Effective Investment in Rural America

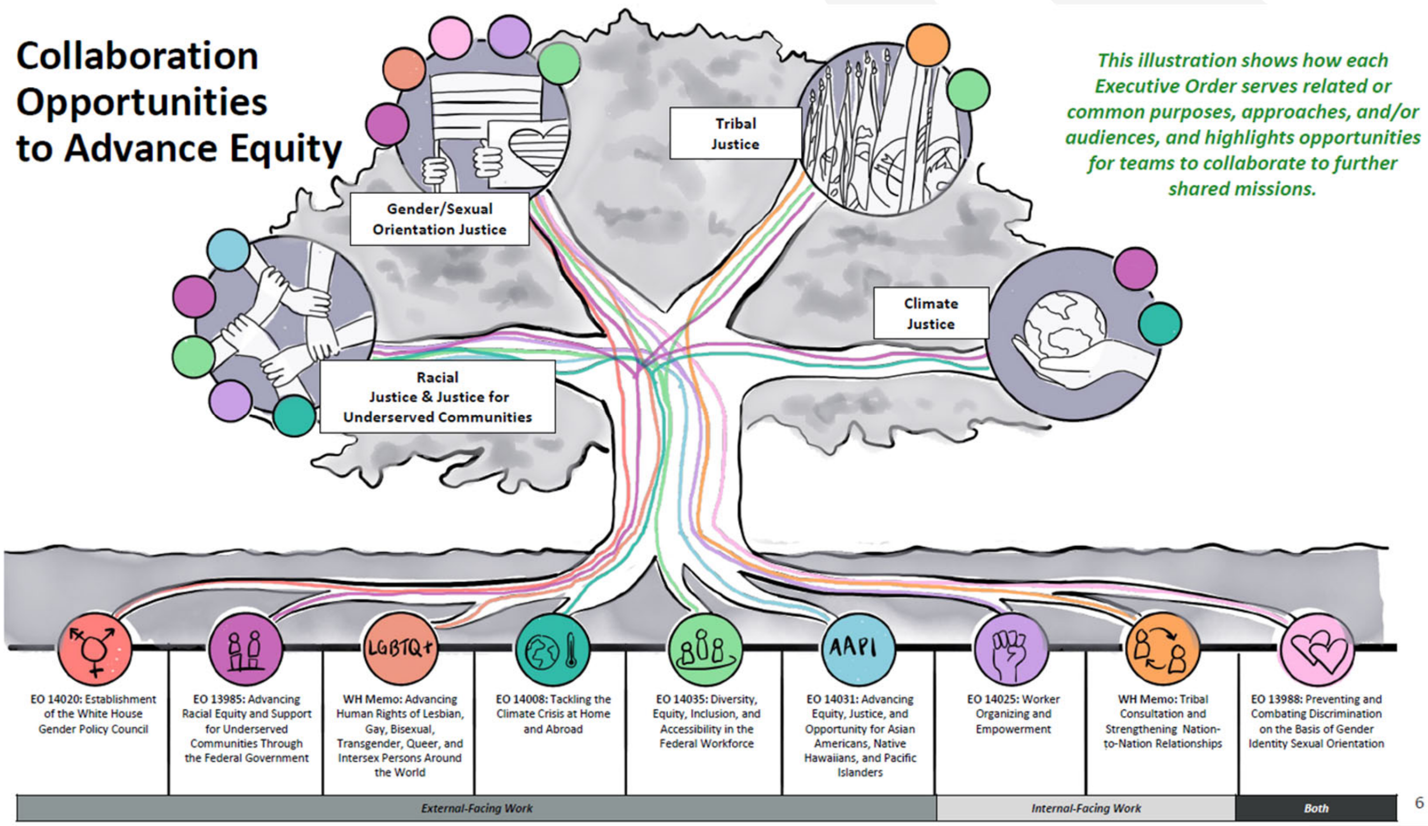
Gbenga Ajilore, Ph.D.

Senior Advisor, Rural Development (USDA)

USDA Rural Development
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Your Partner in Prosperity

Equity Work at USDA and Rural Development



Current Issues with Regional Development

- Private sector/philanthropy don’t invest in rural areas
  - Cannot get ‘bang for their buck’

- Federal resources don’t get to underserved communities
  - These communities lack capacity to apply or manage grants/loans

- This is especially true when federal resources get funneled through states
  - Funds go to large metros and/or capital cities

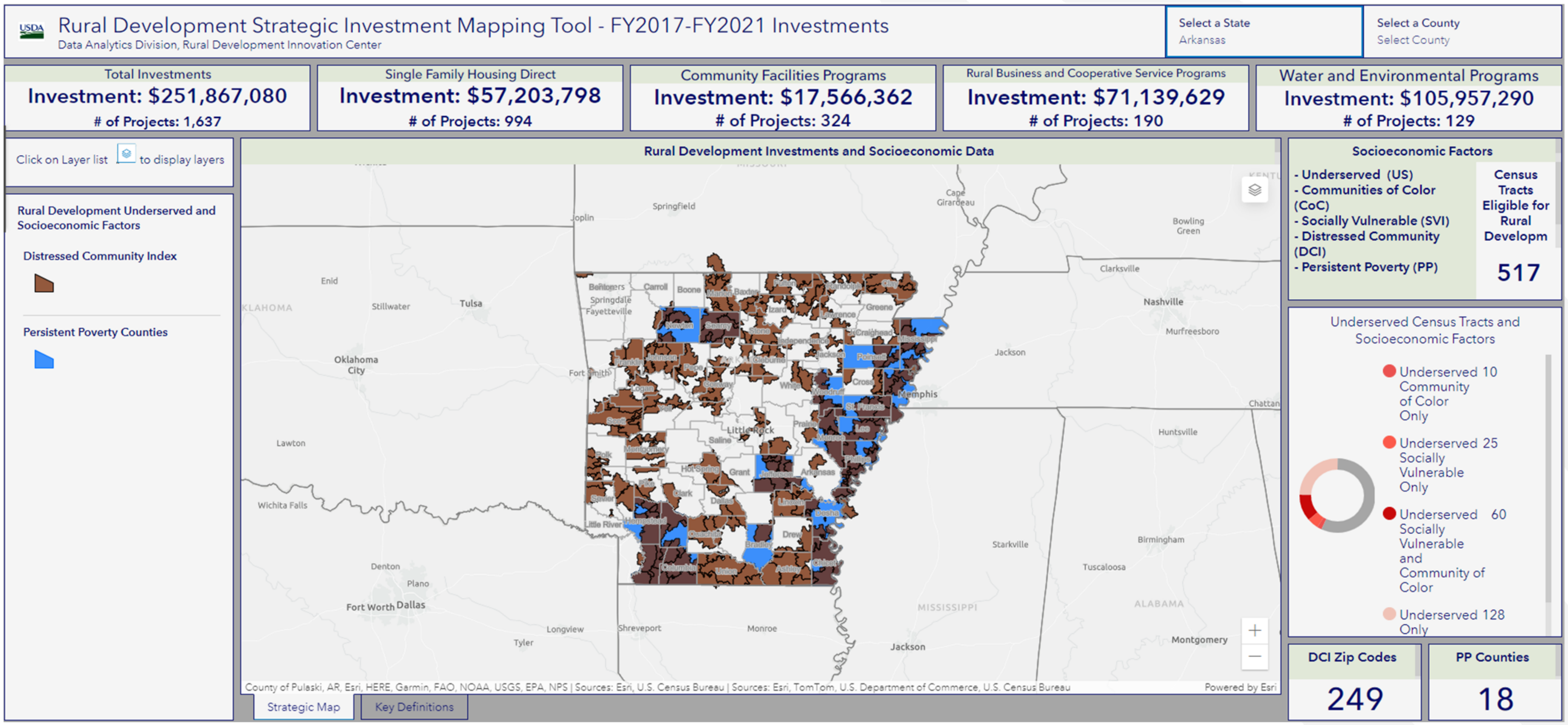
How USDA is thinking about implementation

- Tackling market failure and government failure through direct investment, outreach, and capacity-building efforts

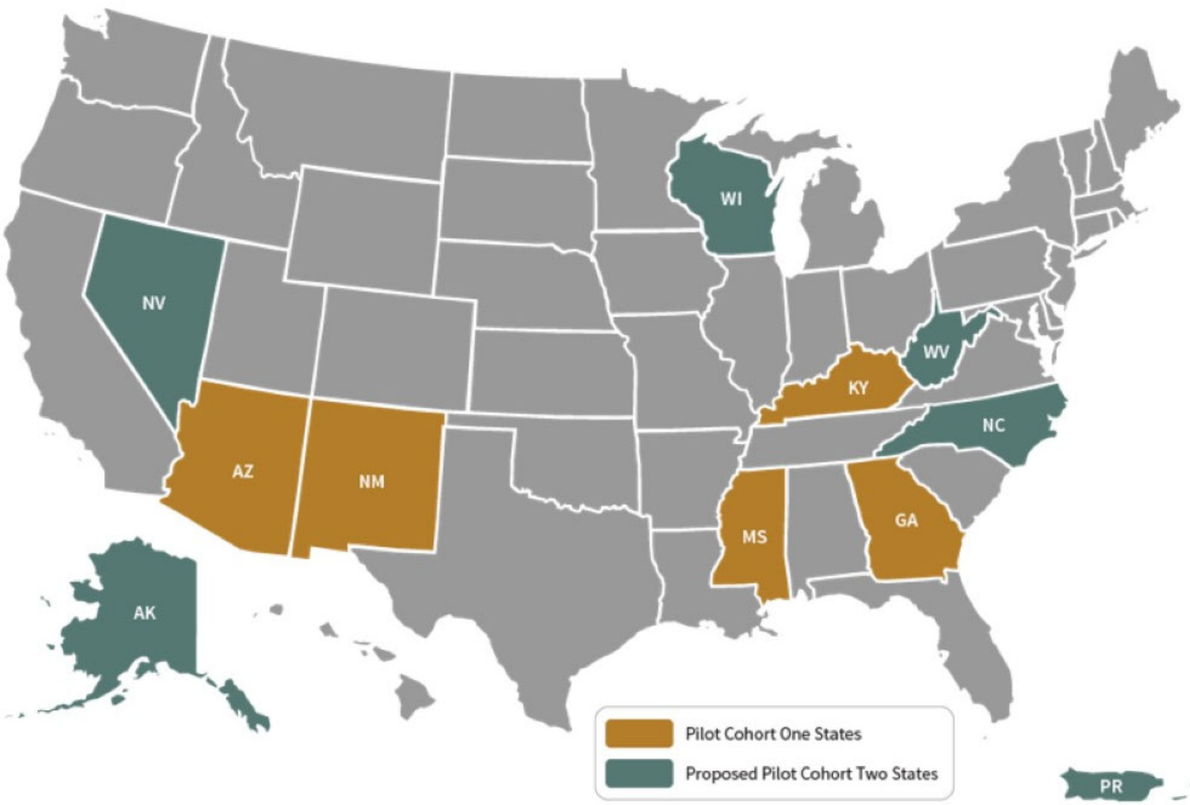
- Addressing equity by pairing a data-driven approach with targeted outreach

- Stakeholder Engagement
  - Who are we talking to? Who *aren't* we talking to?

Data-driven approach to advancing equity



Rural Partners Network



Cohort One States: Georgia, Kentucky New Mexico, Mississippi and Three Tribes in Arizona

Cohort Two States and Territory: Alaska, Nevada, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, Wisconsin, and West Virginia.

Community Liaisons and national and regional TA providers

Advocate for rural community needs; addressing barriers and equitable access

Matchmake between community needs and agency resources and staff

Convene Partners: Federal, Tribal, state, and local governments, non-profits, and other private stakeholders

Provide technical assistance and capacity building support

Framing the discussion around development

- Communities and the people in those communities aren’t economic indicators

- The indicators we see in these “underserved” communities are the outcomes of intentional actions by policymakers

- Using terms like socially vulnerable or distressed take the onus off of those historical actions

- We have to be honest about this and as policymakers we should be held accountable to ensure that we don’t repeat this history

Rural Development

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