to work without pay. The Scott County Partnership provides an excellent example of an umbrella organization

that has used the strategic planning visioning process to gain input from their participating member groups to chart a future course for volunteer projects in the community. The partnership used the planning process with all of the key stakeholders to build their organization by developing and expressing the shared values of the group. A work plan was then developed from the vision to delineate the volunteer responsibilities for each participating member group to ensure a coordinated effort.

When putting together and implementing a volunteer recruitment plan, two approaches are identified in the academic literature: (1) targeted recruitment and (2) mass media. Targeted recruitment involves identifying potential volunteers and implementing a tailored message to promote their involvement. The specific message is designed to recruit volunteers with identified technical skills and should include a job description. Face-to-face

personal invitations were found to be the most effective method for targeted recruitment in Scott County. Word of mouth techniques and networking with existing local service organizations have also been successful methods for targeted recruitment. Another approach to recruitment is the general appeal for volunteers through mass media methods. The Beautification Committee sometimes runs an ad in the local newspaper. The local newspaper also writes an article about the work of the Literacy Council and invites people to join their efforts. Radio was not mentioned in either the academic literature or in the case study, but it might be an important public service for a general volunteer recruitment appeal. Overall, the volunteer organizations of Scott County were able to recruit enough volunteers to fit their needs using mostly informal and inexpensive methods.

In Scott County, all of the different groups studied provided some form of interviews, orientation, and training to volunteers. The social service groups tended to have formal methods while the civic organizations were less formal. Interviews can be informal conversations over the phone, and orientation/training activities can be a part of the job. Close supervision of new and inexperienced volunteers is required to ensure proper training on the job and the completion of work responsibilities.

In most cases, volunteers need to be informed about their roles and job responsibilities. Volunteers need to be able to go to work prepared with the appropriate tools and clothing. In the case of the Caring Construction Company, volunteers are willing to perform many different types of jobs. The interviewed participant suggested that placing volunteers in a wide variety of work situations without fully informing them about their duties was for this group of volunteers an exciting challenge. The supervisor also suggested that training people to work in construction proved to be a valuable and rewarding experience. The promotion of training opportunities should not be overlooked as an important benefit when recruiting volunteers.

Lessons Learned

Scott County, Indiana, has faced several barriers to economic and community development, but it has responded strongly with the formation of local organizations to provide social services. Local leaders decided to work together to help people in their community, and they engaged in volunteerism as an important tool for project implementation. Effective local leadership is a key component in community development and in

Evidence from the key participant interviews suggests that each volunteer organization needs to select performance measurements that fit their mission, goals, and level of resources. In some cases, informal and anecdotal evidence appears to be satisfactory to justify organization efforts. Word of mouth and informal comments from citizens can be used as evidence for performance measurements. In the case of civic organizations with few resources, informal and sometimes anecdotal evidence has proven to be sufficient.

While the academic literature pointed to the importance of evaluation to gauge organizational performance, the interviews in Scott County highlighted the importance of evaluation techniques based on personal volunteer motivation. Evaluation is not simply a method of justifying organizational performance but can also serve as a means of providing local volunteer recognition. People join local volunteer efforts because they observe the positive and highly visible work of the organization. In the end, volunteers work because their efforts in the organization are personally rewarding and make a difference in the community.

The reviewed academic literature concerning recognition discourages large, formal, and expensive awards ceremonies because they are often ineffective and not always appropriate for showing appreciation towards volunteers. Less formal and more frequent recognition events such as lunches, breakfasts, or other recognition activities are regarded as being more effective in the literature review. Some of the volunteer organizations in Scott County organize frequent and informal recognition events and confirmed the effectiveness of the practice. The interview data from Scott County demonstrates the importance to the community of their large formal Good Neighbor recognition event. Over 400 people join together for this televised broadcast of the Mayor's Good Neighbor Banquet, which recognizes the accomplishments of volunteers in Scottsburg.

accomplishing planning goals. The dynamic leadership and enthusiasm of local leaders can motivate citizens to work without pay. Volunteers seek to accomplish projects that are going to make a difference in the community and look to their civic leaders to provide direction.

The interview data from Scott County revealed the significance placed on the organization and recognition of

volunteers. Local civic leaders in Scott County recognized the importance of volunteers for accomplishing community development goals. New leaders are recruited and brought into the various volunteer organizations and then given the authority to implement the shared plans. The importance of the local recognition event demonstrates that local volunteers are encouraged and honored for their work in helping the community. The recognition event is an opportunity to celebrate a shared commitment and progress towards building a better community.

The Scott County Partnership (2003) provides an important leadership and organization role in the community as a common forum for volunteer planning and development efforts. The majority of the local volunteer organizations are members of the Scott County Partnership, and these volunteer groups meet regularly to work together towards common community development goals. The work of all of

the volunteer organizations is integrated into a common work plan each year. The integrated communitywide approach used in Scott County helps to maximize community resources for the achievement of established community goals. For example, the Clearinghouse is a partnership between several local social service agencies and provides an integrated food and clothing distribution approach to prevent the duplication of services. The use of volunteers at the Clearinghouse is a vital part of daily distribution operations. Local leaders understand that only by working together through volunteerism can they overcome the considerable social challenges in their community.

Volunteer partnerships can be a valuable component of rural community development. This study of Scott County provides a useful guide for organizing an effective and coordinated community volunteer effort.

Appendix

Key Informant Interview Questions

Recruitment

1. What role do volunteers play in your community?
2. Please list all of the volunteer groups in your community that meet at least once every month?
3. How did you begin your efforts?
4. How long has your group been working together?
5. How do you recruit volunteers to work for your organization?
6. How do you determine if potential volunteers are a good fit for your organization?
7. Who needs to be involved in a volunteer project for it to be successful?

Supervision and Management

8. What kind of place do you think your community should be in twenty years?
9. What current projects are in the works for your community?

Recognition and Evaluation

10. How do you determine future projects for volunteers?
11. How do you measure project progress and the long-term effects of your volunteer efforts?
12. Please name any examples of how your organization has improved its performance.
13. Do you provide any form of recognition for the work of volunteers?

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