

Impact Tracking System Case Study: The Experience of Four Bands Community Fund

We will now build on the concepts and definitions that were shared earlier, to focus on where and how data is collected to measure and document outcomes and indicators. First, we will take a look at one CDFI's efforts to develop an integrated evaluation program to improve program performance and outcomes. You will then have an opportunity to map your own impact tracking system, and identify the best points to collect baseline and impact data to measure and document indicators and outcomes.

In 2011, Four Bands Community Fund, a Native CDFI serving the Cheyenne River Reservation in north-central South Dakota, began a two-year process to develop an integrated evaluation program to improve their program performance and outcomes. Their objective was to:

Design mission-driven indicators and systems to monitor, evaluate, and improve program performance and outcomes.

In working to design these indicators and systems, Four Bands focused on three key phases:

Phase One: Name and Define Success and System Requirements

Phase Two: Redesign and Align Systems

Phase Three: Use and Improve Systems

Four Bands selected the following four outcomes to follow and measure over time:

1. *Create and retain jobs* with livable wage-level employment income for themselves and others through business ownership and higher education;
2. Improve personal and household *financial capabilities, security, and assets* by
 - a. Establishing, repairing, and building *credit scores* to access financial to invest and build assets;
 - b. *Improving sense of well-being* (quality of life –access to food, housing, health care, education, transportation, sense of well-being);
 - c. *Increasing savings*;
 - d. *Starting or expanding a business* (products/services, revenue, profit, net worth)
3. Model and inspire financial and entrepreneurial wisdom for others in their practices and attitudes; and
4. Contribute to and build community networks and leadership.

As they progressed through the process, Four Bands refined the categories of clients and potential clients they serve, linking categories to the degree of contact and participation with their organization. Four Bands ultimately determined that impact data would only be gathered on clients, thus focusing their data collection efforts on a defined group:

