



Research on Entrepreneurial Opportunities for Disadvantaged Populations

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Background

- **The “Economic Impact of BRAC on Disadvantaged Populations” study highlighted the need to develop alternative strategies for economically disadvantaged workers.**

- **Characteristics and Conclusions:**
 - **A high school education or less**
 - **Lack of computer skills and access to computers**
 - **Limited financial resources and ability to borrow money**
 - **Lack of skills sets for jobs paying more than minimum wage rates**
 - **Mismatch between the current educational attainment and projected job opportunities**
 - **Widespread interest in entrepreneurship**

Microenterprise Research

- **Considerable research presents three compelling reasons for microenterprises among the disadvantaged:**
 - **Self-employment is a necessary and in some cases, the best source of employment and income**
 - **Contributes to the income stream and quality of life**
 - **Can play a role in the revitalization of local economies**

1) Entrepreneurial Network Development: Building Innovation Capacity (USDA)

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- **A lack of connections to business and knowledge networks limits the capacity of this population to recognize opportunities and adapt to change**
- **The study is designed to increase our knowledge of the contextual and individual factors that shape entrepreneurial capacity among the target population while identifying strategies to increase participation in emerging markets for locally grown food**

2) 21st Century Agriculture (DOL)

- **The SBE is a partner in a consortium led by Michigan State University to provide technical and entrepreneurial training to disadvantaged populations**
- **If this \$20 million, 3 year proposal is funded, the School will develop an online entrepreneurship curriculum for consortium partners.**