

*Maryland Rural  
Development Corporation*

Annual Report  
for the Year 2008

Maryland Rural Development Corp

P.O. Box 4848

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[www.mrdc.net](http://www.mrdc.net)

## *2008 ANNUAL REPORT CONTENT*

- Agency Strategic Planning, Mission and Vision Statements
- Board Development
- Program Services to Rural Maryland:  
Results, Impact and Linkages to National Objectives
- Administrative Operations
- Summary and Recommendations

# *Agency Strategic Plan 2007-2008*


## Key Issues for MRDC

- Leadership
- Technology
- Collaborations
- Outcome-based planning
- Marketing
- Organizational environment of innovation and learning

# Agency Mission 2009

(Affirmed July 2008)

*MRDC provides resources that promote self-sufficiency in low income families and build strong, sustainable communities throughout rural Maryland.*

A faint, semi-transparent image of two hands shaking is visible in the lower-left quadrant of the slide, serving as a background element for the mission statement.

# *VISION STATEMENT 2008*

The Maryland Rural Development Corp is a strong and effective statewide organization that...

- Identifies and develops resources to support individual, family and community development
- Provides effective leadership in rural Maryland, helping communities achieve growth and self-sustainability
- Maximizes the use of technology to enhance the delivery of services and information
- Utilizes resources in collaborative partnerships
- Works with communities to identify changing needs and develops programs to address the issues

## Community Survey and Focus Group Assessment Study April 2008

- Implemented to keep MRDC and its services to families and communities on the cutting edge of program development and delivery
- Input from community partners, service recipients and community leaders was a key component of the survey
- Recommendations were used as the foundation of the joint board & staff Strategic Planning Retreat.

# Survey Recommendations

- Maintain judicious resource allocations and staff readiness in responding to mounting demands
- Continue ongoing internal strategic planning to attain maximum impact from limited resources
- MRDC performs a wide range of services to benefit the regions low-income population
- High personnel satisfaction with services
- MRDC has demonstrated a consistent response to community needs
- Strong history of collaboration with other CBO's

# *Joint Board & Staff Planning Retreat*

*July 14-16, 2008*

*“The highway to success requires  
an updated road map!”*

- Community Survey findings, Strategic Direction & Key Components were used as a foundation for planning activities
- To achieve the mission, MRDC must continue to be proactive and adapt to the changing direction of governmental resources (\$) supporting CAA's and Community Based Organizations
- Agency services must work in partnership with customers, other service providers and faith based organizations to achieve lasting success
- Must recognize the need for continuous quality assurance and progressive services to remain in business
- Must keep agency services and investments "on target" to achieve agency mission and national goals

# *The 10 MRDC Essential Elements of Success 2005-08*

1. Fund a Development/Marketing capacity to create P.R., raise unrestricted funding etc. to support mission driven services
2. Review cost/benefit of corporate name change
3. Utilizing staff recommendations, analyze current programs and priorities, spin off possibilities, cut backs, expansion or evolutions
4. Examine unmet needs and future markets (while avoiding mission creep)
5. Provide resources, information and training to community leaders (including entrepreneurial opportunities)
6. Put technology in place to facilitate effective use of data in programs and decision making
7. Train staff to use technology effectively
8. Create an effective work environment to maintain and attract quality staff through use of recognition and incentives

# *2008 Strategic Planning Retreat*

## *Recommendations*

- Define/assign activities to assure follow through and reportable measures of success/challenges
- Seek contractual services, as needed, to achieve development and planning objectives
- Incorporate National CSBG Goals in Strategic Planning documents and reporting instruments
- Energize joint planning efforts with Head Start Policy Council to assure successful collaborations and program objectives
- Continue active participation in local, state and regional advisory and governing bodies to strengthen partnerships, advocacy and support of MRDC's mission
- Initiate or strengthen Faith Based Organization partnerships (FBO's)
- Monitor progress via biennial status reports to the board and Policy Councils
- Continue to explore localized CAA operations in Cecil, Caroline and Kent Counties
- Review statewide MD-RCAP administrative options to achieve maximum growth potential

# *Board Development 2008*

- Board members participated actively in the strategic planning process, community assessments, monitoring reviews and presentations to elected officials and community groups throughout the year.
- Members attended agency oriented, as well as state, regional and national trainings to strengthen the body's role in agency governance.
- Met to review and amend the agency by-laws, personnel policies and other policy based doctrine to assure compliance with pertinent regulations.
- Board implemented agency wide fraud policies to help assure stewardship and fiscal/programmatic integrity
- Recruited representatives of the private sector and the low-income community to fill vacancies
- Board members collaborated with and actively participated in joint Board and Head Start Policy Council matters
- Board members advocated for the MRDC mission and services through numerous local and state committees.

**MRDC's Services to Rural  
Maryland  
and  
Community Services Block  
Grant (CSBG)  
National Objectives**

Linking the MRDC Strategic Plan to meet  
the National Goals and Objectives!

# National Goal 1

Low income people become more self sufficient

## *National Measure*

- Maintaining employment for at least 90 days
- Successful GED completion
- Increase in household income, proper budgeting

## *MRDC Services*

- Job Access/Reverse Commute
- Individual Development Accounts
- Financial Literacy Training

# National Goal 2

## Conditions in which low-income people live are improved

### *National Measure*

- Participants moving from substandard housing into stable housing
- Housing choice and transferability of vouchers
- # of households achieving safe, affordable w/ww services

### *MRDC Services*

- First time Home Buyers Counseling and Mortgage Assistance
- Section 8 Housing Voucher Program
- MD-RCAP water & waste water assistance to low income communities

# National Goal 3

Low income people own a stake in their community

## *National Measure*

- Increase in hours volunteering
- Increase in community involvement hours
- Amount of dollars leveraged to benefit the community

## *MRDC Services*

- MD-RCAP Elected Official/Community Leadership training
- Circuit Rider /Town Manager Program
- Head Start Parent Policy Council

# National Goal 4

Partnerships among service providers to low income people are achieved

## *National Measure*

- Total amount of dollars mobilized by the agency
- % leveraged versus CSBG allocation
- # of partnership agreements achieved

## *MRDC Services*

- Housing counseling, IDA's and mortgage assistance
- MRDC /CSBG leverage FY 2008: \$24 to \$1 of CSBG
- MD-RCAP alliances and partnerships
- Head Start collaborations
- Housing Partnerships

# National Goal 5

Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results

## *National Measure*

- Community based assessments to determine needs
- Evaluation of services, investments and results
- Agency and staff capacity

## *MRDC Services*

- Triennial Community Needs Assessment and Community Surveys
- Agency Joint Strategic Planning
- Staff development through internal & external opportunities and training

# National Goal 6

Low income people, especially those populations that are the most vulnerable , achieve their potential by promoting family and other supportive environments

## *National Measure*

- # of children meeting HS performance standards by program completion
- Improved nutrition, increased parent involvement
- Health, education and employment services accessed

## *MRDC Services*

- Head Start half day and full day services
- Head Start parent involvement and training
- Transportation for medical, training and employment
- MD-RCAP services provide resources, training and assistance to achieve safe, affordable w/ww services

# Agency Technology Initiatives

- High speed internet access to all sites (as available)
- Tele-conferencing & telecommute options under review to reduce travel time and expense
- Develop MRDC intra-net for:
  - Online payroll, travel forms, purchase orders, etc.
  - communication to staff, access to agency policies
  - reporting database utilizing the Promis web-based tracking software
- Linking communities through [mrdc.net](http://mrdc.net) is still a desirable objective

# *MRDC Head Start Program Services 2008*

Marisol Rodriguez, Director

- Enrollment: 447 3-4 yrs olds
- In kind Contributions \$722,345

11 Centers & 3 Offices serving Caroline, Cecil and Harford counties

- Utilizes the Maryland Model For School Readiness and the STEP Literacy Program
  - Offers early childhood education, family services, nutrition, health screenings, health and safety education, mental health and disability resources and support to low income children and their families

# MRDC 2008 Head Start Public Annual Report

- **Total amount of public and private funds received and the amount from each source;**

- Head Start Support FY08:
- US Department of Health and Human Services: \$ 3,038,477
- US Department of Agriculture \$ 163,244
- Maryland State Department of Education: \$ 174,397
- Cecil County Public Schools: \$ 103,010
- In Kind – Services and Donations \$ 772,345

- **Explanation of budgetary expenditures and proposed budget for the fiscal year;**

- MRDC fully obligated all federal dollars in accordance with the grant agreement. The HHS-approved budget for FY08 was as follows:

- Personnel: \$ 1,878,459
- Fringe Benefits: \$ 497,737
- Equipment: \$ 5,000
- Supplies: \$ 85,436
- Contractual: \$ 66,779
- Other: \$ 505,066

- **Total number of children served: 508**
- **Total of families served: 478**
- **Average monthly enrollment (as a percentage of funded enrollment): 100%**
- **Percentage of eligible children served: 92%**

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# MRDC 2008 Head Start Public Annual Report

- **Information about parent involvement activities;**
- Parents are encouraged to volunteer in the programs through Policy Council, Parent Committee and on advisory committee throughout the program.
- Parents are involved in our Self-Assessment process
- We also provide volunteer opportunities within various areas of the program. Parents are given a “Ways to Volunteer” form so that they can identify the areas of their interest. This form is also made available to all managers to use in the event volunteers are needed.
- The Education Advisory committee allows the parents an opportunity to review and provide feedback on Curriculum, Analyze Work Sampling and discuss issues within the education component.
- The program also solicits parent’s ideas and creativity on a monthly basis in the implementation of the monthly theme.
- Parents are also part of the interviewing of new staff and menu planning.
- **Agency’s efforts to prepare children for kindergarten and other information the secretary requires?**
- To ensure parent involvement in transition activities we developed a transition policy
- Parents are invited to participate in any transition discussion
- During conferences discussion of child’s progress, registration process, expectations of the new educational setting.
- Requests are made to public school for Child/Parent visit to their local school
- Teachers meet with kindergarten teachers to discuss “Work Sampling” (as per parents approval) parents are invited to participate.
- Teachers answer transition question
- Head Start staff participates at the elementary schools during registration
- Registration dates are noted on the newsletters a month prior to registration sign-up.
- Parents are provided with a copy of the booklet “Everything you always wanted to know about Kindergarten” and teachers discuss portion of the booklet with parents.
- Obtain permission from parents to transfer relevant records.
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## *MRDC Housing and Transportation Services*

- Housing Services for low income families
  - Cecil , Kent & Caroline Counties
- Individual Development Account (IDA) Asset Development Case Management
- Transportation services for medical, training and employment resources
  - Cecil & Talbot Counties

# MRDC Low Income Housing Assistance

- Section 8 Rental Housing Assistance Thru July 1, 2008
  - Caroline County 143 vouchers @ 96% lease up
  - Kent County 28 vouchers @ 98 % lease up
- Housing Counseling Services
  - Homeownership readiness - 60 households trained
- Foreclosure Prevention – 40 Households assisted & 24 on the wait list
- First Time Home Buyer Mortgage Assistance 06-08
  - 1.2 million dollars in 1<sup>st</sup> time home buyers packaged
  - 10 Homebuyers assisted
- Asset Development (IDA) Case Management
  - 10 cases managed

# MRDC Transportation Services

## Job Access/Reverse Commute Program 2007-08

- 1700 Trips
- 31,700 miles driven
- 43 unduplicated customers assisted

## Therapeutic Youth Services (Cecil County)

- 1998 Trips
- 30,933 miles driven
- 31 persons

# MD-Rural Community Assistance Project (MD-RCAP)

- MRDC serves as the South Eastern Community Assistance Project lead agency for the State of Maryland.
- The MD Rural Community Assistance Project (MD-RCAP) , a project of MRDC, provides direct and indirect technical assistance to rural towns and communities with populations under 10,000
- MD-RCAP provided direct technical assistance to 28 small, rural, low to moderate income communities in calendar year 2008.
- Technical assistance included loan/grant packaging, engineering assistance, administrative and reporting training, workshops and presentations to elected and appointed officials
- Leveraged 15 million dollars in infrastructure improvements to rural low-income communities

# Training for Elected Officials and Small Communities

MD-RCAP sponsored and in partnership with University of Maryland, The Maryland Rural Council and the Rural Maryland Foundation trained 151 elected officials and community leaders throughout the year, including workshops on running effective meetings, innovative rural housing strategies and rural resources for small communities.

Additional training topics included solid waste management techniques, water and wastewater impacts on low-income communities, and other topics of interest to small communities.

# MD-RCAP Small Town Circuit Rider Program

*Lower Eastern Shore Circuit  
Caroline/Dorchester Counties*

- Vienna*
- East New Market*
- Galestown*
- Church Creek*
- Goldsboro*
- Henderson*
- Marydel*
- Brookview*

# MD-RCAP Small Town Circuit Rider Program

## Mid and Upper Shore towns served

- Town of Millington (Kent County)
- Town of Charlestown (Cecil County)
- Town of Sudlersville (Queen Anne)
- Town of Betterton (Kent County)

## Western Maryland Towns

# *IMPACT!*

- MRDC Head Start served **508** 3-4 year old children and their families through partial and full day child development resources.
- Over **247** persons were safely transported 142,199 miles for medical and employment services equaling 7145 trips.
- **40** small, rural towns and communities are served through statewide technical and management assistance.
- **241** families assisted toward better housing

# Partnerships in Community Building 2008

- MD Community Action Partnership
- MD Rural Council/ Forum Foundation
- MD Assn. of Housing and Re-Development Agencies
- Susquehanna Workforce Network
- SE-RCAP Advisory Committee leadership
- MD Head Start Directors Assn.
- MD Head Start Association
- MD Center for Community Development (IDA partnership)
- First Mariner Bank (IDA accounts)

# MRDC Funding Sources

## FY 2008

- Federal Grants and Contracts
- State Funded Grants and Contracts
  - Local Grants and Contracts
- Private Contributions and Volunteerism (Inkind)
  - For profit ventures by the Corporation

# Fiscal impact in rural Maryland

In FY 2008, MRDC administered 4.7 million dollars of direct services to assist rural low-income families and communities.

MRDC services leveraged an estimated 15 million dollars to the state and local economy (FY 2008).

# SUMMARY

Year 2008 was a year of.....

- Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA)
- Joint board and staff planning & direction setting.
- Expansion of services (IDA, Head Start and MD-RCAP)
- Evaluation (internal and external reviews conducted)
  - CSBG Management Review May 2008 resulted in no major findings or concerns.
  - Community Services Focus Group April 2008
- Readiness for the future!

# Contact Information

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