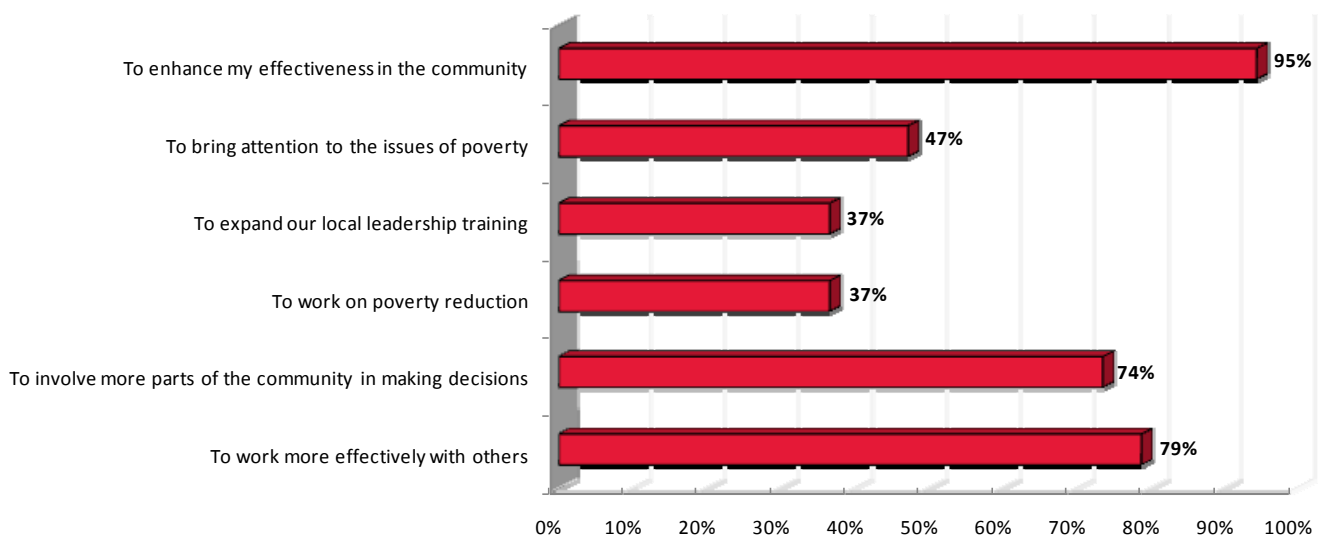


HORIZONS GROWS MORE LEADERS IN VILLISCA

Building the leadership skills of a core group of Villisca residents was the second phase of Horizons. Taught by three trained local volunteers, 21 people participated in 30-40 hours of leadership training. The participants included 71% who said they had no previous leadership training, and just 14% who characterized themselves as “a person who makes community decisions.”

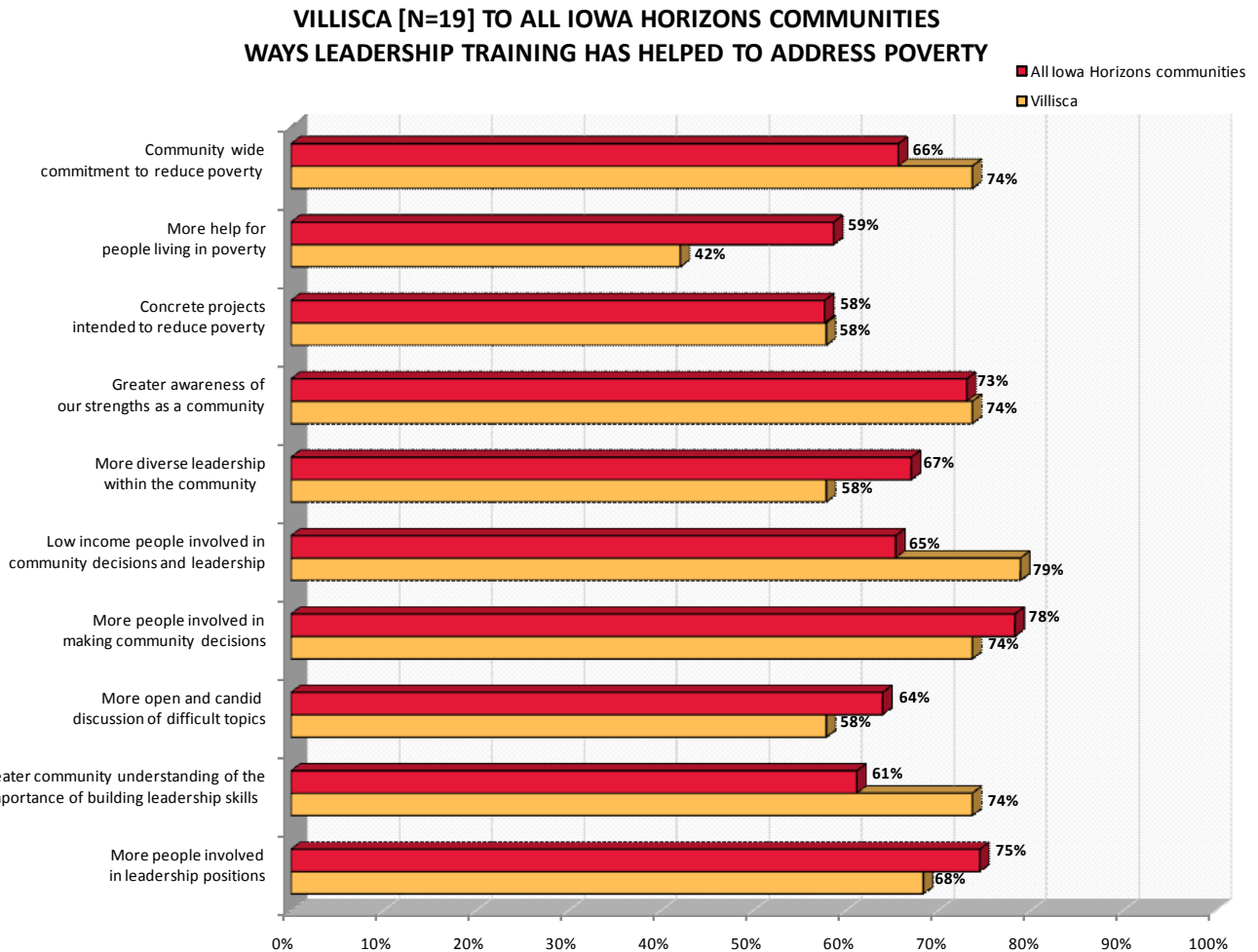
Participants completed surveys before and after the series of classes to assess the outcomes of this intensive training. Nearly all (95%) increased their knowledge of leadership skills—identifying community problems, leading productive meetings, managing conflict, and putting ideas into community action. They also reported plans to put their talents to work. For example, 8 in 10 intend to use their leadership skills to work more effectively with others; 95% of participants said the training would enhance their effectiveness in the community; and 37% intend to work on poverty reduction.

VILLISCA [N=19]
INTENTIONS TO PUT LEADERSHIP SKILLS INTO ACTION



At the conclusion of the training, participants were asked to identify ways the leadership training had helped them and others to address poverty in Villisca. The next chart reports the views of Villisca participants and those in all 14 Iowa communities that are participating in the 18-month Horizons program. Momentum for community action is building. The majority (68%) agreed that more people are aware of poverty. Nearly 2 in 3 (63%) said the community is discussing poverty and what to do about it, and about half (47%) observed more people stepping up to assist those in poverty.

One in 3 (32%) of the Villisca leaders see efforts to create changes in public policy regarding poverty reduction. And roughly mid-way through the Horizons project, 1 in 6 (16%) participants reported that the community is taking concrete steps to address poverty.



Horizons is an 18-month program carried out by Iowa State University Extension with funding from the Northwest Area Foundation. Leadership Plenty® is the leadership training offered to Horizons communities in partnership with the Pew Partnership for Civic Change.

To learn more about the Horizons program visit www.extension.iastate.edu/horizons/ or contact Ruth Freeman, Horizons Director, rofreema@iastate.edu; 515-386-3611.

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July 2009