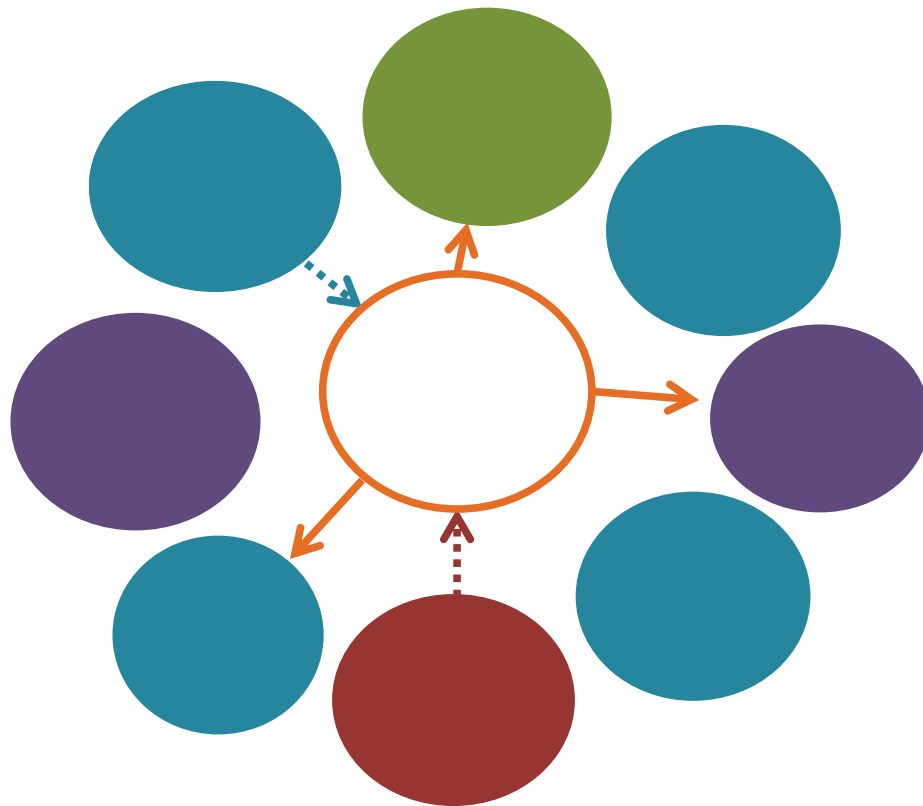


Evaluating Inclusive Excellence in UW-Extension, Cooperative Extension's Educational Programming

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Executive summary

Purpose and use

This evaluation sought to understand the current state of inclusive excellence practice in UW-Extension, Cooperative Extension's educational programming. Applying lessons learned from this study can improve organizational efforts to build on what works well and address barriers that consistently create challenges for expanding access and inclusion across the state.

Evaluation questions

1. In what ways are Cooperative Extension employees implementing programming in an innovative and effective way related to inclusion and what can we learn from this?
2. What are the barriers to inclusive programming and how can they be addressed?

Methodology

A qualitative analysis of a sample of results narratives from Recording Results and Civil Rights reviews from 2014.

Key lessons learned

- There is no "one size fits all" practice or set of practices for addressing barriers to inclusive programming.
 - Each situation is unique and complex and requires a thoughtful analysis that engages diverse voices and perspectives.
- Promising practices for inclusive programming often address multiple barriers simultaneously.
- Addressing certain barriers facilitates multiple, often complementary, promising practices.

Barriers to inclusive programming

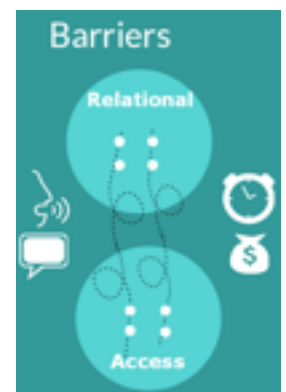
- **Relational:** Lack of trust, lack of knowledge about non-traditional audience or community, not tapping into existing relationships, unclear or miscommunication, unclear boundaries about program leadership, lack of local support
- **Access:** Accommodations for persons with disabilities, physical access, emotional access
- **Language access:** English-dominant programming without language support services (e.g. translation, interpretation, bilingual employees)
- **Resources:** Time and money

Promising practices for inclusive programming

- **Relationship building:** Reflecting values of trust, respect, indigenous knowledge, making connections through existing partnerships, listening to target audience and engaging diverse voices in planning processes
- **Communication:** Appropriate use of media and technology, providing language support services (e.g. translation, interpretation), hiring staff that is fluent in the target language(s)
- **Accommodation:** Physical and emotional access; ADA compliance; universal tools and adaptive technologies
- **Learner-centered and culturally relevant** program design, teaching and curricula Relationships between barriers and promising practices

Like buttons on a shirt

Relational and access barriers, the most common types of barriers in this study, are connected by the common threads of language and resource barriers.



There is a give-and-take relationship between barriers and promising practices. Practices often address multiple barriers, yet they also require certain resources. These resources sometimes become barriers themselves, but in some cases, another practice can be used to fulfill these needs. For instance, the practice of *listening to community members* fosters effective communication between groups, builds trust, and increases knowledge about an intended audience. At the same time, listening requires time on the part of practitioners, a safe and accessible space, and a shared language.

Turning barriers into promising practices

Figure 1 serves as both a visual representation of the relationships between barriers and promising practices and as a tool for practitioners thinking about challenges to inclusive programming and how they may overcome them. In this model, a promising practice is placed in the middle circle and barriers to inclusive programming in the outer circles. Lines with arrows moving from the practice to barriers indicate that the practice addresses those barriers. Lines with arrows pointing towards the practice indicate a need for the barrier to be addressed in order to implement the practice. The full study report

contains more information on the tool, including an example from the data set, and a “Turning Barriers into Promising Practices” tool (figure 7 and Appendix B).

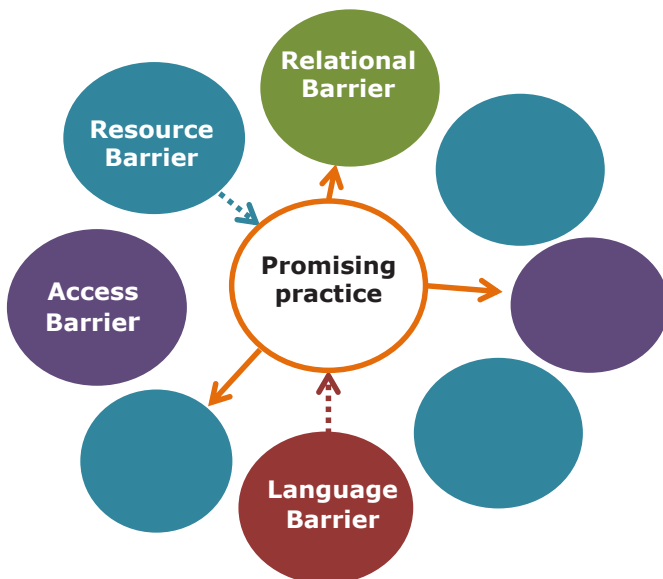
Recommendations¹

Delegate regular time and space, such as the ongoing Program Development and Evaluation (PDE) data jams, staff meetings or meetings with local partners to collectively explore the relationships between barriers and promising practice using the “Turning Barriers into Promising Practices” tool.

- Remind colleagues to enter “access” data into the Recording Results, results narrative format. The SharePoint platform can be used to understand what others are doing to address barriers to inclusion, including particular strategies, tools, or resources that facilitate inclusive programming. This space can also help us measure progress over time.
- Promote organizational learning by encouraging colleagues to document failures as well as successes.
- Implement a study to examine how organizational efforts such as professional development offerings contribute to more inclusive programming.
- Implement a study to assess, from a community perspective, how culturally competent we are in our educational programming efforts.
- Build on practices identified as promising (e.g., contributing to inclusive programming). Explore different ways to do this, which may include capacity building, case studies, and communities of practice.

Identifying barriers and practices to overcome them is something that can happen at various stages of the program development framework. Figure 2 includes sample questions for each stage of programming that examine relationships between existing barriers and practices and facilitate inclusive, culturally responsive programming. A more complete set of questions to consider is included in the full study report.

FIGURE 1. Relationships between barriers and promising practices



¹It is essential that leadership in particular model these recommendations, and expect and support the same of all staff.

Practice inclusive excellence at every stage of programming...

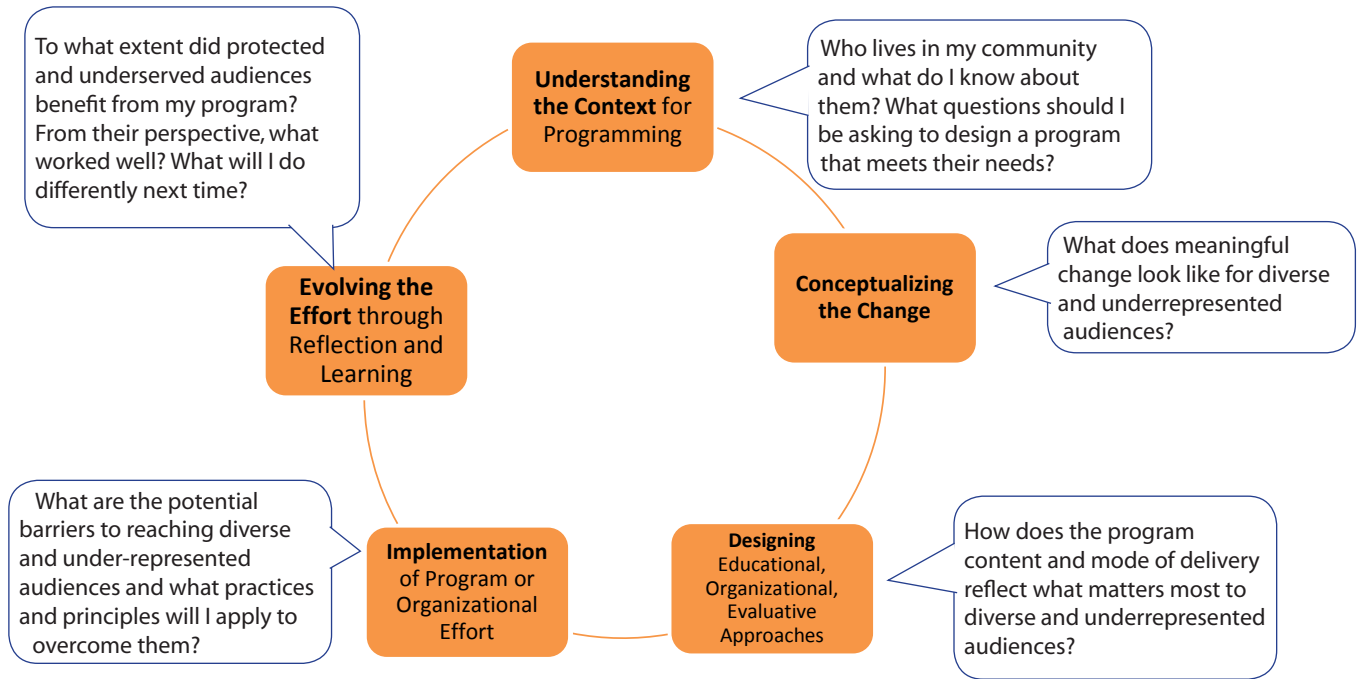


FIGURE 2

Introduction

Leaders at the University of Wisconsin–Extension, Cooperative Extension (CES) expressed interest in understanding the extent to which inclusive excellence is modeled in educational programming. Particular interests included generating lessons learned and recommendations for improving our approach to expanding access and inclusion in community programs. The Program Development and Evaluation (PDE) unit was charged with the task of conducting a study on inclusive excellence as it relates to programming and sharing learning around what seems to be working well, as well as challenges that prevent colleagues from working in inclusive ways. The ability of colleagues to engage diverse, protected, and underserved audiences in educational programming aligns with our organizational vision of “a thriving, well-known and sought-after educational resource that reflects the rich diversity of the state.”

Purpose and use of this evaluation

This evaluation sought to identify and better understand the current state of inclusive excellence practices in Cooperative Extension programming. The study’s main objective was to distinguish inclusive excellence strategies and practices that seem to be working well and to identify areas that would benefit from improvement, with the ultimate goal of expanding access to diverse, protected, and underserved audiences.

Leaders expressed an additional interest in assessing the desires, assets, needs, and interests of community members with regards to inclusive programming which we anticipate exploring in subsequent phases.

Definition of inclusive excellence

In order to operationalize the study, we needed to define inclusive excellence in a way that allowed us to measure the extent to which it occurs in Cooperative Extension programming. To create this definition, the team collected data from program directors and regional directors, asking them how they defined an inclusive and diverse organization. Additionally, the

CES inclusive excellence website, as well as a literature review of other institutional definitions of inclusive excellence, were used as references.

An important finding from the early stages of this study is that there does not seem to be a clear and common understanding or definition of “inclusive excellence.” As the literature on diversity and inclusion suggests, if an organization is going to truly value diversity, they need to begin with a definition of inclusion that all employees can relate to. In a paper by the Association of American Colleges and Universities in 2005, the importance of connecting educational quality and inclusion efforts is highlighted alongside some challenging questions: “What will the next generation of work on inclusion and excellence look like? How will both our thinking and our actions shift? Who will need to be involved? How will we know we are accomplishing our goals?”²

For purposes of this study, we used the resources mentioned above to develop the following definition:

Inclusive excellence is a practice that intentionally welcomes and engages diverse perspectives, experiences, ideas, and skills. It is a pervasive and integrated effort that complements, promotes, and advances Cooperative Extension’s purpose, vision, and values.

In Cooperative Extension this means:

- Expanding access to our educational programs by making special efforts to reach out, reach in, and empower traditionally underrepresented and neglected audiences in order to meet their needs.
- Building the capacity of Extension educators to develop, implement, and evaluate educational programs that create safe learning spaces, are relevant to diverse learners, and are respectful of indigenous knowledge and cultural perspectives.
- Implementing organizational strategies to recognize, appreciate, consider, and address differences in race, ethnicity, gender identification, sexual orientation, English language proficiency, age, ability, and other human differences.

- Valuing the opinions and skills of all employees, and rewarding and celebrating innovative efforts to expand access to our educational programming.

Evaluation questions

? In what ways are we implementing programming in an innovative and effective way related to inclusion, and what can we learn from this?

? What are the barriers to inclusive programming and how have they been addressed?

We began with a focus on learning around “barriers” and “promising practices” related to expanding access and inclusion in educational programming. Additional questions of interest had to do with the application of learning from professional development related to diversity and inclusion, as well as the extent to which communities perceive CES as a culturally competent organization. These questions will likely be explored in future studies.

In preparation for this evaluation, the evaluation team reviewed existing documentation that was put together by the organization’s Inclusive Excellence Action Team (IEAT). This team was formed in 2012 and met for a period of one year to develop a strategy for improving the organization’s inclusive excellence efforts. IEAT developed three logic models that focused on leadership and organizational development, staffing, and programming. Because the focus of this study is on inclusivity as it relates to programming, the evaluation team reviewed the IEAT programming logic model and identified the following intended outcomes as potential areas to pay attention to. The outcomes below relate to the evaluation questions used for this study as they focus on efforts for expanding access, including culturally responsive program models, materials, and partnerships as well as overcoming access barriers. The underlying assumption in this theory of change is that these efforts will lead to increased participation of underserved audiences and ultimately, greater impact on lives and communities representing the rich diversity of our state.

²Williams, D. A., Berger, J. B., McClendon, S. A., 2005. Toward a model of inclusive excellence and change in postsecondary institutions. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

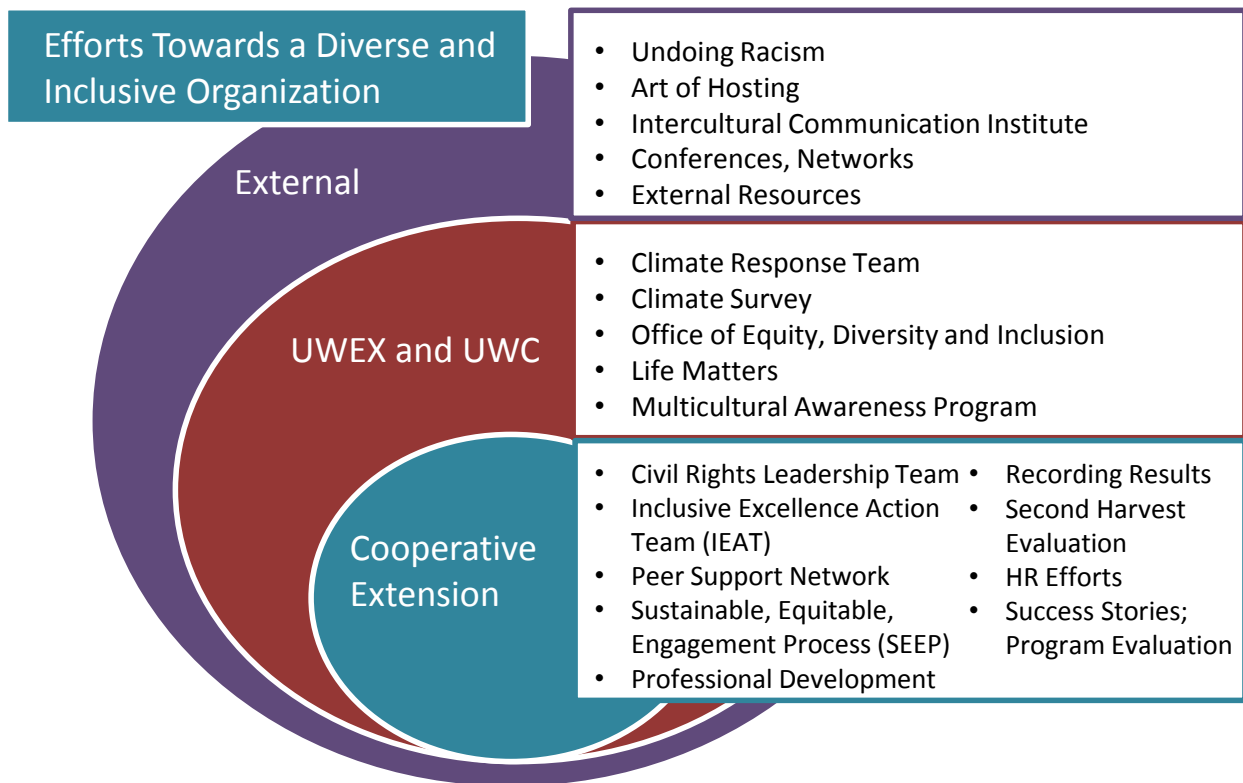
TABLE 1. Short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes from the Inclusive Excellence Action Team programming logic model as they apply to this study.

| Short-term outcomes | Medium-term outcomes | Long-term outcomes |
|---|--|---|
| Ongoing efforts to increase access for underserved audiences | Program materials and instructional technologies are accessible to all | Increase in underserved audiences participating in UWEX programs |
| Alternative program development models are implemented, evaluated and shared | | |
| Increased capacity to create culturally appropriate educational materials | | Positive impacts on the lives of underserved audiences as a result of CES program participation |
| Existing and new partners' increased awareness of Cooperative Extension's commitment to civil rights, diversity, and inclusive excellence | | |

Source: Inclusive Excellence Action Team programming logic model, 2012.

Design and methodology

FIGURE 3. Three levels of previous and current organizational efforts towards inclusive excellence. Mapping out these efforts was a first step in the study design process.³



³After publication, the authors learned of the Translation and Interpretation Advisory Group Report.

The evaluation team started the design process by identifying and mapping out past and existing efforts towards inclusive excellence. Efforts at the level of Cooperative Extension, the UW System, and external networks were considered. Although not a comprehensive list, the multifaceted nature of these efforts was recognized, particularly on the level of Cooperative Extension. Listing out these efforts was a useful practice, allowing the evaluation team an opportunity to consider a number of potential data sources. Additionally, this highlights the collective role of multi-level/multi-organizational efforts towards inclusive excellence, illuminating the difficulty in untangling the contributions of any one group such as UW-Extension, especially when individual efforts have not been evaluated.

Data sources

Due to feasibility and considering time constraints and lack of existing data, the team decided to focus on easily accessible data from one slice in time. Two key data sources used for this study include **Recording Results (RR) Expanding Access data from 2014 and Civil Rights Review (CRR) Reports from 2014**.⁴ The evaluation used qualitative data analysis using MAXQDA software.

Recording results

This study analyzed results narratives and impact statements from UW-Extension colleagues in the new Recording Results system. We looked at Expanding Access data in Recording Results from 2014, the first year data was entered into the new system. We worked under the following assumptions which we acknowledge are also limitations:

- Colleagues are entering all relevant data related to expanding access
- Colleagues' perspective on what works well would be the same perspective of program participants

We began by investigating barriers—challenges that colleagues faced while attempting to actualize effective inclusive programming—and promising practices (e.g., strategies, principles, and processes) that colleagues reported that seemed to facilitate inclusive programming, at least in the particular contexts described.

Data set content

A small subset of data was analyzed in order to create a tentative model and suggestions concerning barriers and promising practices. The sample was purposeful and designed for representation from both rural and urban counties. The sample consisted of 40 entries total, divided into two datasets; one contained 20 entries from counties considered urban ("Urban 20"), and the other contained 20 entries from counties considered rural ("Rural 20"). Urban counties included: Brown, Dane, Kenosha, Milwaukee, Racine, Rock, Washington, and Waukesha. Rural entries were pulled from the remaining counties. Each dataset (Urban 20, Rural 20), was comprised of five entries from each of the four program areas. These entries were randomly pulled from the larger data set. This yielded a total of 20 entries each for the rural and urban data sets. Further details about the sampling technique follows.

To randomly select entries from Recording Results, entries were divided into two subsets (urban and rural) based on the list above. The two new data sets were each exported to Microsoft Excel where entries were sorted by "targeted audiences" in order to select only entries with Expanding Access records. Entries that had no "targeted audiences" listed were omitted from the sample. Using the RAND function, random numbers were generated for each entry. The highest five randomly generated numbers were pulled from each program area to form the data set used for analysis. For a step-by-step breakdown of how to pull a random sample from a MAXQDA data set, see the workflow available on the qualitative data analysis education website at: <http://blogs.ces.uwex.edu/qualitativedataanalysis/guides/>

⁴The evaluation team discussed moving to more in-depth studies that gather data from community members, participants, partners, and colleagues in subsequent phases to triangulate the data and better understand inclusive excellence from diverse perspectives.

Limitations of this method

A limitation realized after the narratives were selected was that there are potential inaccuracies with location of work as entered in Recording Results. In Recording Results Expanding Access, work location is logged as “home office” rather than where the work is actually done. Thus, entries from a state specialist based in Madison will be included in the urban set even if the work was carried out in a rural area. However, the main purpose of this study is not to differentiate between urban and rural areas, nor between state specialists and county educators. Therefore, the sampling method still provided a widespread, non-selective sample which allowed us to answer questions concerning barriers to programming and promising practices to overcome them.

Analysis process

Data analysis was completed with MAXQDA11 and migrated over to MAXQDA12. Beginning with the Urban 20 data set, the authors, with assistance from Christian Schmieder, read through each response to the “barriers” field in the Expanding Access section. The question regarding barriers was phrased “*How did you identify and overcome participant and access barriers?*” Therefore, many of the responses did not highlight specific barriers but described strategies to overcome them. As barriers were identified by the evaluators, codes were created and responses tagged with appropriate codes. Each code was documented with a memo which included a definition, documentation of key conversations we had about it, and relevant (or irrelevant) examples. Some data were assigned codes because they represent the opposite of the barrier (e.g., how the author overcame the barrier). See Appendix A for a full list of codes and definitions.

Codes for promising practices were also created organically after going through several entries. After working through the Urban 20 set, we went back through the initial entries looking for promising practices. Analysis of the Rural 20 set followed the same approach, except that we reviewed entries for barriers and promising

practices in parallel. For both barriers and promising practices, multiple codes could be, and often were, applied to a single entry.

In cases where we were unable to understand the full context of the situation and how the promising practices led to more inclusive programming, we called or e-mailed authors for a fuller description of their efforts and the resulting impacts.

Civil Rights Reports

Civil Rights Reports from 2014 were reviewed for barriers and promising practices. When possible, the county-wide CRR was reviewed. The code system from Recording Results analysis was applied to these reports.

Limitations of study

Data from Recording Results comes from one perspective—the author of the results narrative—which presents a bias. The voice of program participants and partners is missing from this data, as well as community members who have not accessed UWEX programs. At the same time, there is an underlying assumption that Recording Results contains information about all efforts that have taken place. We are fairly certain this is not the case. The organizational policy on Recording Results does not require colleagues to enter all of their efforts. Rather, they are asked to choose the most significant ones based on their own experiences and perspectives. This likely omits information about efforts and impacts that are taking place but not recorded, as well as efforts that were not considered “successful,” but could also be important learning experiences. Learning from failures as well as successes is important in becoming a more diverse and inclusive organization.

An explicit assumption that may or may not be accurate is that what has been identified as an effective practice has resulted in more inclusive programming, and would be perceived as such by program participants. Because we do not have data representing the perspective of other stakeholders, particularly program recipients, we cannot be sure that statements about effectiveness are accurate. We also acknowledge that ‘effectiveness’ can have multiple definitions. The majority of the 40 entries selected for this

study lacked evidence or criteria to support claims of effective practice or programming. At the same time, the current Recording Results system does not link participant data with results narratives. As such, we could not determine the *number or percentage* of protected or underserved audiences that participated in programs where promising practices were applied.

Findings

The sample of 40 narratives was purposefully selected to include representation from each program area, and was split into rural and urban counties. Within each program area, narratives in the data set were randomly selected. Each narrative includes a Targeted Audience field. Figure 4 shows the breakdown of Targeted Audiences for the data set, the highest number of narratives were about programs targeting Marginalized and Vulnerable Populations, a group which includes persons with disabilities, persons with mental illnesses, and youth identified as 'at risk' by teachers or program partners.

Barriers

? What are the barriers to inclusive programming and how can they be addressed?

Four main categories of barriers were identified: relational, access, resources, and access for persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). The most common barrier was relational, with 21 narratives coded under this category, followed closely by access, with 17 narratives. Figure 5 illustrates the relationships between the barrier categories. If relational and access barriers are represented as buttons, then language access and resources are common threads that tie them together. Language is used to form relationships, and is an important component of accessing a program or related information. Resources of time and money were integral to all types of barriers. Similar barriers were identified across urban and rural locations, as well as across program areas.

FIGURE 4. Breakdown of program audiences for the 40 narratives analyzed during this study

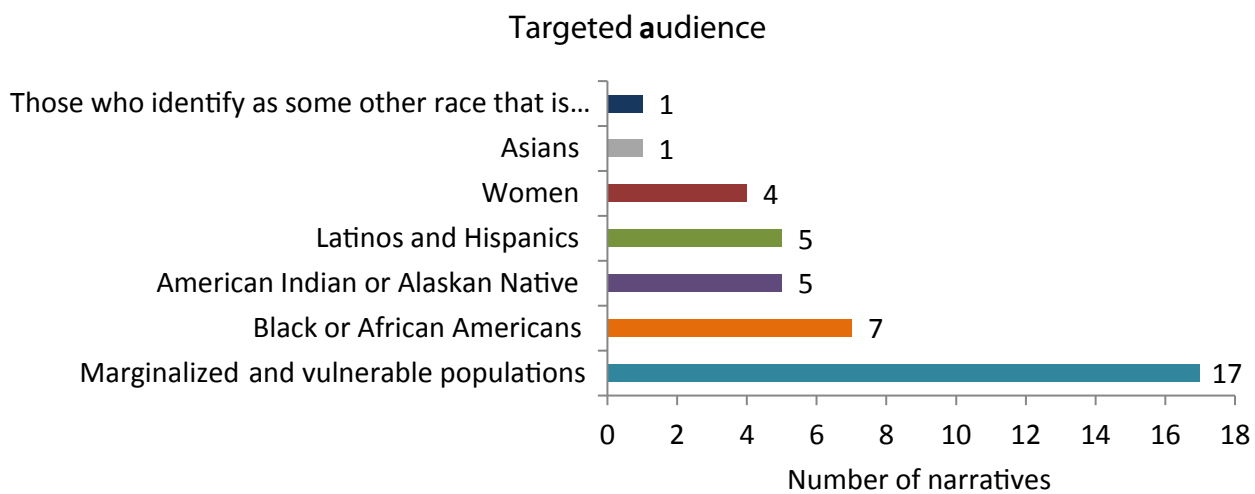


FIGURE 5. The number of Recording Results narratives in each barrier category. The numbers in each category are exclusive of entries coded with multiple sub-codes in one category.

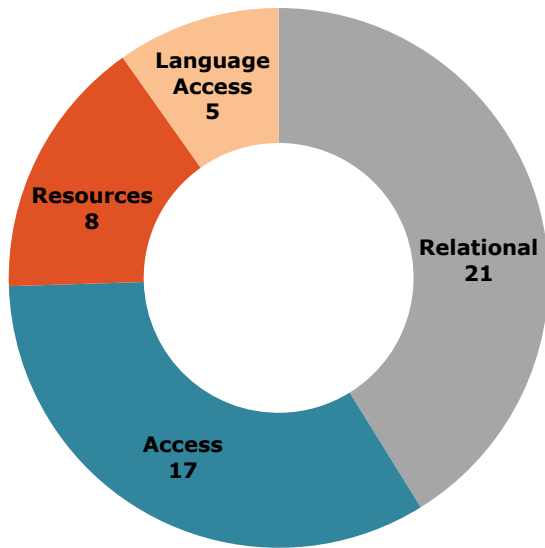
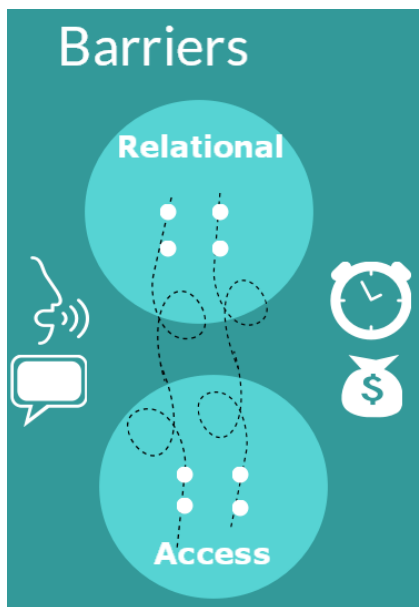


FIGURE 6. If relational and access barriers are thought of as buttons, language and resource barriers are common threads between the two main categories.



The four barrier categories—relational, access, resources, language access—formed from a bottom-up process. Initially, fourteen barrier *type* codes were created and upon reviewing these in more detail, they were grouped into the four barrier *categories*. Multiple codes were often applied to one entry. The most common barrier *category* was relational with 21 narratives (this number is exclusive of entries that were coded with multiple relational barrier codes). The most common barrier *type* was physical access, related to access concerning a person with a physical disability, which was used 11 times.

A review of Civil Rights Reports (CRRs) from 2014 yielded similar findings as the RR analysis. CRRs are written primarily as a scoring rubric. Sometimes barriers were addressed in reviewer notes, other times they were identified in a separate “things to do better” section. Recording Results barriers also found in the review of CRRs include physical access, language, and lack of knowledge about participant community.

Relational

The relational category contained seven, or half, of the barrier codes. Barriers in this category centered on lack of relationships, communications, and shared understandings between program leaders and participants and/or stakeholders. Many responses in this category were coded with multiple barriers, sometimes with multiple relational barriers (e.g., “lack of trust” and “communication”).

Eight responses contained language referring to a lack of knowledge about the intended audience as a barrier. In some of these responses, a colleague indicated they were lacking enough information to carry out a program with an intended audience. In others, the description of challenges pointed towards a need for greater understanding of the intended audience in order to successfully carry out programming. A related sub-code was “not tapping into existing relationships.” These two codes sometimes went hand-in-hand, but not always.

A lack of trust between communities, program participants, and communication (e.g., learning style, mental capacity, attention span, and personality) as barriers were present in seven and six responses respectively. Because unclear

boundaries regarding authority and leadership were present, a category named “who’s in charge?” was applied in two narratives. Also present in two narratives were comments about

participant concerns to partake in programming. Finally, one narrative touched on a lack of local support as a barrier to inclusive programming.

Access

Programming must be carried out in an accessible way; its physical location and its design each matter. Eleven narratives included language regarding physical access as a barrier to inclusive programming. This code centered on programming locations, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance, transportation concerns, and tangible problems with equipment used in programming (universally designed tools). The other code types in the access category, mental state and access to technology, were used in two and one narrative respectfully.

The logistical problems of running a program for adults with cognitive and intellectual disabilities made themselves known. Transportation was a huge problem for individuals independently trying to get to our program sites. We also felt ill prepared to handle medical emergencies, e.g. seizures. Now that we partner with agencies those logistical barriers are no more. The partners provide the transportation and staff for those who have medical issues or need assistance with personal care.

—East-Metro Region

Very short attention spans
Sometimes encountering class distractions, a staff taking out students unannounced, a field trip that left half-way into class that was not made known to instructors, a woman who came to take class photos and let the youth play with the camera even when told this was not an appropriate time. Finally center staff that are to be assisting but are concentrating on their phones, texting, or otherwise distracted and not centered on assisting the youth and their work. Sometimes staff was major distractions for the youth and actually took away from youth learning.

—Southwest Region

We built trust with the African American leaders of the PEOPLE Program, and they have supported our efforts to develop and market the urban food systems curriculum.

—Southwest Region

Demonstration of building alliances with protected audiences to increase outreach capacity by leveraging work with [colleagues].

—CRR North Central Region

Some residents were wheelchair users or used walkers or canes and had some difficulty in the garden. Some had mental health issues that interfered with regular care of garden plots.

—Southwest Region

With this population, it is easier to bring Master Gardener Volunteers to our community partner’s site.

—East-Metro Region

Travel to the UW-Extension Office, hard to find a meeting date.

—Northwest Region

You know to bring the program “to them” be it face to face or technology to best and most efficiently meet the needs of your constituents. “Glass half full” attitude with technology in regards to using it to expand access to programs. We think you can develop a wonderful narrative on the transition to broadband to better serve audiences.

—CRR Northwest Region

Resources

Inadequate funding and time were the most cited barriers in the resources category, followed by inconsistent programming.

Money as a barrier was mentioned in five responses. These sometimes referred to purchasing programming materials or expenses related to running a program. Other times, the reference was more general. Lack of time to build relationships and communicate with partners and participants was expressed in four narratives. It is significant that lack of time as a barrier came up specifically in the context of relationship building, which is in keeping with our finding that relational barriers are the most common category of barriers to inclusive programming, and that barriers are intertwined in fundamental ways.

To overcome resource barriers, YPCL provided scholarships covering up to \$90 of the \$110 conference fee to a majority of conference participants.

—Southwest Region

The cost of professionally printing cookbook; communication barrier with volunteer staff at food pantries

—Northwest Region

Building trust was not too difficult. The language barrier has been more challenging because we can only work with bi-lingual people. Also time constraints and limited resources have been a constraint for all of us.

—Southwest Region

[...]Time and resources to educate food vendors was more intensive than anticipated.

—East-Metro Region

Language

Five narratives mentioned language as a barrier to inclusive programming.

Due to a language barrier with some residents, we connected with a bilingual/bicultural volunteer interested in organizing Latinos in the community to increase civic participation in positions of power. After aligning our efforts and combining resources, we were able to connect with families

—East-Metro Region

Funding and language were the largest barriers. Combined funding streams would allow delivery of more services at the time of referral which would strengthen the program. Language was also a barrier, however, translators for Latino and Somali Mothers were provided whenever possible.

—East-Metro Region

Language is a challenge in reaching and programming with Latinos. This is particularly true of those employed on dairy farms.

—CRR Southwest Region

There was one additional code from the data analysis which was for barriers that Cooperative Extension cannot directly address. Three responses included such items, for example EBT machines malfunctioning at farmers' markets.

In CRRs, there was additional concern over maintaining relationships in the future (e.g., where new relationships with diverse audiences had been built by temporary staff—in one case an Americorps Vista) and concern over some staff members encountering resistance from local partners who pushed back on efforts to engage non-traditional audiences. This seemed to be due to fears that this would take away from existing impacts, often defined by large numbers of people reached versus the extent to which protected and underserved audiences participated.

Promising practices

? In what ways are Cooperative Extension employees implementing programming in an innovative and effective way related to inclusion and what can we learn from this?

While looking for promising practices in both RR and CRRs, we found that there is no “one size fits all” practice or set of practices for expanding access and inclusion. Each entry required an analysis of the situation, and each practice was context specific. What we identified as promising practices were more along the lines of *effective principles* that guide programming and work practices. In coding promising practices, we focused on actions and chose not to include responses where outcomes were listed without indication of how the outcome was achieved.

Promising practices were divided among four categories: relationship building, communication, learner-centered and culturally relevant approaches to programming, and accommodation. The practices within these categories often overlapped (a practice might fall into multiple categories). Likewise, a practice may address multiple barriers. For instance, by listening to community members, educators build trusting relationships with the community and are better able to accommodate community needs from the beginning. This multi-use and complex nature of promising practices is an important component to expanding access and inclusion, one that will be further discussed in the [“Relationships between promising practices and barriers” section](#). The characteristics of promising practices also make it difficult to separate narratives into discrete categories, therefore numerical values were not assigned to each category. During analysis, 16 narratives were flagged as containing promising practices.

Relationship building

Building relationships with targeted communities, community members, and partners came up in several narratives. Relationships were built through the practices of listening, building trust, having patience, and being visible in the community. Making connections through existing partnerships and engaging diverse voices in planning processes also appeared in narratives. These efforts are by nature intentional and usually lay the groundwork for expanding access (e.g., by building relationships with a community organization in a Spanish-speaking area, educators are better able to reach and communicate with that audience).

Making myself available to go WHERE they needed, and WHEN they needed was key. Building some flexibility into the program where I could take the time to get to know them better also provided me with the opportunity to develop more positive relationships with the community.

Patience, patience and more patience. Getting to understand the hierarchy within the community is important and who you can talk to what about.

—Northwest Region

Listened to partners.

—Northwest Region

Building infrastructure with organizations to prepare for future education opportunities.

You understand the need for authentic relationships. Great examples of leveraging partnerships [...]

—CRR Northwest Region

Communication

Communication practices centered on using language(s) spoken within diverse communities, media, and technology. A key component of communication is creating a welcoming environment for targeted audiences.

The program works in the schools which makes it accessible for the youth and is comfortable for the families. Also, almost all the events have a Spanish translator so that the Spanish speaking parents can get all the necessary information. For the upcoming year, we have a Spanish translator volunteer that can be the bridge for the families.

Also, having that connection with the schools helped because the 4-H online enrollment system was not in Spanish for those parents that needed it. So, the schools took on the responsibility of getting these families enrolled.

—East-Metro Region

Funding and language were the largest barriers. Combined funding streams would allow delivery of more services at the time of referral [which] would strengthen the program. Language was also a barrier, however, translators for Latino and Somali Mothers were provided whenever possible.

—East-Metro Region

Intentionally hiring bi or multilingual/bi or multicultural employees builds staff capacity for inclusive programming, and expands access of programming.

In one narrative, communication happened between organizational colleagues as part of the on-boarding process.

Barriers were identified to me when I was hired in 2013. The idea of trust and taking time to build the relationships was communicated to me heavily. I've made myself available and visible by taking personal classes on the reservation, volunteering to help with some activities on the reservation, and connecting with [Extension] on a consistent basis. Learning to take time to build the relationships was the best advice given to me.

—Northwest Region

Learner-centered and culturally relevant

Designing programming for an intended audience puts the learner at the center of the process and helps ensure programming is culturally relevant. Practices, such including diverse voices in the planning process, and holding programming in a new location that is easier for participants to access, are responsive to participant needs and embody inclusive excellence.

By having [at-risk] youth on both of our [named] committees, we were able to engage them in determining the best places to reach youth with the messages. (For example, youth came up with slogans and suggested placing them near clocks since that is where students are always looking.)

—North Central Region

With this population, it is easier to bring Master Gardener Volunteers to our community partner's site.

—East-Metro Region

The garden was designed from the beginning to be mobility access friendly. The cost of rent was low. Many seeds and plants were donated to any who wanted them.

—North Central Region

Spanish language resources brought to restaurants and other targeted areas to increase pre reservation in day camp.

—CRR North Central Region

Appropriate accommodation

Promising practices in the accommodation category work towards inclusive excellence in that they are intentional and welcoming, expand program access, and build capacity. These practices center on providing physical and emotional access (e.g., safe and comfortable) but may also extend to the use of language for including audience members with limited English proficiency. Holding programs in ADA compliant locations, and using universal tools and adaptive technologies.

[...] The meal site needed to be in a place where people would feel comfortable coming [...] (emotional access)

—Southwest Region

Reaching retirees includes access to venues. So we host [program name] in an ADA-compliant auditorium in a building that has an ADA-compliant parking garage attached to it. This means those older people who can drive can do so and park right next to the building hosting the event; they don't have to cross any streets; they can stroll or roll stair-free from their car to their seat.

—Southwest Region

The visiting team was impressed with how these colleagues are assuring that programs must be offered at locations that are accessible and where learners feel comfortable and welcome. Educators go to where they believe learners can most easily congregate.

—CRR Southwest Region

Professional development offerings were not mentioned in the barriers section of RR entries, though we did see it mentioned in narrative sections not included in this study. Here, one RR author whose entry was part of the study, mentioned professional development in a follow-up e-mail with the evaluators:

“...the trainings I've attend specifically about Native Populations or maybe even with the Multi-Cultural Awareness training... there has been a flavor of getting to know people. Allow them to tell their story. Connect with them through the sharing of stories... That type of advice/wisdom sharing has been important to me. As an “outsider” myself (moving to the area three years ago), I've found it instrumental in developing partnerships with agencies I work with in this small town arena. As you know, until someone can connect with people they aren't usually a trusted person. So—I keep working on this!”

—E-mail from RR narrative author

Civil Rights Reviews also mentioned being intentional about engaging all staff in professional development offerings such as Multi Cultural Awareness Training and Expanding Access workshops which were mentioned most frequently. Five out of fourteen (36%) Civil Rights Reviews mentioned the Expanding Access Mapping as an effort to expand access by identifying where protected audiences live in their communities. A number of other professional development offerings were mentioned as well, including Multi-Cultural Awareness, Privilege Walk, Real Colors, Disk Indra, Radical Hospitality, How to Communicate Across Generations, Leadership for Inclusivity, and the “Are We Born Racist?” book club. It was not clear from the documentation in what specific ways learning from those professional development offerings was applied to educational programming efforts. A number of counties did talk about using the expanding access maps to identify and engage with new audiences. CRRs also show that some counties are engaging local partners that have had a history working with particular sub-populations and have bi or multilingual staff in order to reach protected audiences. However, documenting

efforts of *direct* engagement and relationship building with target audiences was often seen as an area for improvement.

Regarding staff capacity building as a component of inclusive excellence, the authors see a relationship between the barrier of resources and relational promising practices. Building relationships, listening, and understanding communities—these all take time, and therefore also money. Relational practices will not always have an immediate or practical payoff, however they are crucial to expanding access and inclusion and staff must feel supported in these types of efforts.

Examples of promising practices that address multiple barriers

Promising practices often address multiple barriers, or can be combined in complementary ways to overcome significant barriers with available resources. When promising practices are used in combination, we consider this to be best practice and the embodiment of inclusive excellence.

EXAMPLE 1: Accessibility, physical and emotional access

The meal site needed to be placed in an accessible place for the audience. The [library] is in a low income neighborhood in [town name]. The meal site needed to be in a place where people would feel comfortable coming. The [library] children's programming is used by many people in the neighborhood.

—Southwest Region

The educator chose the location based on physical and emotional access. We see this as a best practice. This may reflect a cultural responsiveness, and in our opinion it may reflect that the educator is not only considering the deficits (e.g., lack of transportation and physical access), but also the existing assets of the community (an active library used by the target audience).

EXAMPLE 2: Build on prior relationships, physical access, learner-centered, adaption and accommodation

Building partnerships with [hospital] staff and volunteers was integral to enabling certain patients to participate in gardening activities. If a patient was concerned about getting a wound dirty or needed a little encouragement to try gardening, volunteers or hospital staff who already had developed relationships with these patients would help facilitate participation. Additionally, adaptive gardening tools and techniques were present and taught, respectively, to ensure that disabled or patients in wheelchairs could interact with plant material.

—Southwest Region

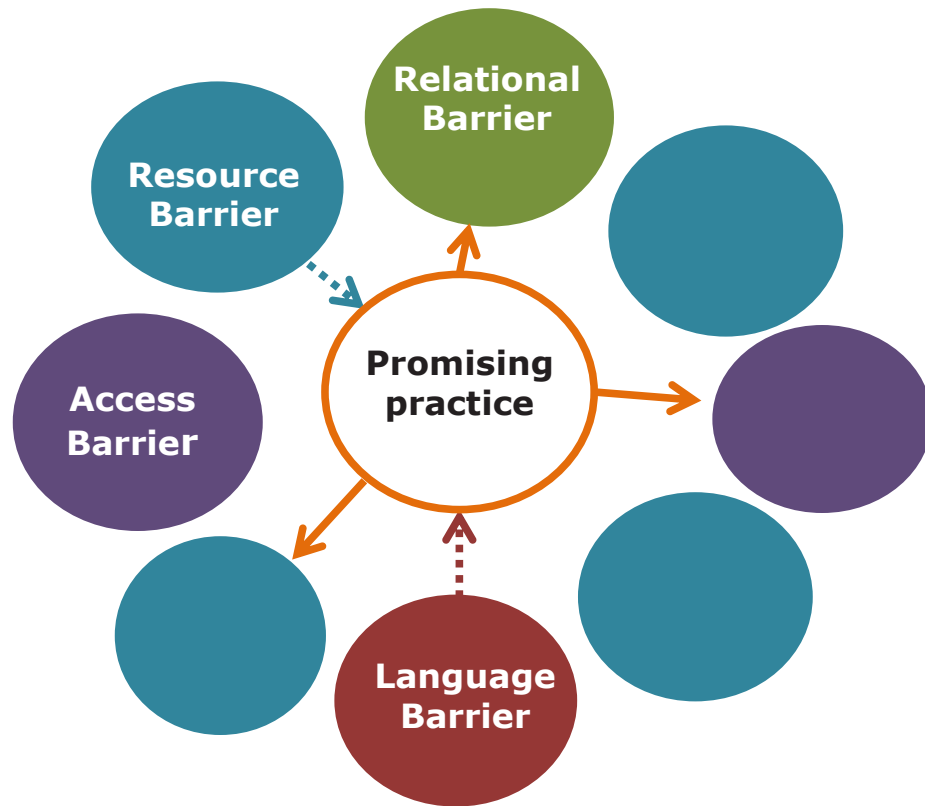
Here, the educator capitalized on established relationships which the intended audience (patients) had with a program collaborator (hospital staff). Through these relationships, emotional access and comfort during the program was assured. Additionally, physical access needs were addressed by using a learner-centered approach and adaptive gardening techniques.

Relationships between promising practices and barriers

Once the analyses of barriers and promising practices were complete, the possible relationships between the two were examined. This task, carried out by the report authors and Christian Schmieder, involved discussions around the similarities and differences between the categories and their linkages. Through this process, a tool (figure 7) was created to help demonstrate relationships between barriers and promising practices. This tool can be used by practitioners thinking about their own challenges and how they may overcome them.

TOOL: Turning barriers into promising practices

FIGURE 7. Turning barriers into promising practices



A diagram like figure 7 can be used to map and demonstrate the connections between promising practices and barriers. Placing a promising practice in the middle circle, and barriers in the outer circles, solid lines with arrows moving from the practice to a barrier indicate that the practice addresses that barrier. Dotted lines with arrows pointing towards the practice mean that the barrier must be removed in order to carry out the practice.

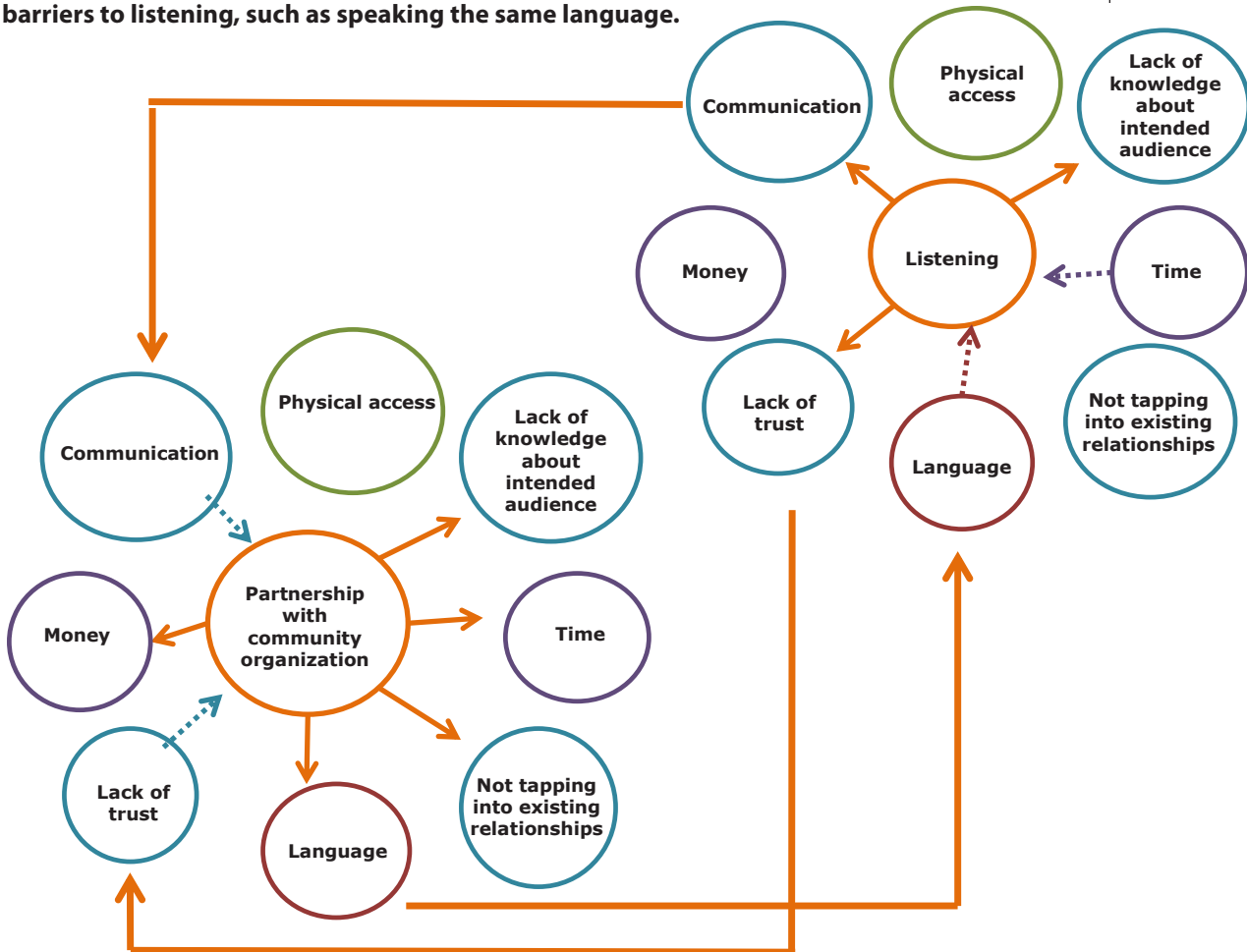
For instance, the practice of listening to community members fosters good communication between parties, builds trust, and increases knowledge about an intended audience. In order to listen to community members, practitioners need time, support from their supervisors, and a shared language.

Promising practices require resources in order to be implemented. Sometimes, one promising practice can meet the resource need of another practice. This creates opportunities for multiple promising practices to be used in combination together in order to address multiple barriers and fulfill resource needs.

The following example (figure 8) illustrates how the tool can be used to examine connections between promising practices and barriers. In this case, a Cooperative Extension educator was interested in engaging members of a Latino community in a strategic planning process for a community development initiative. He lacked Spanish language skills, was unfamiliar with the cultural nuances of the community he sought to engage, was limited by time, and did not have funds to hire a bilingual and bicultural translator and interpreter. He shared his interests and concerns with an existing community partner who informed him that they had recently hired a bilingual and bicultural employee from a Latino community for a different project. The two partners identified ways in which they could share human resources in order to help fill gaps and maximize the effectiveness of multiple efforts.

Described as a mutually beneficial situation, the educator worked with the bilingual employee to listen and learn from Spanish speaking residents. By doing so, he built trust and strengthened communication with the community. This allowed him to develop new relationships and partnerships. Working with local partners to identify ways to maximize resources and work together towards common interests is a promising practice that addresses multiples barriers to inclusive programming. The removal of certain barriers, in turn, facilitates additional promising practices such as deep listening in order to better understand community assets and needs. This understanding can help develop and implement culturally responsive, inclusive programs that contribute to the transformation of diverse lives and communities throughout the state of Wisconsin.

FIGURE 8. In this example, one promising practice (partnering with a community organization) enables another promising practice (listening) by reducing prior barriers to listening, such as speaking the same language.



Faulty assumptions

We identified some potentially faulty assumptions about the data that we want to make explicit:

- **Assumption A:** If an educator is not implementing inclusive programming, it is her or his fault.

Comment: Often the barrier identified was something that the educator could not control. Overcoming many of the listed barriers requires time and space that was not allotted, and sometimes not supported.

- **Assumption B:** The barriers to inclusive programming are the fault of the target audience.

Comment: A few of the entries suggested that the barrier was due to the attitude or learning style of the participants, which affected the pre-designed program that was being presented. Thinking about this resulted in a question about the processes used to develop programs in a culturally responsive way.

Importantly, we coded responses that reflected these assumptions as barriers because we respect and acknowledge the views of the authors. It is something they perceive as a barrier. If a finding is that people in the organization are viewing the barrier as a barrier to their pre-designed program rather than how to design the program to include the targeted/underserved audience, then we have an organizational problem.

Recommendations

- Delegate regular time and space, such as the ongoing PDE data jams, staff meetings, or meetings with local partners to collectively explore the relationships between barriers and promising practice using the “Turning Barriers into Promising Practices” tool.
- Remind colleagues to enter “access” data into the Recording Results, results narrative format. The SharePoint platform can be used to understand what others are doing to address barriers to inclusion, including particular strategies, tools or resources that facilitate inclusive programming. This space can also help us measure progress over time.
- Promote organizational learning by encouraging colleagues to document failures as well as successes.
- Implement further studies to answer the remaining questions of interest:
 - How do organizational efforts such as professional development offerings contribute to more inclusive programming?
 - Assess the extent to which the various efforts identified in figure 3 independently or collectively support or confound Cooperative Extension’s role in inclusive excellence.
- Implement a study to assess from a community perspective, how culturally competent are we in our educational programming efforts.
- Build on practices identified as “promising,” (i.e., contributing to inclusive programming). Explore different ways to do this which may include capacity building, case studies, and communities of practice.
 - Regarding staff capacity building as a component of inclusive excellence, the authors see a relationship between the barrier of resources and relational promising practices. Building relationships, listening, understanding communities—these all take time, and therefore money. Relational practices will not always have an immediate or practical payoff, however they are crucial

to expanding access and inclusion, and staff must feel supported in these types of efforts.

Conclusions

This study sought to understand the barriers to inclusive educational programming and how Cooperative Extension employees are overcoming them in innovative and effective ways. Four categories of barriers and four corresponding categories of promising practices for more inclusive programming were identified. Barriers and promising practices were similar across programming areas and locations. Overall, this study has three main findings:

- There is no “one size fits all” practice for addressing barriers to inclusive programming.
- Promising practices for inclusive programming often address multiple barriers simultaneously.
- Addressing certain barriers facilitates multiple, often complementary, promising practices.

Dissemination of results

Initial findings from this study were presented at the Cooperative Extension all-state conference on November 12, 2015 from 1:30–3:00 p.m. Subsequently, the full inclusive excellence report, executive summary, and accompanying infographics were made available to all colleagues through the UW-Extension Program Development and Evaluation and Civil Rights Leadership Team websites.

Findings were also presented at the Dean’s WisLine on March 7, 2016. The audio recording is available in archive.

- Capacity building on using the tool to explore relationships between barriers and promising practices will be integrated into Recording Results workshops for UW-Extension colleagues.
- Data Jams run by the Program Development and Evaluation unit provide opportunities for colleagues to analyze Access data from Recording Results. Colleagues have the option to attend these sessions face-to-face or remotely through Google+.

- All colleagues are encouraged to share findings from this study with others, including staff, county boards, and local partnering organizations.
- PDE will continue to look for “spaces” such as conferences, all staff meetings, and professional development offerings to explore relationships between barriers and promising practices and brainstorm ideas for improving inclusive excellence across Cooperative Extension’s educational programs.

Where do we go from here?

We encourage colleagues, especially those in decision-making positions, to think about the following:

- How can we support colleagues to build robust relationships with nontraditional audiences?
- How can we facilitate connections between UW-Extension and protected and underserved audiences?
- To what extent do CES leaders (i.e., those in positions of power) have relationships with nontraditional partners that represent protected and underserved audiences?
- How do we or could we encourage and reward colleagues who take the risk of doing business in a new, more inclusive way?
- Is expanding access a priority...
 - In the community in which I work?
 - In Cooperative Extension?
 - To me, personally?
- What resonates with you most about the findings of this study?
- What other barriers or practices have not been highlighted in this study? How will you document and share what you know?

Appendix A

Barrier and promising practice codes with definitions

| Barrier code | Definition |
|--|---|
| Lack of knowledge about non-traditional audience/community | Includes feeling unprepared for community-specific events that may occur, and unprepared to work with a community |
| Not tapping into existing relationships | Tapping/not tapping into relationships with other people, or tapping/not tapping into existing community relationships with spaces/ places |
| Lack of trust | Building trust in communities, with program participants |
| Communication | Situations where lack of communication, miscommunication, or misalignment of communicated (or non-communicated) expectations are viewed as a barrier |
| Who's in charge? | Expresses issues with authority or power; too many cooks in the kitchen; unclear boundaries about who has authority and leadership; misalignment of power (more than one person can have power, but everybody needs to be on the same page) |
| Participant concerns | Concerns to participate in program by people we reach out to; fear to participate |
| Lack of local support, relationships, expectations | Misalignment between the educator goals and the program staff, or participants, or expectations |
| Physical access | Includes locations of programming (ADA compliance), transportation, physical/tangible problem with a machine or tool |
| Mental state | Participants unable to complete programming due to mental state, which may include references to mental health or the attention spans of audience members |
| Access to technology | Lack of access to technology (does not include deliberate non-use of technology, for example in the Amish community) |
| Money | Lack of money is barrier |
| Time | Resource of time is a barrier |
| Inconsistent programming | Not holding programs on a regular basis; inconsistent engagement |
| Language | Not speaking the same language, translation of documents |

| Promising practice code | Definition |
|---|--|
| Accessible | Programming is in a safe location, an ADA compliant location, or uses adaptive tools or technology to expand access |
| Leveraging community members/ partnerships | Partnering with community members or organizations who are able to build capacity and reach a specific audience through language |
| Translators | Hiring translators |
| Capacity building | Hiring staff who increase capacity for inclusive programming by bringing with them skills or relationships previously not part of the program team |
| Leveraging partnerships | Capitalizing on an existing relationship to reach an audience |
| Building trust | |
| Listening | Actively listening to what members of a community say |
| Understanding communities | |
| Representation during planning process | Including certain individuals/community members in planning processes |
| Emotional access | Programming in a location or way that is emotionally safe and accessible |

Appendix B

Turning barriers into promising practices worksheet

Guidelines for using this tool:

1. Write a promising practice you use or want to try in the middle circle.
2. Fill in barriers specific to your program in the empty outer ring circles.
3. Draw **solid lines** from the middle circle to outer circles to indicate which barriers the practice addresses.
4. Draw **dotted lines** from the outer circles to the middle circle to indicate barriers that need to be addressed to facilitate the practice.
5. Think about how you can address multiple barriers with particular practices. At the same time, notice how you can facilitate other inclusive practices by addressing certain barriers. By examining these relationships regularly, you can be strategic in the design and implementation of inclusive and culturally responsive programs, resulting in positive outcomes for more diverse and underrepresented audiences.

