

FOSTERING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

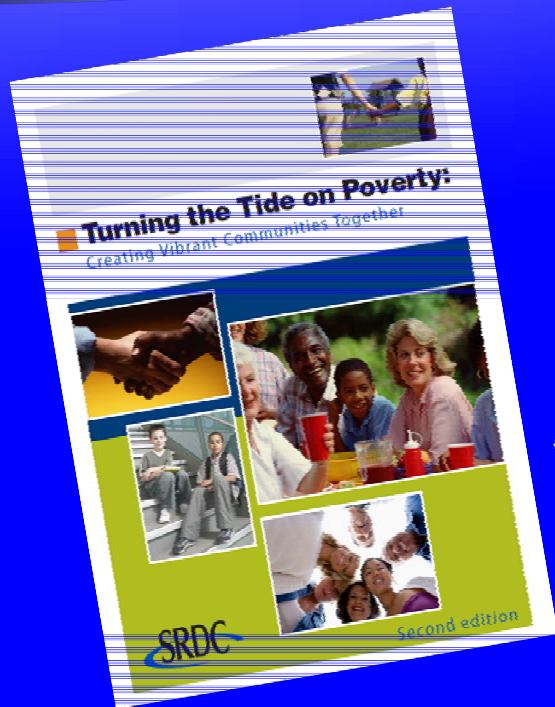
Exploring the Elements of Civic Involvement
and Community Success

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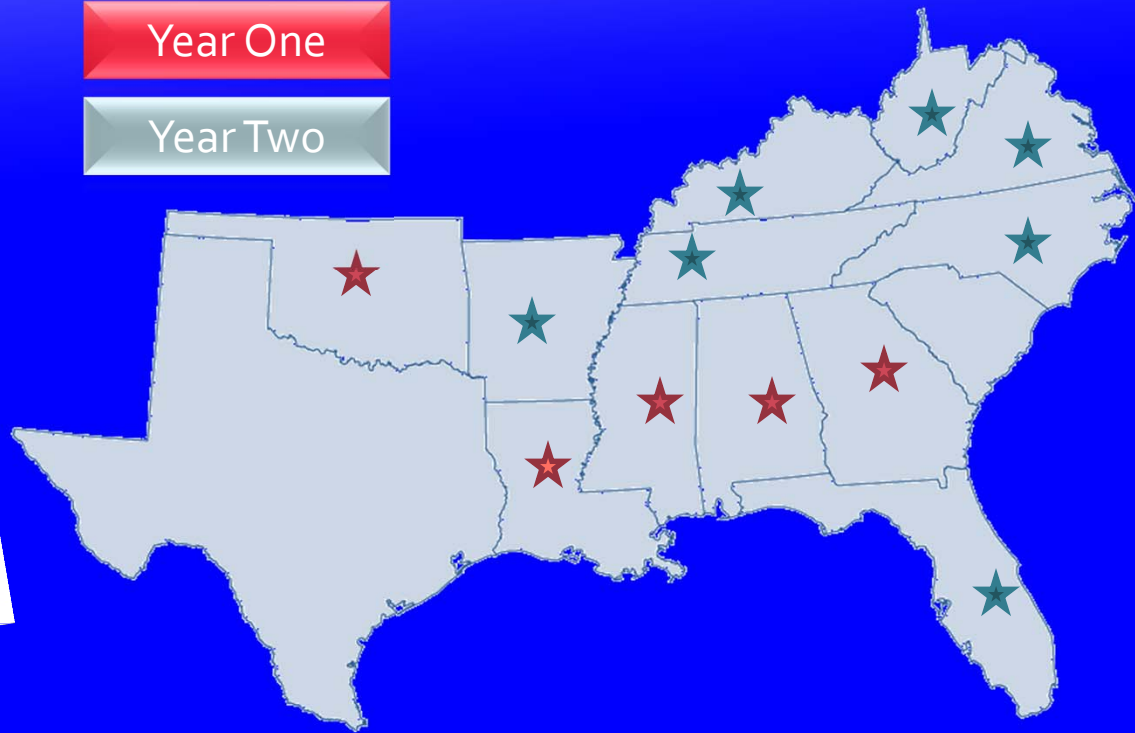


State Teams

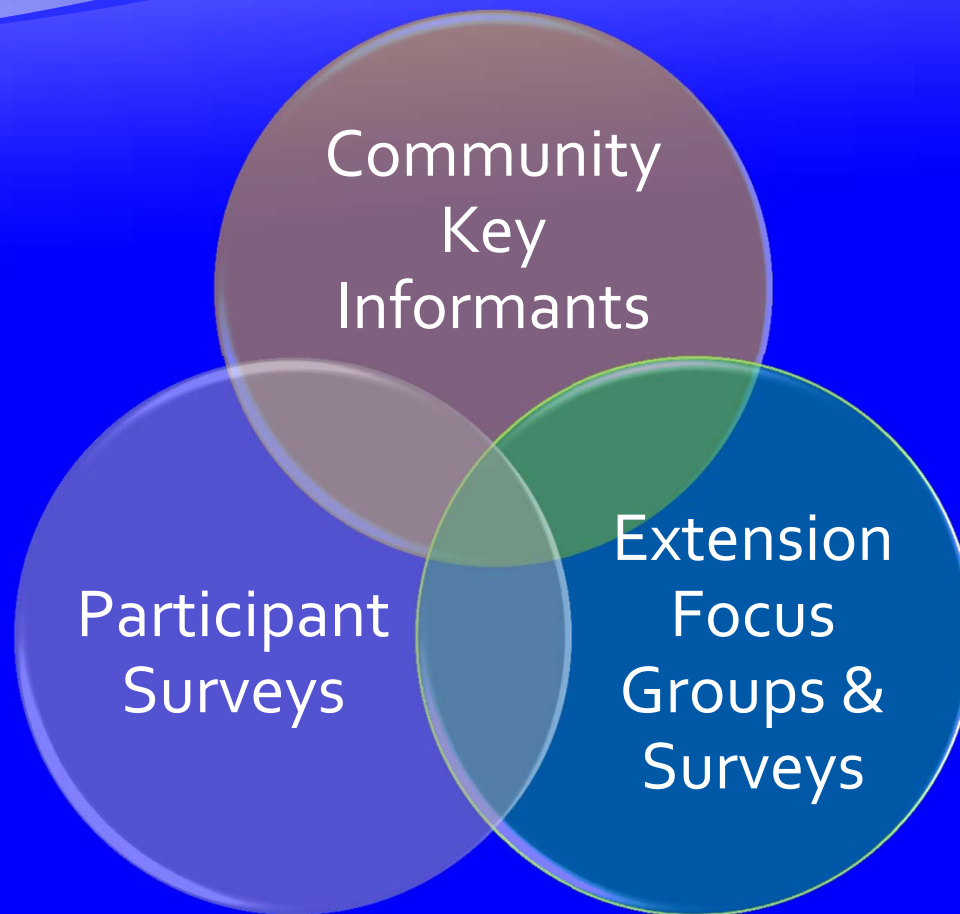


Year One

Year Two



Learning About How Tide Works



Success: Possible Metrics

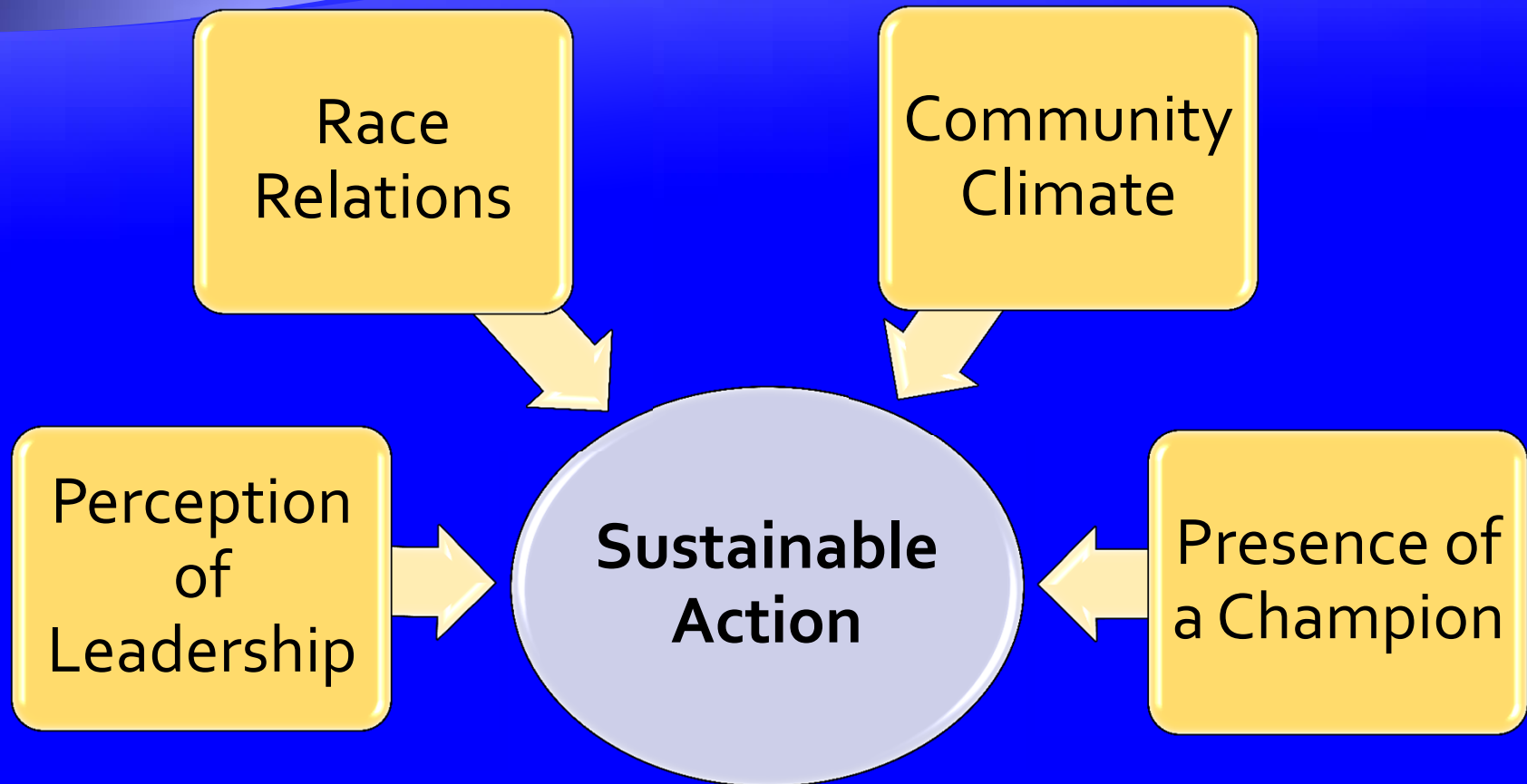
- ◆ **Diversity of participants:**
 - Age, race, income, marital status, length of time in community, education, etc.
- ◆ **Number of participants & community circles**
- ◆ **Number of community projects:**
 - Complete
 - In Process
 - Sustaining



Success through Action

Site	# Projects	# Complete	# In Process	Sustainable
Selmont, Dallas County, AL	5	2	3	High
Uniontown, Perry County, AL	1	1	0	Low
Elbert County, GA	0	0	0	Low
Washington, St. Landry Parish, LA	4	0	4	High
St. Joseph, Tensas Parish, LA	7	7	0	Mid
Lauderdale County, MS	4	3	1	Mid
<i>Collinsville</i>	1	1	0	Low
<i>Meridian</i>	3	2	1	High
Neshoba County, MS	7	7	4	High
<i>Philadelphia</i>	4	4	2+	High
<i>Pearl River</i>	1	1	0	Low
<i>Union</i>	2	2	2	High
Okfuskee County, OK	22	20	2	Mid
<i>Boley</i>	8	8	?	High
<i>Clearview</i>	11	9	2	High
<i>Okemah</i>	0	0	0	Low
<i>Weleetka</i>	3	3	?	Mid

Potential Influences



Perceptions of Leadership

◆ Primary community decision-makers:

- Elected officials
- Top-down style of leadership

◆ Other influential groups:

- Small group of elites
- Churches



Corrupt
Self-Serving
Dysfunctional
Tyrannical

LEADERSHIP CONTINUUM

Progressive
Open
Responsive
Respected

Race Relations

- ♦ Racial issues and tensions surfaced in all communities.
- ♦ Most division is between Caucasians and African Americans; two counties also have Native American reservations.
- ♦ Some feel division is fading with time: younger generation less impacted.



Hostile
Frozen
Us and Them
Polarization

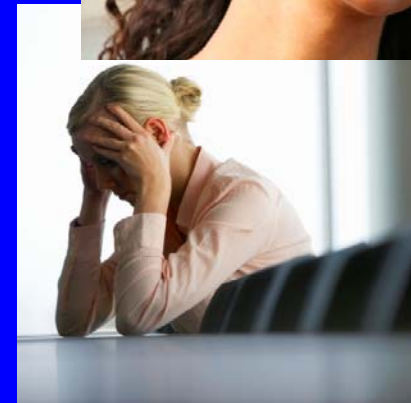
RACE RELATIONS
CONTINUUM

Common Purpose
Improving
Openness
Beginning Unity

Community Climate

All sites had 20%+ poverty rate

- ◆ Consistent concerns for economy
- ◆ Some feelings of hopelessness
- ◆ Some ready to do something positive



Apathy
Hopelessness
Hostility
Lack of Vision
Despair

COMMUNITY CLIMATE
CONTINUUM

Willingness
Optimism
"Can Do" Attitude
Enthusiasm
Commitment

Champion

Presence of someone that:

- ◆ Demonstrated enthusiasm for the process
- ◆ Rallied others to become involved
- ◆ Embraced a particular action idea
- ◆ Extension or community member



Possible Pointers to Success

Site	Sustainable	Perception of Leadership	Race Relations	Community Climate	Extension Champion	Community Champion
Selmont, Dallas County, AL	High	Low	Low	Low	Mid	High
Uniontown, Perry County, AL	Low	Low	Low	Low	Mid	Low
Elbert County, GA	Low				Low	Low
Washington, St. Landry Parish, LA	High	Mid	Mid	Mid	High	High
St. Joseph, Tensas Parish, LA	Mid	Low	Low	Low	Mid	Mid
Lauderdale County, MS	Mid	Low (pre) /High (post)	High	Mid	Mid	Mid
<i>Collinsville</i>	Low					Low
<i>Meridian</i>	High	Low (pre) High (post)				High
Neshoba County, MS	High	High	High	High	High	High
<i>Philadelphia</i>	High	High	High	High	High	High
<i>Pearl River</i>	Low	Low*	Low		Mid	Low
Union	High				High	High
Okfuskee County, OK	Mid	High	Mid	Mid	Mid	Mid
<i>Boley</i>	High	High		High	Mid	High
<i>Clearview</i>	High	High		High	Mid	High
<i>Okemah</i>	Low	High		Low	Mid	Low
<i>Weleetka</i>	Mid	High		Mid	Mid	High

*Very little input

Cooperative Extension Service

- ◆ Civic engagement as outreach
- ◆ New partnerships and opportunities
- ◆ Value of involving citizens
- ◆ Shifts from “expert” to “co-learner”
- ◆ Strengthening CES’ commitment to civic engagement



Civic Engagement as Outreach

"I think this is an honest return to what Extension is all about, when Extension had a larger community development role."

"Most groups we work with are homogenous. These aren't. They are diverse in race, income, all that."

"[Tide] takes us outside of the groups we usually work with. That's a good thing. We have groups we like to work with and call on. This process causes us to connect to others."

**CES
Leadership**

New Partners & Opportunities



Non-Profit/Civic



For Profit Businesses



Schools



Ethnic /Cultural Groups

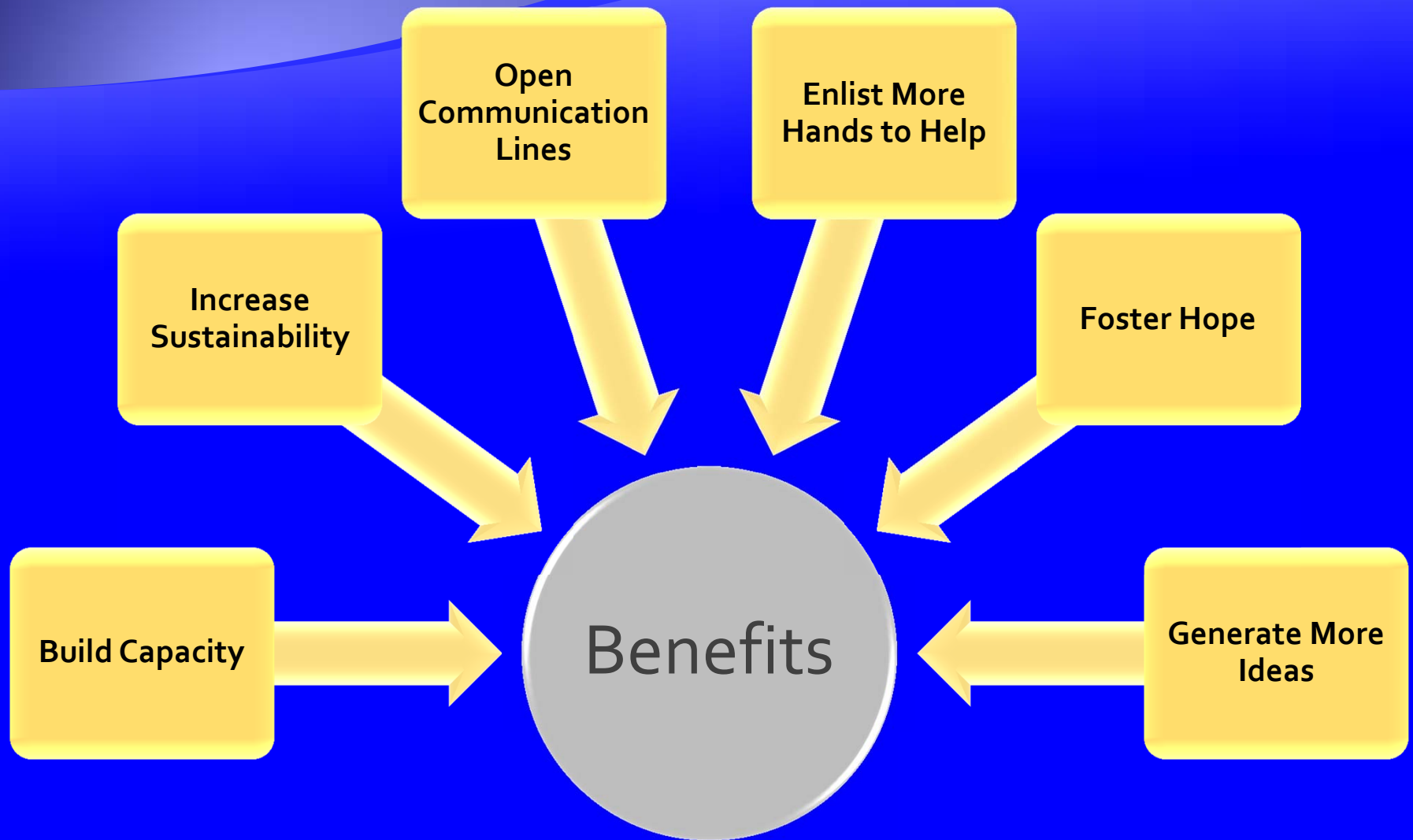


Elected Officials



Faith-based

Value of Involving Citizens



Expert Vs. Co-Learner: Leadership Views

Pre: Roles of CES Agents

- ◆ Education
- ◆ Laying facts on the table
- ◆ Implement programs

"[Agents' role] is education, trying to get people to understand what the facts really are."

"[Agents] have research based information that [citizens] don't have access to."

Post: Roles of CES Agents

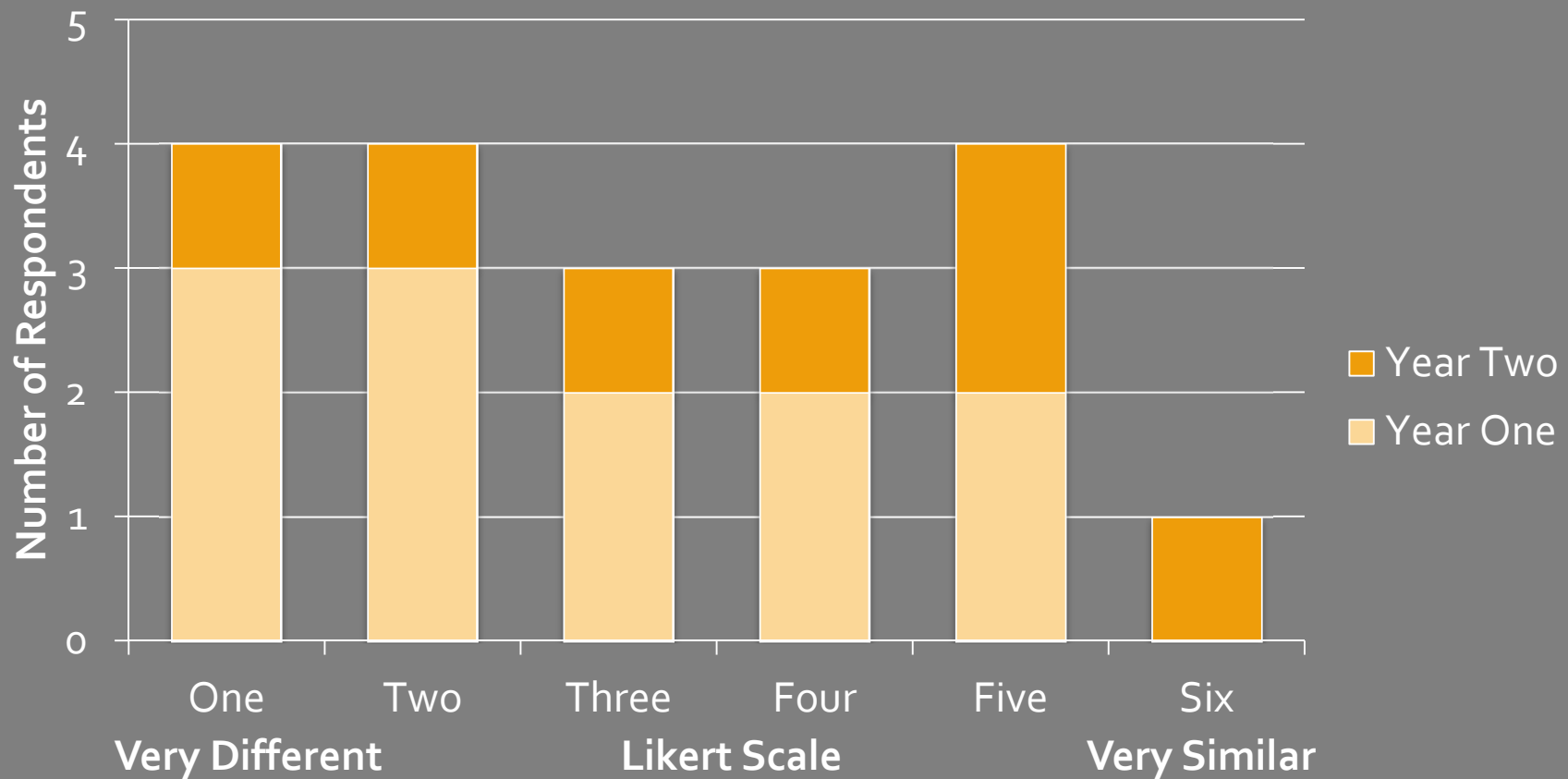
- ◆ Build capacity
- ◆ Group takes ownership
- ◆ Empower community

"My comfort level with this program has certainly increased."

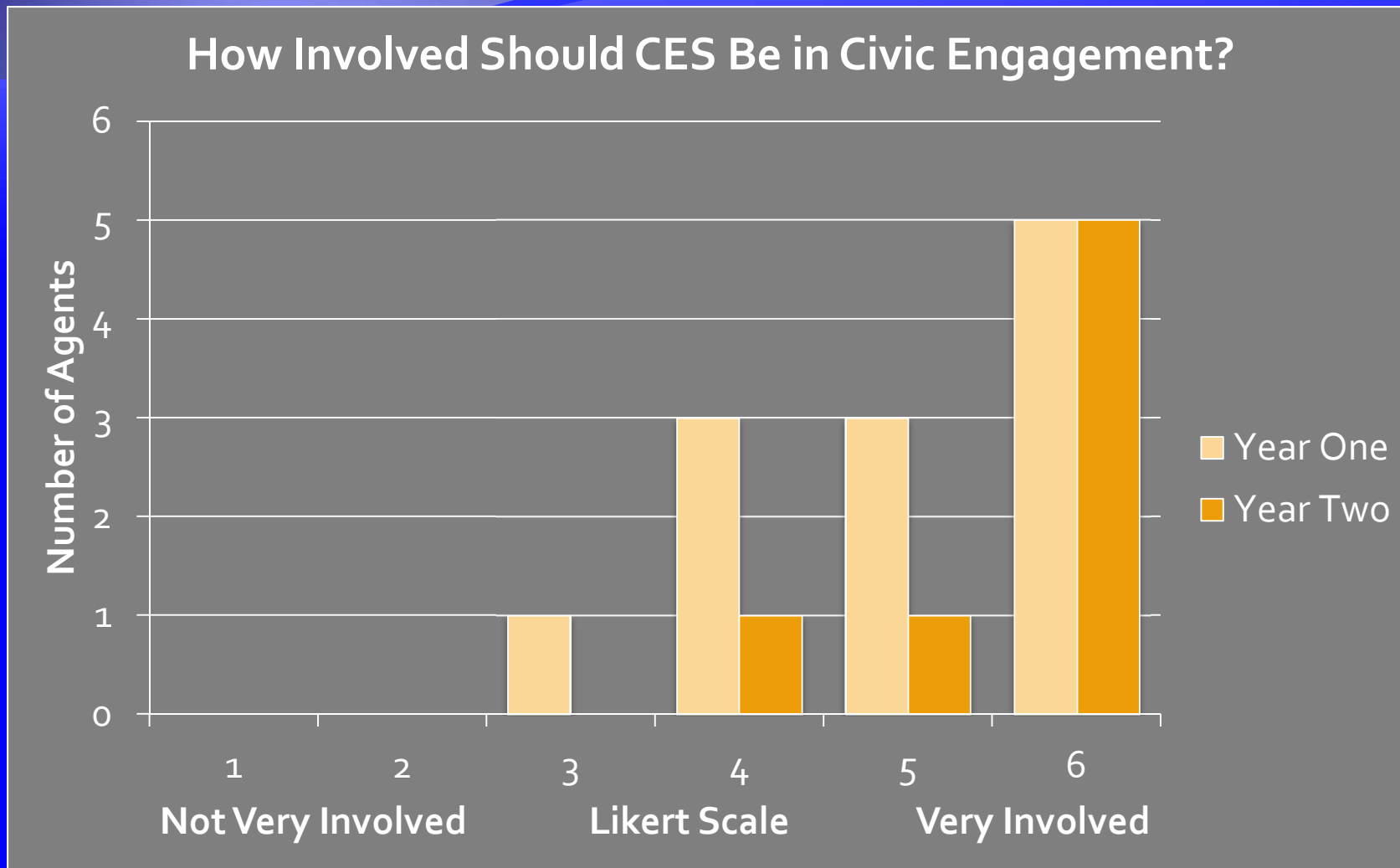
"[Tide] was different because it yielded something in the end. We need to invest time where there is a yield."

Agent Views

How Different or Similar is this Role?
19 Respondents



Agent Views



Conclusions and Recommendations

- ◆ A diverse population is willing to join dialogue
- ◆ The presence of a local champion seems vital
- ◆ Investments in civic engagement translate into increases in:
 - Citizen participation
 - Innovative partnerships
 - New collaborations

**“Solutions must come
from the bottom up by the citizens and
cannot be solved alone
by money or outside forces.
The Tide program is a classic example of
teaching a man to fish and
you feed him for a lifetime.”**

CES Agent

Discussion & Observations

