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SRDI trains Minnesota Collaborative in Philanthropy

Raleigh, NC – The Southern Rural Development Initiative, SRDI, conducted philanthropy training in February 2007 for a nine county region in southern Minnesota.

The Region Nine Development Commission (RNDC) contracted with SRDI to provide comprehensive data and training on the philanthropic assets in the area using SRDI's Philanthropy Index process. The Philanthropy Index data report provided documented information about individual and business assets as well as positive dynamics in the nine county area that are seldom reported. The compiled census, federal income tax, and civic sector data illuminated strategies for creating permanent charitable assets, while the convening process walked the RNDC through an action planning process, resulting in tangible next steps. The RNDC plans to launch a new community foundation in the next year.

The six hour training was held over two days, despite the emergence of the area's worst winter weather of the season. SRDI facilitators Alan McGregor and Calvin Allen worked with the group to understand how philanthropy can be used to stimulate community development, increase inclusiveness in the area, and lead the community toward a united vision.

Participant evaluations indicated that RNDC felt

- *they were better able to increase their grantmaking initiatives to create greater equity in their community (3.0 out of 4.0)*
- *they were better able to use philanthropy to lead their community's development (3.5 out of 4.0)*
- *they were better able to make their philanthropy more inclusive (3.38 out of 4.0)*

The Southern Rural Development Initiative, started in 1993, considers itself to be the “hardware store” for rural community leadership working to build just and sustainable rural communities. Over the past year, the agency implemented policy initiatives in two communities in South Carolina and one in Louisiana; facilitated the conversion of a youth prison into a community learning center in Tallulah, LA; and implemented the Philanthropy Index process in twelve communities.

The agency works across the twelve states of the rural South with offices in Raleigh and Asheville, NC.

local philanthropy + flows of funding + economic options = the R U R A L F U T U R E