ASSESSING GEORGIA'S SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEUR SUPPORT SYSTEMS

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Project Overview

- **Feb. 2003**: Tifton Summit—Gov. Perdue Issues Call for Action
- Design Team Created
    - Includes 10 state agencies (over 65 programs)
- GDITT Office of Small Business and Entrepreneur Support Created
- **Feb. 2004**: Governor's preliminary plan released

Entrepreneurship in Georgia: A Snapshot

- Some of US's leading public programs
  - Regional Strength in Atlanta
  - Sectoral Strength in Manufacturing
- High ranks for "Entrepreneurial Energy"
  - Atlanta ranks No. 1 in INC rankings
  - Rural regions rank lower
- Lower rankings in technology areas

The Team's Challenge

- Improve on Existing Array of Services
  - e.g., Build on SBDC network
- Engage New Customers
  - e.g., Minorities, New Immigrants
- Enhance Rural Support Services
  - Community **and** Entrepreneur Support

Building a Support System: Key Issues

- Collaboration
- Community-Centered Focus
- Outreach to New Customers
- Links to Education Resources

Collaboration

- Multiple service providers/agencies does not equal waste and duplication
- System and organization roles must be clearly understood by service providers
- Entrepreneurs need to get desired service---how it gets there is irrelevant!

Enhancing Collaboration: Some Ideas

- Single state website and 800 number
- Single intake approach
  - "One Stop Shop" replaced by "No Wrong Door"
  - Employ case manager approach
  - Coordination of intake procedures (e.g. forms, referrals, etc.)

Community-Centered Focus

- Shift Service Delivery to Regional/Local Level
  - State is not a natural economic unit
- Steps to Success:
  - Train ED professionals in system and appropriate responses (Enet/GDITT Partnership)
  - Build Local Networks and Partnerships
  - Link to Local Clusters

Outreach to New Customers

- Expand Services in Rural Areas
  - Replicate East GA College GREDC Program
- Fund Rural Demonstration Projects
- Outreach to Minorities, Immigrants
  - Identify new partners (e.g. churches)

Links to Education System

- Education/Training is most important system input
- Underserved Markets
  - Non-Traditional Students (e.g. arts majors)
  - Community Colleges
- Expand Youth Entrepreneurship training

For More Information:

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