

**Award Recipient**  
**United States Department of**  
**Agriculture**  
**Food and Nutrition Service**  
**Southeast Regional**  
**Office**

- **1 of 7 Regions of USDA/FNS**
- **150 employees**
  - 100 in Atlanta**
  - 50 in 8 Field Offices**
- **Regional Administrator is a Senior Executive Service Member**
  - Came to Atlanta in 1986**

- **Agency was established in 1969**  
**Grew to 2,800 employees in 1980**  
**Steady decline to 1,500 today**
- **FNS works in partnership with State and local agencies.**
- **FNS administrative budget is approximately \$100 million.**
- **Program cost is almost \$40 billion.**

- **Nature of work is regulatory oversight and technical assistance.**
- **A total of 14 feeding programs, including food stamps, school lunch, school breakfast, Women, Infants and Children (WIC), and summer food service programs.**

# **Vision**

FNS will Lead America in  
Ending Hunger and  
Improving Nutrition and  
Health

## **FNS's Work Is Important**

- Babies and children who don't get enough to eat don't develop the way human beings are supposed to.
- Even before "hunger" becomes severe, inadequate food intake inhibits the ability of children to learn.

- Limited calories go first to organ development, then to growth, and last to social activity and learning.
- Pregnant women who don't get enough nutritious food to eat have underdeveloped babies.

- Low birth weight is the number one correlation with infant mortality.
- Underdeveloped babies can have diminished brain cell development.

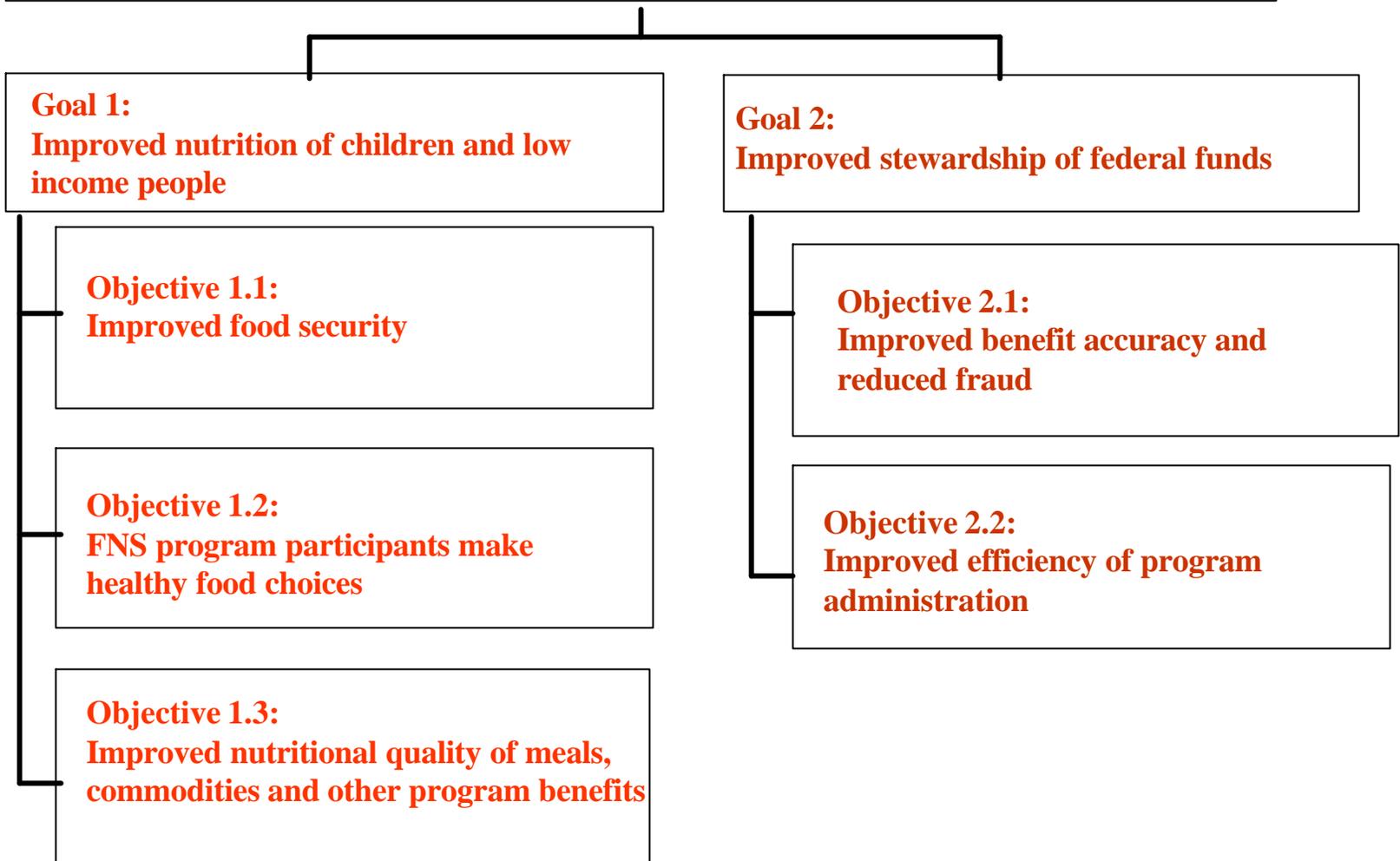
- Listless and irritable hungry children find it difficult to concentrate in school.
- Hungry children are more susceptible to illness and more likely to miss school.

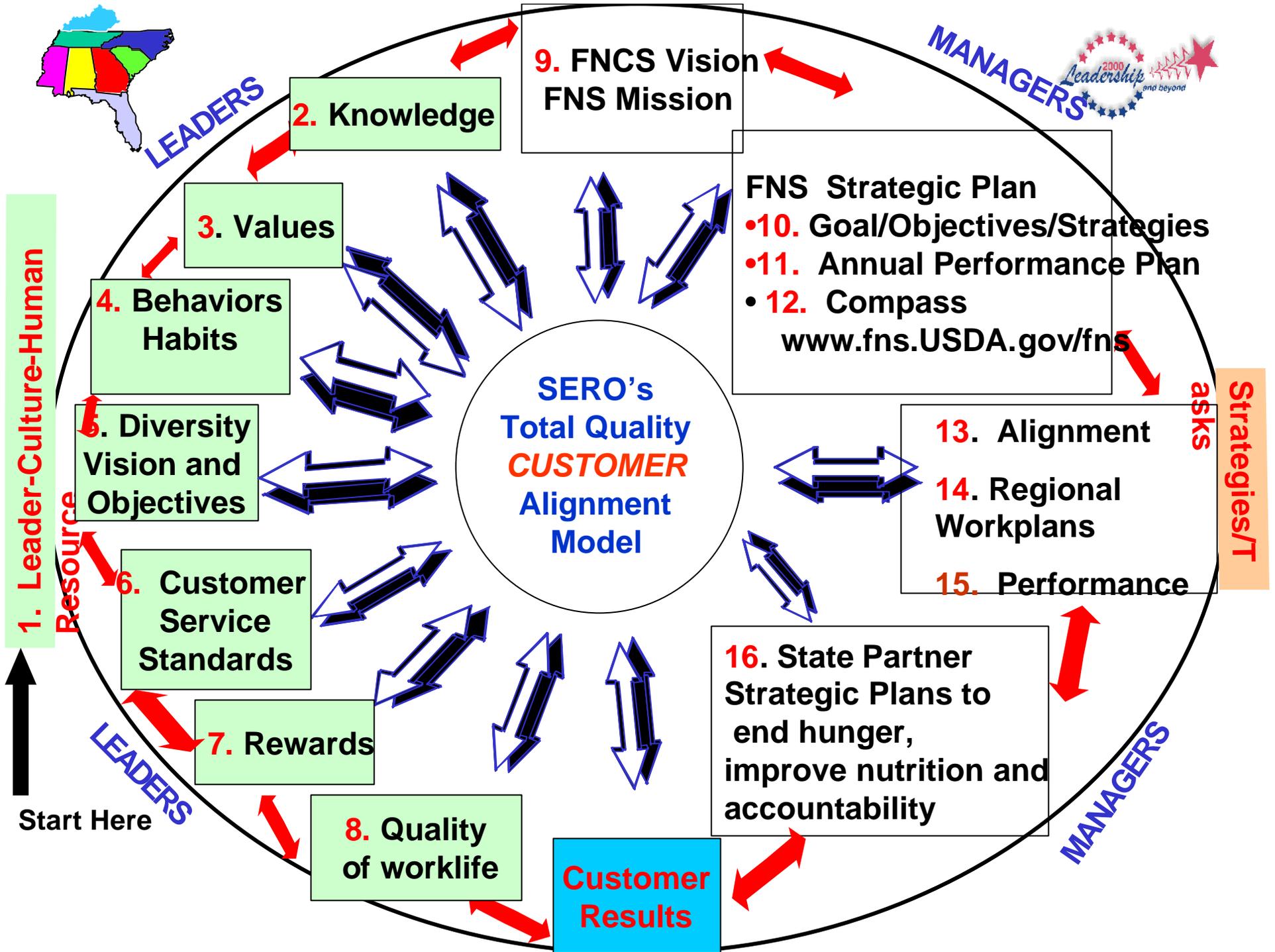
- Statistically, hungry children suffer higher levels of depression, score lower on standardized tests, and often require special education.
- Hunger in adults is known to cause fatigue and lowered resistance to illness.

- The psychological strain of not being able to provide enough food for yourself or your family can be devastating.
- Despite \$40 billion in food assistance annually, a 1999 USDA study showed 2.6 million children suffer from hunger at least some of the time.

# FNS Mission

**Increase Food Security and Reduce Hunger in Partnership with cooperating Organizations by Providing Children and Low-Income People Access to Food, A Healthful Diet, and Nutrition Education In A Manner That Supports American Agriculture and Inspires Public Confidence.**





Leadership: The skill of influencing people to work enthusiastically toward goals identified as being for the common good.

“The Servant” by James C . Hunter

# Alignment

“A River Without Banks is a Large  
Puddle.”

Ken Blanchard

# How to Align Performance with Agency Goals:

1. Communicate, Communicate, Communicate

2. Encourage Learning about Leadership:

- Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People
- Covey's 4 Roles of Leadership
- Masters in Leadership

## 2.a. Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Successful People

**Habit 1:** Be Proactive - Respond According to Values, Accepting Responsibility, Focusing on the Circle of Influence, and Become Transition Figure.

**Habit 2:** Begin With The End In Mind – Mental Creation Precedes Physical Creation, Choosing a Life Center, and Personal Mission Statement.

**Habit 3:** Put First Things First – Your First Things, Living and Effective Life in Quadrant II, and the Six-Step Process.

**Habit 4:** Think Win-Win – Six Paradigms of Human Interaction, Win-Win Rescripting, and Four Dimensions of Win-Win.

**Habit 5:** Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood – The Challenges of Communication, and the Attitude and Skill of Empathy.

**Habit 6:** Synergize – The Process of Synergizing, Valuing the Differences, Creating the Third Alternative, and the Perspective of Humility.

**Habit 7:** Sharpen the Saw – Four Dimensions of Renewal, Personal Production Capability, The Upward Spiral, and Principle-Centered Living.

## 2.b. Covey's 4 Roles of Leadership

### **PATHFINDING** ANSWERS THREE QUESTIONS:

- WHO'S IMPORTANT TO US, WHAT MATTERS MOST TO THEM (PARTNER'S NEEDS)?
- WHAT IS OUR PURPOSE, WHAT MATTERS MOST TO US, AND HOW WILL WE ACT TOWARD ONE ANOTHER (MISSION AND VALUES)?
- WHERE ARE GOING, AND HOW WILL WE GET THERE (VISION AND STRATEGY)?

### **ALIGNING** ANSWERS THESE THREE QUESTIONS:

- HOW DOES THE WHOLE SYSTEM WORK TOGETHER?
- WHAT ARE THE PARTS OF THE SYSTEM?
- HOW DO WE ALIGN THE PARTS TO ACHIEVE VISION MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES?

**EMPOWERING** ANSWERS THESE FOUR QUESTIONS:

- HOW DO WE CULTIVATE AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE PEOPLE CAN DO THEIR BEST AND ARE COMMITTED?
- WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THE WORK BEING DONE?
- HOW MUCH RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY SHOULD PEOPLE HAVE?
- WHO DOES WHAT? HOW? WITH WHAT RESOURCES AND ACCOUNTABILITY? FOR WHAT REASONS?

**MODELING** ANSWERS THESE FOUR QUESTIONS:

- WHO WOULD FOLLOW ME?
- DO I TAKE RESPONSIBILITY?
- DO I “WALK MY TALK”?
- AM I TRUSTWORTHY?

## 2.c. Masters in Leadership



*Masters in Leadership 2000*

**Awarded  
to**

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Date \_\_\_\_\_

Virgil L. Conrad  
Regional Administrator

**SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE**

# How to Align Performance with Agency Goals:

- Alignment workday – What is the Main Thing?
- Leadership Alignment Retreat
- Stakeholder Meetings. Examples:
  - Food Security
  - Payment Accuracy
- Individual Work Plans

# Performance Management

## 1. Program workplans, based on:

- Vision, mission, goals and objectives in Agency's GPRA Strategic Plan
- Agency's annual Performance Plan (APP)
- COMPASS – National Priority Setting
- Management Control Vulnerabilities
- Regional Priorities

## Example of a Completed Workplan:

**FY-2001**

### **SERO WORKPLAN**

#### **SERO Web Communication**

**MISSION:** Increase food security and reduce hunger in partnership with cooperating organizations by providing children and low-income people access to food, a healthful diet, and nutrition education in a manner that supports American agriculture and inspires public confidence.

**STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:** 2 - Improved Stewardship of Federal Funds

**STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVE:** 2.2 - Improved efficiency of program administration

#### **COMPASS PRIORITY PROJECT/FUNCTIONAL**

**EXPECTATION:** IT System/Infrastructure Upgrades

**NAME OF ACTIVITY:** SERO Web Communication (Intranet and Partner Web Site)

**PROBLEMS:** 1) Employees do not have access to a single resource tool that will provide work-related information, links to useful information, provide new information to employees on a daily basis and to promote and provide updates on special projects. Information sharing or communication had been identified in the Employee Worklife Survey as needing increased attention. A mechanism to increase employee information sharing (best practices, success stories, etc.), distribute communication materials in a timely manner and provide employees a way to provide feedback is needed. 2) Currently, there is no mechanism for SERO staff and our participating state partners to share information and resources. Consolidation of information resources may result in increased productivity and improve the effectiveness of program delivery.

**EXPECTED OUTCOME:** A fresh tool for providing information will be available to all SERO employees and to state partners. Trained staff will participate in the design of the web sites and be responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of their Program's web pages.

**REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR'S ROLE:** Provide support (moral and financial), encouragement and ideas to the Team for possible inclusion on the web sites. Encourage Program Directors to fully utilize trained staff in the maintenance of web pages. Solicit buy-in

Solicit buy-in from state partners to provide information to be included on the Partner Web Site.



### MAJOR ACTIVITIES:

### DATE:

- Establish a working team with representation from all programs and the field staff to be responsible for the design and maintenance of the Programs web pages 9/2000
- Regional Program Directors designate a program representative(s) to participate on the cross-functional team and to provide technical assistance and participate in team meetings. 9/2000
- Arrange Front Page 2000 training for all working team members (conducted by National Office staff) 9/19 - 22/00
- Install Front Page 2000 Software on all working team members PCs (RO staff) 9/2000
- Install Front Page 2000 software on working team members PCs (TN, NC) TBD
- Determine the topics/categories for the Navigation Bar for the Intranet 10/2000
- Determine the topics/categories for the Navigation Bar for the Extranet 04/2001
- Provide technical assistance, as needed, to working team to bring Program pages on line On-going

- Provide technical assistance, as needed, to working team to bring Program pages on line On-going
- Set up bi-weekly cross-functional team meetings (beginning 9/26/00) On-going
- Cross-functional team members meet with their Program staff to determine the look and the content of their Web Pages 10 - 11/00
- Begin construction of Program Web Pages 11/00
- Modify and add information to Web site On-going
- Integrate useful “links” into the Web site On-going
- Develop plan for putting resource material into the “Library” On-going
- Announce the arrival of new Program web pages as they are developed On-going

□

**EVALUATION:** The SERO Intranet site will be the primary vehicle for communication within the region. Feedback will be solicited from staff for improvements and usefulness. The SERO partner web site (Extranet) will be initiated and preliminary designs will be posted for testing by participating state partners.

**COST: Staff Years:** .90 (see below)

**Travel:** \$

1,000.00

(PA- .20, FM - .20, SNP - .10, FSP - .10, WIC - .10, FO - .10, HRM - .05, CR - .05)

Karen Dean, Team Sponsor

David Lee, Team Leader

Tambral Christian, FSP Coordinator

Madeline Fowler, WIC Coordinator

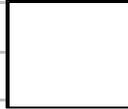
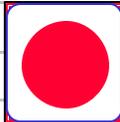
Patricia Bonner, WIC Coordinator

Rick Hargreaves, SNP Coordinator

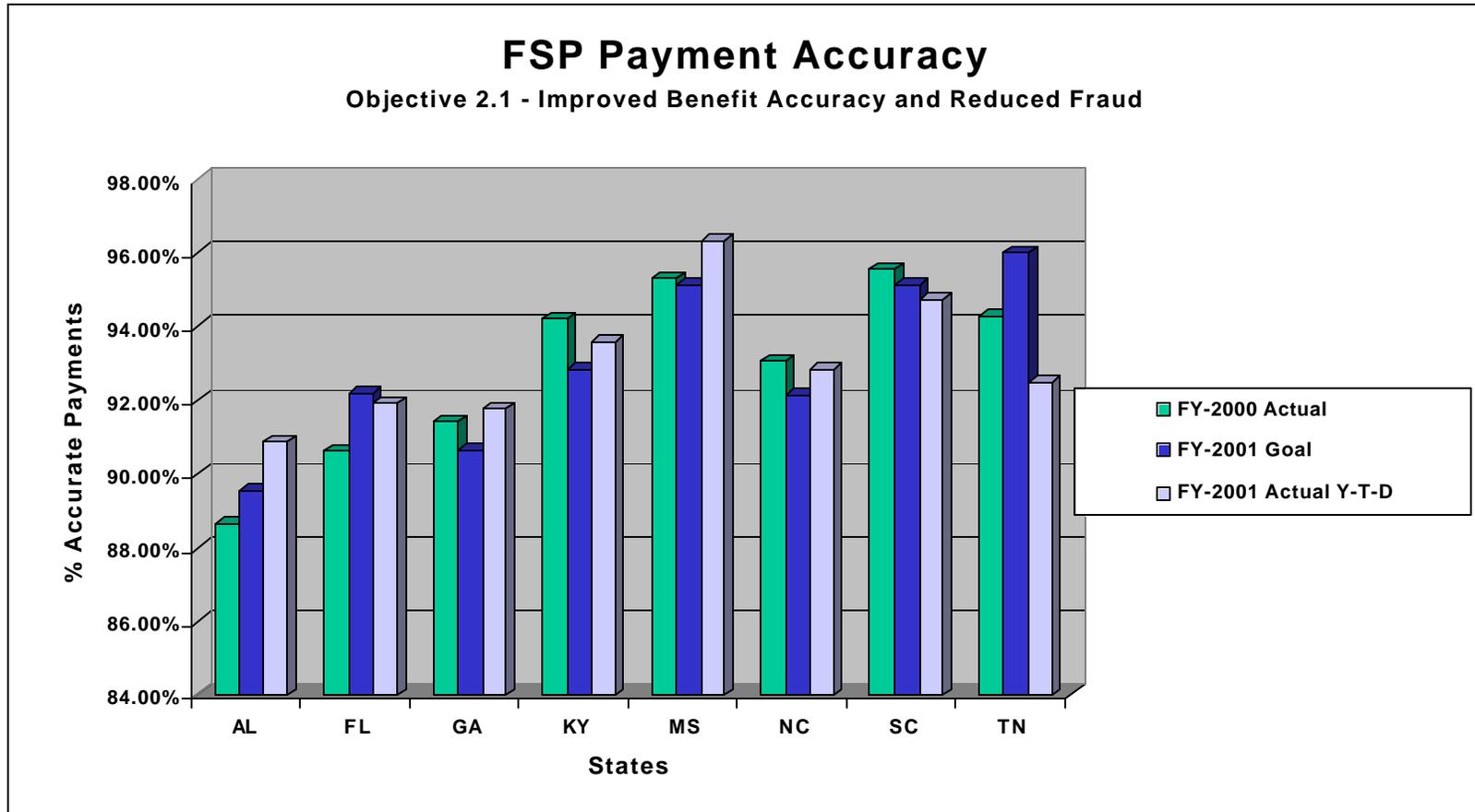
Beth King, FM Coordinator

John Butler, FO Coordinator

# Results:

| <b>SERO - Active Websites</b>   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| <i>Objective 2.2 Improved efficiency of program administration</i>                |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |
| RA  | CR  | FM  | FSP   | HR   | PA  | SNP   | WIC   | FOP   |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <i>Data as of July 2001</i>   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |

# Results:



## 2. Specific Written, Annual Expectations

## Leadership Action Plans with Win-Win Agreements, example:

### LEADERSHIP ACTION PLAN WITH WIN-WIN AGREEMENT

**Employee:** Crayton Lankford, Deputy RA

**Supervisor:** Virgil Conrad

**Time Period:** From 1/1/2000 to 12/31/2000

**Number 1 of 4**

#### **1. Desired Results**

Program and Staff Director's performance plans will be aligned with the FNS strategic plan's goals and objectives. New performance standards and leadership action plans with win-win agreements will be part of the new system. Work plans will be better aligned with the strategic plan and updated to stay relevant.

After we get this system in place and working for program and staff directors, we will prepare to implement it with other staff.

#### **2. Leadership Actions**

By March 15, 2000, I will rewrite performance standards for Program and Staff Directors to make them more outcome oriented and measurable. I will obtain written leadership action plans with win-win agreements from each director. I will obtain workplans and review them in comparison with the strategic plan to make sure the workplan is aligned, the strategies are sound, and the outcome measures are specific and measurable. I will lead this effort in a way that directors see the value of it and can pass it along to their employees in a positive manner.

### **3. Guidelines**

Government and agency regulations require a performance appraisal system with three levels: exceeds, fully successful, and does not meet. At least one, and not all of the elements, must be critical. The EEO element must be designated critical. USDA Form AD-435 must be used. The rating period coincides with the calendar year. Under current rules, win-win agreements will have to be used in addition to the performance standards, not in place of them.

### **4. Resources**

To establish meaningful win-win agreements for the staff reporting to me I will need to be able to commit to cash awards. I estimate I need \$9000 in cash award authority, which will only be used if personal leadership actions lead to specific, measurable, and significant improvements. I have authority to give time off awards and non-monetary recognition.

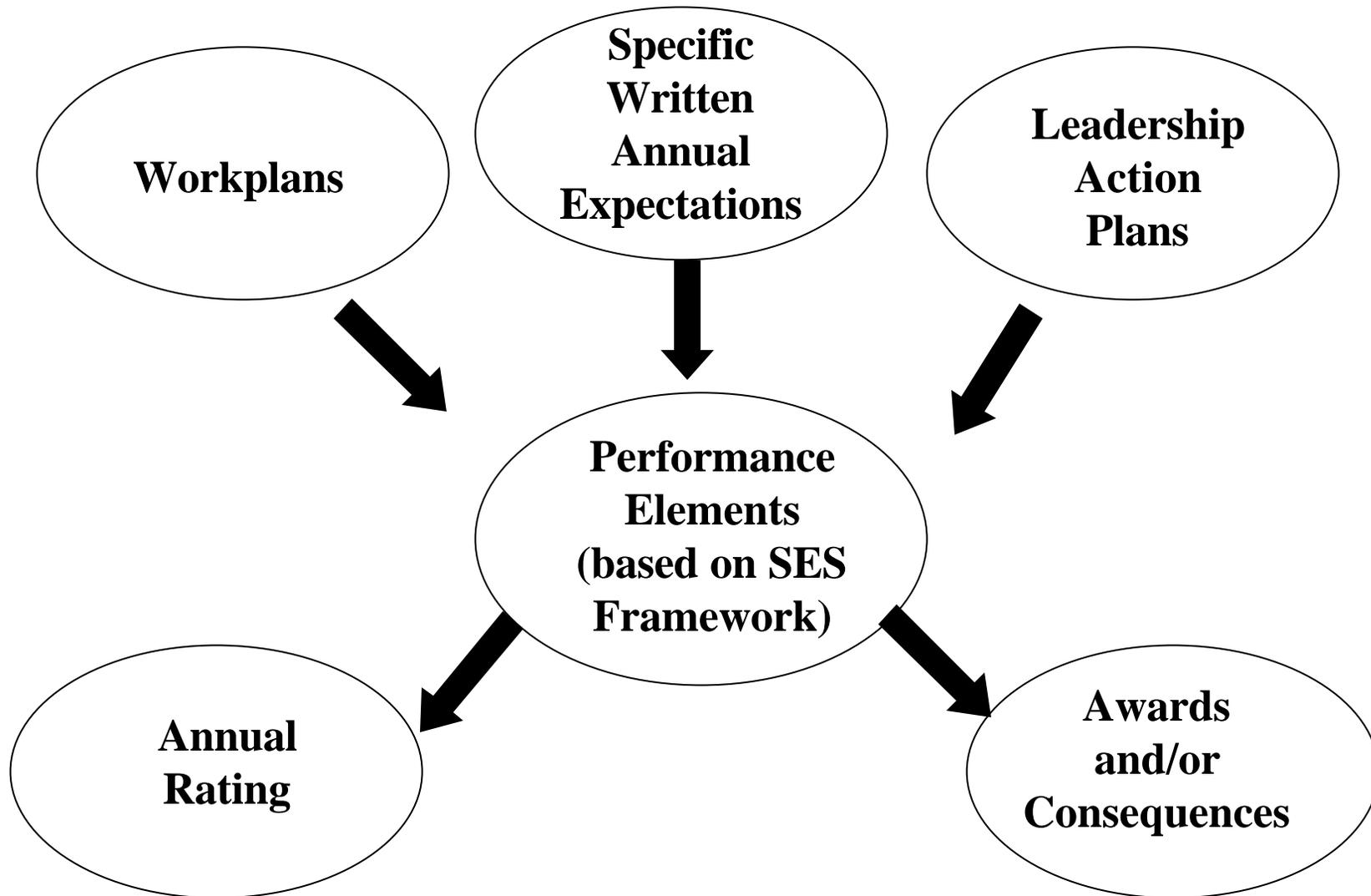
### **5. Accountability**

I will review with my supervisor and get his approval for the new performance standards and leadership action plans with win-win agreements formats. I will obtain the cooperation of the directors and together we will brief my supervisor about how the new system will work. This will be accomplished no later than March 15, 2000.

New performance standards and personal leadership action plans with win-win agreements for all directors will be in place by March 31, 2000.



# SERO Performance Management System



# Leadership Performance Standards

Based on Framework of SES Core Competencies

## Leading Change

Leads and motivates employees to incorporate the agency's vision, mission, strategic planning, values, and quality management initiative into the fabric of the organization. Demonstrates and encourages creative thinking and innovation. Designs and implements continuous process improvements. Pursues self-development, seeking feedback from others and opportunities to master new knowledge.

## Leading People

Designs and implements strategies which maximize employee potential and foster high standards for accomplishment of the work. Provides leadership in setting the workforce's expected performance levels to achieve the organization's objectives. Empowers people by sharing power and authority. Fosters an environment where cultural diversity thrives and enhances the accomplishment of the mission. Fosters commitment, team spirit, pride, trust, and group identity. Resolves conflicts in a positive and constructive manner. Deals effectively with labor/management and quality of worklife issues. Develops leadership in others, through coaching and mentoring. Takes disciplinary actions when other means have not been successful.

## Achieving Results – CRITICAL

Achieves results by formulating regional work plans in accordance with the agency strategic plan. In consultation with cooperating organizations and consistent with the strategic plan, sets specific goals and objectives for program performance. Develops strategies to accomplish the goals and objectives. Monitors results and takes timely and appropriate action when expected results are not being achieved. Maintains focus, intensity, and persistence even under adversity. Ensures customer service standards are developed and met.

## Business Acumen

Administers human, financial, material, and information resources in a manner which instills public trust and accomplishes the agency's mission. Uses new technology to enhance decision making and improve efficiency and effectiveness. Assesses current and future staffing needs based on organization goals and budget realities. Finds ways to maintain excellence despite reduced numbers of staff. Proactively plans for reduced staff levels to minimize the impact on the quality of work when staffing levels decline. Establishes and assures the use of internal controls for financial systems. Effectively manages budget allocations.

## Building Coalitions/Communication

Represents and speaks for the organizational unit and its work (e.g. presenting, explaining, selling, defining and negotiating) to those within and outside the office. Makes clear and convincing oral presentations to individuals and groups. Establishes and maintains effective working relationships with internal organizational units. Develops and enhances alliances with external groups (e.g. other agencies, State and local governments, grassroots organizations, and member of Congress, as appropriate). Works in groups and teams, gaining cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals.

## EEO/Civil Rights – CRITICAL

Develops plans and implements initiatives to achieve and continue progress toward workforce diversity. Communicates to and sets a positive example for staff in support of the Agency commitment to workforce diversity. Ensures timely submission, implementation, and effective monitoring of EO plans; and where necessary, initiates timely action to correct problems. Provides appropriate training and other developmental opportunities in EO, workforce diversity, and nondiscriminatory service to USDA customers. Assures equal treatment and EO in all aspects of Federal employment. Responds promptly to employee allegations of discrimination, with the goal of resolving appropriate cases at the lowest possible level. In delivery of programs and/or functions, makes positive efforts to serve all populations equally, including groups traditionally underserved.

## EEO/Civil Rights (Cont)

Establishes and substantially achieves contracting goals for small, 8(a), minority, and women contractors. Provides evidence of outreach efforts to serve underrepresented populations. Establishes EEO performance expectations for employees in assigned organization and articulates measures for successfully meeting and exceeding performance requirements. Implements and enforces all applicable policies, regulations, rules, memorandums, etc. developed as a result of the Civil Rights Action Team Report. Incorporates FNS CR Performance Plan into Agency or staff office strategic plan and annual operating plan developed in compliance with Government Performance and Results Act. Factors related to quality, quantity and timeliness will be met as described in FNS CR Performance Plan.

## Performance Management for Non-Supervisors

- Individual Work Plans
- Clear expectations set at beginning of year – reviewed at mid-year
- Future Plans
  - Individual action plans with win-win agreements