

## Performance Results for 2019-20 Community Futures Lesser Slave Lake 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*.

<b>Community Futures Performance Results</b>	<b>Results as of 2019-20</b>
<b><i>Strong rural community strategic planning and implementation</i></b>	
1. Total number of community-based projects (new & on-going)	<b>18</b>
2. Total number of local and regionally-based community strategic plans developed and/or updated	<b>1</b>
<b><i>Rural access to business development services</i></b>	
3. Total number of business training session participants	<b>873</b>
4. Total number of business advisory services	<b>250</b>
<b><i>Rural access to capital and leveraged capital</i></b>	
5. Dollar value of loans	<b>\$619,512</b>
6. Total number of loans	<b>9</b>
7. Number of jobs created/maintained/expanded through lending <sup>1</sup>	<b>79</b>
Provide additional Information (e.g. Success stories, Links to priorities, leveraging work, communication events, etc...)	
<p>This year, CFLSLR has gone through a lot, and yet still had one of its best years in a long time. Shortly after moving to a new office space and in the beginning of our 2019-2020 year, the Slave Lake region faced major fires throughout the region, causing havoc in our communities, closures of businesses/schools, and an end to all outside CF programing. Shortly after, one of our key employees had to go on short term disability leave while another went on maternity leave. As these were both simultaneous and at a time when there were major labour shortages, finding replacements took months. The oil industry in the Slave Lake Region has shuddered to a halt leaving many jobless and the housing market saturated. And finally, to finish off this fiscal year, COVID-19 decided to join the party and wreak further havoc on our precarious economy and citizens.</p> <p>That being said...</p> <p>This year has been one CFLSLR's best years in a long while. In the face of adversity, businesses and Community Futures alike must adapt to stay strong, and this year we truly did. The fires allowed the CFLSLR staff to test out a new remote working system we had just put in place. This kept us in contact with our clients and even allowed us to work more closely with them at times (as we could bring our office with us to locations). The set-up of remote offices</p>	

<sup>1</sup> Estimated at the time of lending

not only helped us through the time of fires in our region (when our office shut down) but is currently allowing CFLSLR to run at nearly full capacity during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our model is now setting a precedence for future operations as it is allowing for our office to be more flexible and accessible to our communities.

Having temporarily lost two important full-time staff members (of a staff of 3 full time and 1 part time) our CF had to think of ingenuitive ways to keep on top of our goals and objectives. One of these was hiring contractors to focus on specific goals our CF had made. We hired a programs coordinator whose main focus was to work on our youth programs which yielded us more than 550 participants in 30+ sessions. We also contracted a business analyst who was not only able to train our other staff into a business analyst role but the two of them worked hard to beat our loan value goals and our number of loans MPS. When working with a shortage of staff, it forced CFLSLR to really focus on what was important to our community and our purpose.

When we got back to full staff were really able to create value in our community through a few additional great projects:

#### Business Visitation Project

This project helped us reach out to over 100 businesses through 1-2 hour interviews with each of them. The purpose was to find out their business needs pertaining to finance, training, support, and what barriers they faced. This program helped CF tell businesses about the programs that already existed to help them as well as get ideas to address the needs that weren't being met. We did this project in partnership with the Slave Lake and District Chamber of Commerce, Alberta Labour and Immigration, and the Town of Slave Lake. The information was then shared at another event to all important stakeholders.

#### Business Week

In partnership with the Slave Lake and District Chamber of Commerce, CFLSLR put on Business Week for the businesses within the Slave Lake Region. We hosted a 'Reading Financial Statements' class that received rave reviews and had business owners grateful they came.

#### Leadercast Women

For the second year in a row, CFLSLR hosted a successful Leadercast Women conference. Leadercast Women is a women focussed leadership training conference with broadcasted events throughout the day. In addition to this we host the Women in Business showcase, a mini trade show for women in business to network, collaborate, and market themselves.

#### Thriving in Business

In partnership with the Town of Slave Lake, Alberta Labour and Immigration, the Slave Lake and District Chamber of Commerce, CFLSLR was able to secure a LMP grant to begin addressing the economic and labour issues within the Slave Lake Region. The first event included reviewing the results from surveys of the Business Visitation Program followed by a guest speaker Ken Cotes, expert on rural economic development. Another three events are planned for the next fiscal year to address labour retention, customer service, marketing, and innovation.

Yes it was a tough year, but we worked hard to make a difference in our community, and we believe we did it