

Performance Results for 2020-21 Community Futures Lloydminster & Region

Community Futures (CF) is a program that supports community economic development and builds the capacity of communities to realize their full sustainable potential. The purpose of the CF Program is to help communities develop and implement *local solutions to local problems*.

Community Futures Performance Results	2020-21
<i>Strong rural community strategic planning and implementation</i>	
1. Total number of community-based projects (new & on-going)	58
2. Total number of local and regionally-based community strategic plans developed and/or updated	3
<i>Rural access to business development services</i>	
3. Total number of business training session participants	882
4. Total number of business advisory services	353
<i>Rural access to capital and leveraged capital</i>	
5. Dollar value of loans	\$3,436,689
6. Total number of loans	122
7. Number of jobs created/maintained/expanded through lending ¹	179.5
Provide additional information (e.g. Success stories, Links to priorities, leveraging work, communication events, etc)	
<p>The focus for project delivery this past year was on Relief initiatives to help our communities through this challenging year. We took a lead role on projects such as Re-Opening Forums and resource development, Economic Recovery Task Force, Think Local campaigns in support of two of our larger communities, and the development of online marketplaces to allow businesses to pivot to an online platform. Project Gazelle, our Women’s Entrepreneurship Strategy project, continued to see great growth and success. Our key measurement indicators are all ahead of timeline estimates. Additional COVID relief programming funding allowed us to provide enhanced services in the form of mental health resources and supports, human resource management supports, business modelling strategies, and an online marketplace platform for our women entrepreneurs.</p> <p>Our ongoing Women Entrepreneurship Strategy - Project Gazelle continues to make great impact. This initiative accelerates the growth of women entrepreneurs in our rural and remote region – a key GOC/WD priority. Geographically this project encompasses NW Saskatchewan and across Alberta and involves 15 partnering Community Futures offices plus numerous community partners. The goal is to introduce 4500 women to the concept of entrepreneurship and have 1500 start down the path towards owning their own businesses. Specific project activities include developing 6 new and/or enhancing existing business incubators with female entrepreneur-specific programming; implementing a comprehensive coaching, training, and mentorship program; and to promote entrepreneurship to women. To date we have reached over 2,751 women, have started 1,166 clients down the path to entrepreneurship through intakes, assessments, training, mentoring or coaching, and have 5 incubators in place to provide services and supports to our business communities. This past year, we introduced additional COVID related supports for mental health, human resource management, business planning, and online marketplace access.</p>	

¹ Estimated at the time of lending

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Our partnership with Community Futures St. Paul, Lac La Biche, and Lakeland and the CDEA created the amazing Alberta iMarket – an online marketplace to allow our rural small businesses the opportunity to pivot at least a portion of their sales to an online platform. While we are keeping costs extremely low, the key advantage to our project is in the Shop, Sell, Support Local philosophy guiding our project. Our vendors and our buyers are all buying into the local movement. With the added bonus of local support staff to work one-on-one with these small businesses, the platform is gaining great momentum. We see its' potential to grow to be the most valuable marketplace supporting rural businesses in the province and we hope that next year we will be able to report even more growth and success.