

# Writing Impact Statements: The Basics

## What is an impact statement?

An impact statement summarizes the changes in knowledge, actions (i.e., behaviors or practices), and/or conditions (i.e., economic, environmental, and/or social differences) your efforts have made in people's lives.

## Why should I submit an impact statement?

Impact statements are used in the reports submitted to the state level for the Mississippi Legislature and the federal government. Impact statements are also submitted to a national impacts database and are shared with the Student Leadership and Community Engagement (SLCE) office at Mississippi State University

(MSU). Impact statements can be included in annual performance evaluations and in the dossiers that are submitted for promotion.

## What are the elements of an impact statement?

Impact statements have three key elements: issue, response, and impact. First, describe the general issue or problem statement in simple terms appropriate for your audience. Next, provide an action statement that describes the response to the issue and who was reached. Finally, the impact section answers the question, "What is the payoff socially, economically, and environmentally?" This section addresses "so what," "who cares," and "who benefited and how?"



### Issue

- What is your identified need/problem/issue? How did you determine this need/problem/issue?
- Who might be affected—directly or indirectly—if this need/problem/issue is not addressed?



### Response

- What did you do? Who was your primary audience, and how many attended?
- What topics/activities were presented that addressed the identified need/problem/issue?



### Impact

- How was the impact determined? What was the reported change in knowledge, attitude, awareness, or skill?
- What was the reported change in behavior (actual or intended)? What was the resulting condition change (economic, environmental, and/or social)?
- How did the broader public benefit from the program?

# Where can I find internal resources on impact statements?

There are several impact statement resources available on the MSU Extension Intranet. From the homepage, follow Program Development > Report > Impact Statements.

You will find the following:

1. Impact Statement Presentation — an in-depth description of impact statements and a step-by-step example of how to write one
2. Writing Impact Statements — a guide on writing impact statements and examples from each program area
3. Impact Statement Worksheet — a worksheet that helps you write each part of the impact statement: issue, response, and impact
4. Program and Staff Development (PSD) Office Hours: Writing Impact Statements — a recorded workshop video on writing impact statements

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By **Donna J. Peterson**, PhD, Extension Professor, and **Tia M. Gregory**, Extension Instructor I, Human Sciences.



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