

## Performance Results for 2024-25 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*.

Community Futures Performance Results		2024-25
<b><i>Strong rural community strategic planning and implementation</i></b>		
1. Total number of community-based projects (new & on-going)		<b>40</b>
2. Total number of local and regionally-based community strategic plans developed and/or updated		<b>11</b>
<b><i>Rural access to business development services</i></b>		
3. Total number of business training session participants		<b>510</b>
4. Total number of business advisory services		<b>778</b>
<b><i>Rural access to capital and leveraged capital</i></b>		
5. Dollar value of loans		<b>\$420,000.00</b>
6. Total number of loans		<b>7</b>
7. Number of jobs created/maintained/expanded through lending <sup>1</sup>		<b>10</b>
Provide additional Information (e.g. Success stories, Links to priorities, leveraging work, communication events, etc.)		
<p>The 2024–2025 fiscal year has been both one of the most challenging and rewarding years for Community Futures Lesser Slave Lake Region (CFLSLR). While the lending environment across the Slave Lake Region presented ongoing difficulties due to a lack of demand and a shifting economic landscape, CFLSLR made substantial strides in addressing these issues through reflection, strategic change, and community-driven programming.</p> <p>The organization faced notable challenges in meeting the MPS for lending. Internal and external reviews revealed that CFLSLR's lending processes were cumbersome, difficult to navigate, and not easily understood by clients—especially considering regional differences in education levels compared to other rural or urban areas. As a response, CFLSLR initiated a comprehensive overhaul of its internal systems. Lending products, communications, and client processes are currently being redesigned to be more inclusive, accessible, and streamlined—ensuring future alignment with client needs and market conditions. Early indicators suggest an improvement in lending demand as of January 2025, reinforcing the timeliness of these internal adjustments.</p> <p>In contrast to the lending challenges, CFLSLR had a highly productive year in terms of community economic development. The team successfully secured federal and provincial funding to launch five impactful new programs:</p>		

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

LIFT (Learning Indigenous Financial Teachings) introduced financial literacy and business education tailored for Indigenous and Métis women and LGBTQ2IAS+ individuals.

YESS/YOU supported marginalized youth under 30 through workplace entry programs and employer incentives for training and retention.

OMNI championed diversity, equity, and inclusion through community training, the launch of a multicultural society, and support for cultural events.

POP (Possibilities and Opportunities Project) provided vital training opportunities for both existing business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs.

RGT (Regional Growth Team) offered economic development services across nine communities, supporting 10 unique initiatives and the creation of 11 strategic plans.

In addition to new programming, CFLSLR undertook a critical self-assessment of organizational effectiveness. The outcome has led to a commitment to deep internal reform. Major initiatives now underway include rewriting lending and office procedures, digitizing all files, consolidating operational software into a single system, developing new strategic partnerships, and creating a comprehensive marketing strategy. These initiatives aim not only to improve internal efficiency and client service but also to position CFLSLR as a model of innovation among Community Futures offices.

In summary, despite a complex lending climate, CFLSLR has strengthened its role as a key economic development leader in the region through bold programming, introspective governance, and a future-focused vision for growth and impact.