



Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) completes 2020 Strategic Plan.

Fifteen Extension directors and specialists representing the National Extension Disaster Network (EDEN) assembled in Indianapolis to design their 2020 strategic plan.

Present at the meeting were:

Mike Yoder, Associate Director and State program Leader, North Carolina State University Extension; Beverly Samuels, National Program Leader, USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture; Jane Schuchardt, Executive Director, Extension Committee on Organizations and Policy; Scott Cotton, University of Wyoming; Abby Hostetler, Purdue University; Fred Schlutt, Director, UAF Cooperative Extension; Virginia White, Alabama Cooperative Extension; Jason Henderson, Director, Purdue Extension; Pat Skinner, Louisiana State University; Larry Katz, Director, Rutgers Cooperative Extension; Steve Cain, Purdue Extension Disaster Specialist; Ed Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension; Chris Boerboom, Director, North Dakota State Extension; Cheryl Skjolaas, University of Wisconsin Extension; Nick Place, Director, Florida Cooperative Extension.

The key points that dominated the meeting included system-wide sharing of resources, branding, organizational structures that include multi-state or regional entities, collaborating with others to share science-based research on mitigating and adaptation to climate change. Of particular interest was the effects of climate change and how it impacts people, ecosystems, and the economy. The items agreed upon include a strategy for federal and private resource development, create a national system to build capacity spearheaded by regional centers and regional leadership, an organized process to recruit delegates and an endowment for an executive director. The facilitator for the three-day meeting was George Okantey, Community Development and Association for Talent Development Learning and Performance educator.





In the picture from right: Scott Cotton, Virginia White, Pat Skinner, Steve Cain, Mike Yoder and Cheryl Skjolaas.

The meeting occurred at the Embassy Suites in Indianapolis from September 8 to 10, 2015. The meeting began with introductions led by current chair, Mike Yoder. He welcomed everyone, stated the purpose of the strategy meeting and then reiterated the [mission of EDEN](#) to reduce the impact of disasters through research-based education. Yoder noted that EDEN's objectives are to:

1. Enhance the abilities of individuals, families, organizations, agencies, and businesses to prepare for, prevent, mitigate, and recover from disasters
2. Serve as a national source for research-based disaster education
3. Strengthen Extension's capacity and commitment to address disaster issues
4. Strengthen EDEN's ability to provide research-based disaster education

The facilitation purpose of the strategy meeting was to appraise the value of EDEN to the Cooperative Extension Service and to seek recommendations, strategic directions and support from Extension leadership. Another goal was to take the input from these discussions to chart a course for the future. Steve Cain introduced Purdue Extension Director, Jason Henderson, who challenged the group by asking "what is your bumper sticker?" He shared the branding stories of Purdue Extension and espoused that Extension is America's education partner for life. He challenged the group not to lose sight of the fact that our work is about improving the quality of life and that we help people deal with life's most pressing challenges, including preparing them for disaster and unforeseen events that may affect the quality of their lives and their communities. He commended the effort to bring together directors and opinion leaders from ECOP, NIFA and the EDEN Executive Committee to address these needs. He ended his short welcome by stating that "Extension does not do anything by itself. We do it in partnership with others to help people do well." The facilitation process used to gain consensus for strategic directions was a workshop model in which participants brainstormed, used multi-voting and then participated in plenaries and recommended actions and outcomes.

A survey was conducted before the workshop. Extension directors, program leaders and state delegates participated in the survey. Forty-seven directors and 65 delegates participated from the 1862 land grant systems. Eight directors and three delegates from 1980, and two delegates

from Sea Grant. Overall, 55 directors and 70 delegates completed the survey. The insights from analysis of the survey indicated that:

Survey analysis	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 91% have used resources provided by EDEN to enhance work in their state • 87% of Directors expected their state to use EDEN resources • 74% of delegates reported that EDEN resources have made disaster response more robust • 83% indicated that information provided by EDEN saved faculty and staff time at their institution 	<p>The challenges and opportunities gleaned from the survey included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff resources to update website and produce on-time and relevant research-based information • Produce high-quality materials without dedicated subject matter staff and resources in every county or state institution

Others pointed out that as state and county budgets are depleted, government officials are turning more and more to Extension for disaster resources and assistance in completing FEMA paperwork. This is both a challenge and an opportunity for Extension. The next analysis drawn from the survey includes strengths, opportunities, aspirations and results (SOAR)

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A national network that provides opportunities for collaboration • A coordinating body that encourages educational resource sharing and strategies system-wide • Ready and responsive network for state's CES to respond to and reduce the impact of disasters. • Easy access to shared information and resources • Provide educational and professional development training and opportunities • Provide lifesaving information at a timely and rapid pace to communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More intentional and purposeful connection with the Extension System • Increase our attention to disaster programming in the state and sustain ongoing program priorities • Reach out to 1890s and underserved communities • Work closely with Extension Community Development, Sea Grant, and others • Provide educational program leadership on climate response options

Using the SOAR concept for the data gathering, the next analysis included aspirations and results:

5. Evaluate educational program associated with risk, risk assessment, best management practices and adaptation to change

The consensus model used enabled each participant to write down his or her individual ideas, brainstorm with a small group, hold a plenary to discuss ranked recommendations for actions, and finally, to secure ratification by the whole group to set strategic direction. Approximately 40 minutes were allocated to each strategic question. The goal questions were:

Goal 1: What ways could we use to leverage institutional expectations with opportunities to improve EDEN (function in the state, national, and international communities)?

Goal 2: How can we strengthen engagement/collaboration with others to enhance EDEN's impact?

Goal 3: What branding strategies are desirable/available to brand and integrate EDEN with Extension effectively.

Goal 4: What creative ways could we use to enhance sharing of resources across state lines and from institution to institution?

Goal 5: What educational programs do we have/not have to address risk, risk management and best management practice, given our commitment to innovation and change?



From left: Ed Jones, Nick Place, Jane Shuchardt, Fred Schlutt, Chris Boerboom and Larry Katz

The director/participants were aware of the turnover of directors and the challenge of bringing new Extension directors up to speed on EDEN. Specific actions were stated to educate program leaders, directors and delegates. The outcome envisioned is that this will increase institutional support and engagement across CES program areas. Another issue discussed was communicating impact, given that Extension had varying methods of reporting state-specific

impact. The action agreed upon was to create an aggregate for reporting requirements and for people engaged in EDEN to report in at least one knowledge area. Directors agreed to funnel their impact and post reports at landgrantimpacts.org. The group agreed to clarify the roles of state delegates and increase program area representation within their state delegations. ECOP promised to seek private funds to support the work of [EDEN](#). On branding the group agreed to create a seamless connection and create opportunities for partnerships with EDEN serving as the national face of Extension. This will lead to a federation of states consistently showing the national impact that benefits everyone—elevating EDEN to the highest levels and increasing funding by 60%. Discussions and actions included identifying core competencies and providing professional development to delegates for increasing the capacity to serve clientele and provide adequate investment to sustain EDEN.

On the issues of strengthening collaboration with others, the group determined their three most important relationships—Extension directors, NIFA and FEMA. The structural problems that arose included a regional leadership model for disaster-specific programming. The group agreed to create a logic model on how to engage educators and institutions that have Extension functions. There was an agreement to promote and market SCAP, deliver Ready Business, commit to increased state matching of Smith-Lever funds, increase communication capacity and develop a business model. The group agreed that there was an international role for Extension in disaster education. The actions included providing technical assistance to international affiliates.



From left: Ed Jones, Nick Place, George Okantey, Fred Schlutt, Chris Boerboom and Larry Katz

Regarding actions that would enhance resource-sharing, the group agreed on a regional approach and use of eXtension for professional development. Additionally, to use effective evaluation tools and strategies to enhance existing and new resources. The innovative and promising program areas for Extension focused on climate change. This topic engendered lively

discussions and culminated in a consensus definition of disaster as “an event or series of events that overwhelm resources and dominate personal and community priorities.” Out of this, the group agreed that EDEN’s niche should be:

1. Education and application. Helping people apply research and science-based information.
2. Engagement as a local asset. We were there before and after the disaster.
3. Integration with research and resource material development.



In picture: Abby Hostetler, Larry Katz, Beverly Samuels, Mike Yoder, Nick Place and Pat Skinner hidden.



Draft EDEN 2015-2020 Strategic Plan

EDEN's Mission: Reduce the impact of disasters through research-based education

Strategic Goals

1. Enhance the abilities of individuals, families, organizations, agencies and businesses to prepare for, prevent, mitigate and recover from disasters
2. Serve as a national source for research-based disaster education
3. Strengthen Extension's capacity and commitment to address disaster issues
4. Strengthen EDEN's capacity to provide research-based disaster education

External Goals

Goal 1: Enhance the abilities of individuals, families, organizations, agencies and businesses to prepare for, prevent, mitigate and recover from disasters

Objectives:

- 1.1 Identify, develop, and maintain resources to help people make informed decisions about disaster resiliency
- 1.2 Provide the most relevant resources for local, state, national and international audiences

Goal 2: Serve as a national source for research-based disaster education

Objectives:

- 2.1 Serve as a clearinghouse of research-based educational materials
- 2.2 Develop partnerships with other organizations and agencies
- 2.3 Brand EDEN as Extension's premier provider of disaster education

Internal Goals

Goal 3: Strengthen Extension's capacity and commitment to address disaster issues

Objectives:

- 3.1 Provide resources that prepare Extension personnel for all phases of disaster
- 3.2 Position EDEN to enable Extension personnel to engage in disaster education
- 3.3 Provide avenues for disaster education competency

Goal 4: Strengthen EDEN's capacity to provide research-based disaster education

Objectives:

- 4.1 Develop relationships with researchers and practitioners

