

# Stats and Stories

## Analysis of Asset Mapping Initiatives in Rural Coastal Regions of Newfoundland

Brennan Lowery

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Amsterdam

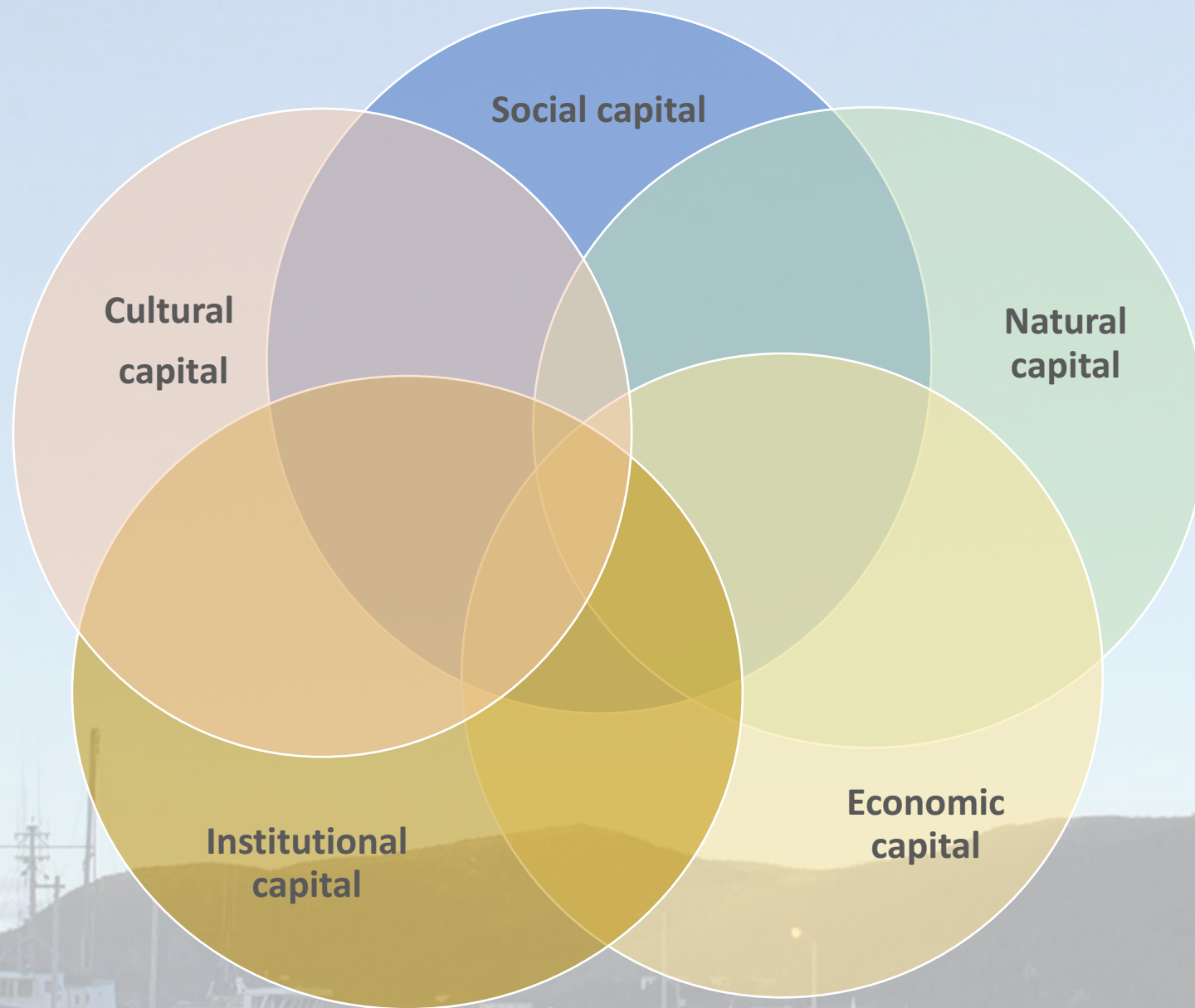


# What does sustainability mean for rural coastal communities?





Source: UN Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, n.d.



# Identifying community assets

- Asset mapping is about identifying, cataloguing, and/or measuring the assets present in a community (Fuller et al., 2014).
- Extensive community participation in identification and analysis of assets
- Asset categories:
  - Capacities: individuals, associations, institutions (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).
  - Community capital (Emery & Flora, 2006).
    - Ecological
    - Economic
    - Socio-cultural

# Measuring assets of sustainable communities

## Sustainability indicators (SIs):

- Identifying measurable trends in a community to track sustainable development
- Transition from expert-driven to participatory (Bell & Morse, 2008; Reed et al., 2006; Lyytimaki et al., 2014)
- Balancing act:
  - Local aspirations and global sustainability priorities (Fraser et al., 2006)
  - Self-perceived well-being and official data
  - Tangible and intangible assets
  - Quantitative and qualitative data

# Narrative approach to sustainable community development

- Asset-Based Community Development is about “starting with what is strong, instead of what is wrong” (Russell, 2016)
- Stories can serve as powerful tools for describing the strengths and assets of communities
- Community archetypes (Sandercock, 2006)
- Narrative policy framework (Jones et al., 2014)

# Narratives about sustainability in rural Newfoundland and Labrador







## Last year was the worst year in history for births in Newfoundland and Labrador



Preliminary records show there were 900 more deaths than births last year



Terry Roberts · CBC News · Posted: Jan 22, 2019 7:00 AM NT | Last Updated: January 22



*“...the fertility rate plummets even more in small communities, with researchers saying anywhere from 100 to 120 small communities are now beyond the point of no return ” (Roberts, 2018).*

## \$6M ferry service for 114 people: But don't mention resettlement on St. Brendan's

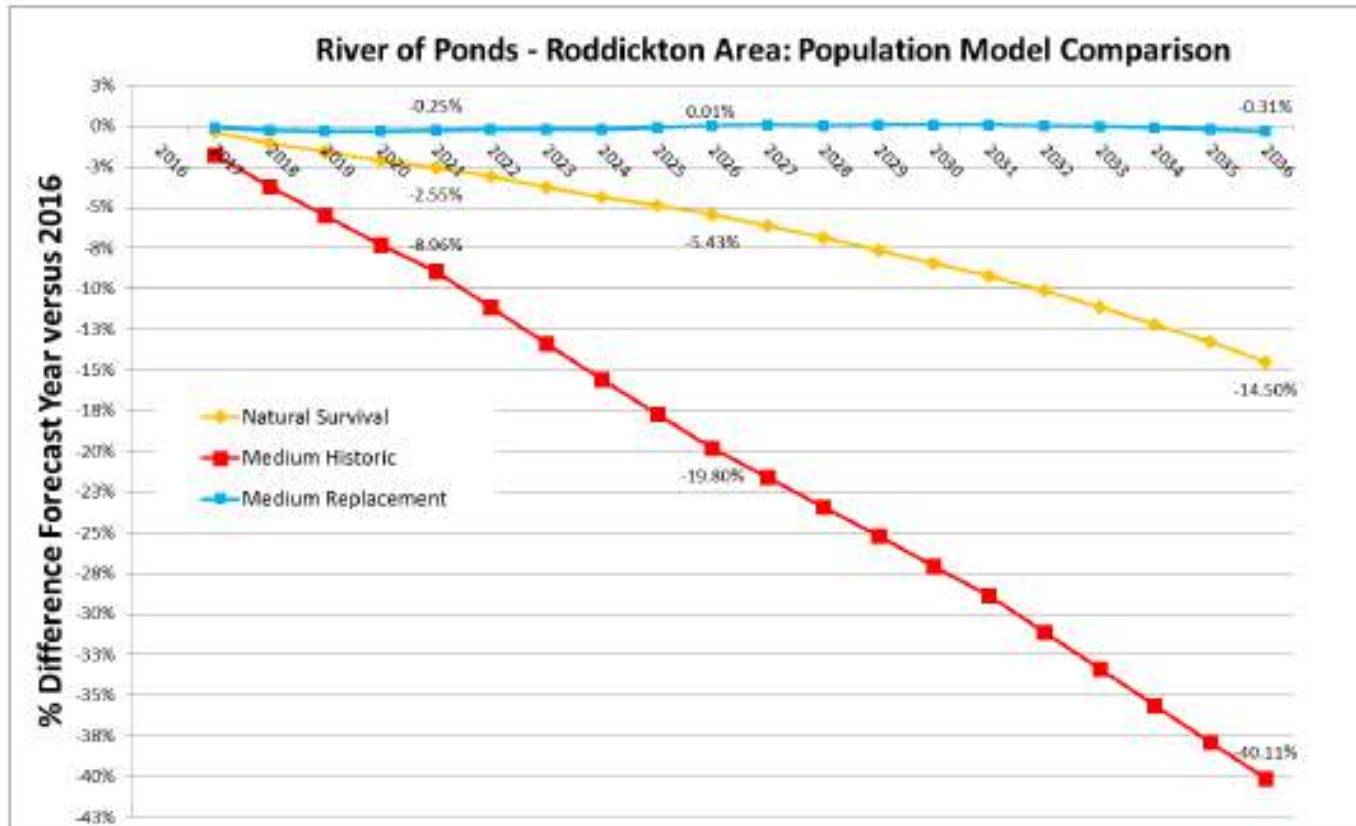


Transportation minister admit numbers 'don't work'



Terry Roberts · CBC News · Posted: Oct 30, 2017 7:00 AM NT | Last Updated: October 31, 2017





**Figure 3.3: River of Ponds – Roddickton Area: Natural Survival, Historic Survival and Medium Replacement Models Predicted Percent Population Change (Baseline Year = 2016).**

Source: Simms & Ward, 2017.

*“That's the story of the Northern Peninsula: heavy youth out-migration; one of the oldest median ages in the country; an economic base teetering on the brink.”*

*T. Roberts, Nov. 8, 2016.*

# Project Objectives

1. Identify past and present asset mapping initiatives in rural NL
2. Determine how these initiatives came about
3. Assess whether any lasting outcomes resulted from the identified asset mapping initiatives
4. Identify the factors that enabled or inhibited these initiatives from making a positive impact on regional economic development and sustainability

# Methods

- Identification of rural asset mapping initiatives
- Desk review of initiatives based on publicly available documents
- Interviews with key stakeholders in each region (19 total)
- Analysis of interview findings, reporting
- Dissemination



# Methods

## Step Zero approach

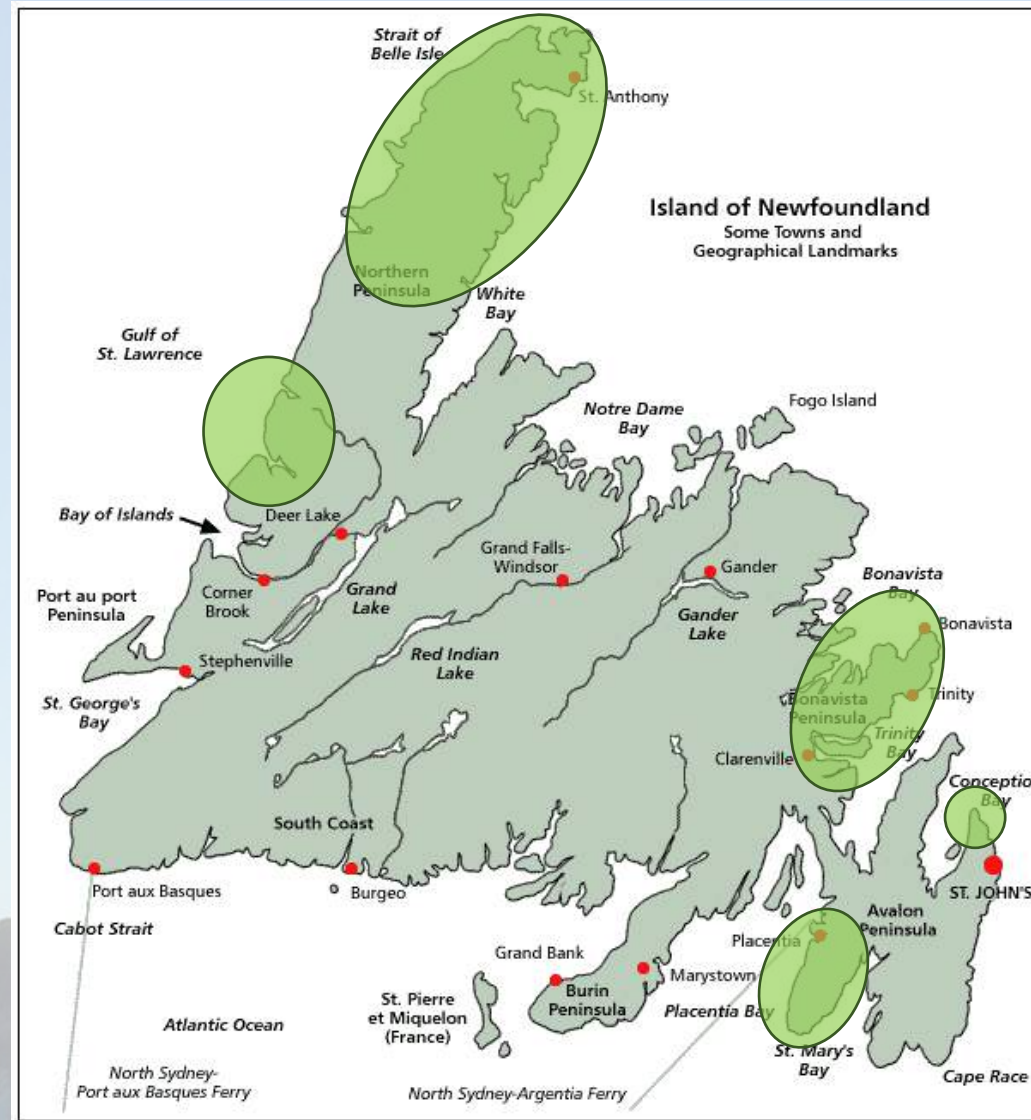
- Approach to assessing governance tools to understand the pre-implementation phases that can affect later outcomes (Chuenpagdee & Jentoft, 2007; Chuenpagdee et al., 2013).
- Examination of step zero factors for each rural asset mapping initiative:
  - Which groups introduced them
  - How local stakeholders were engaged
  - The role of external actors (e.g. government, university)
  - What frameworks were employed
  - Presence of a local champion



# Findings



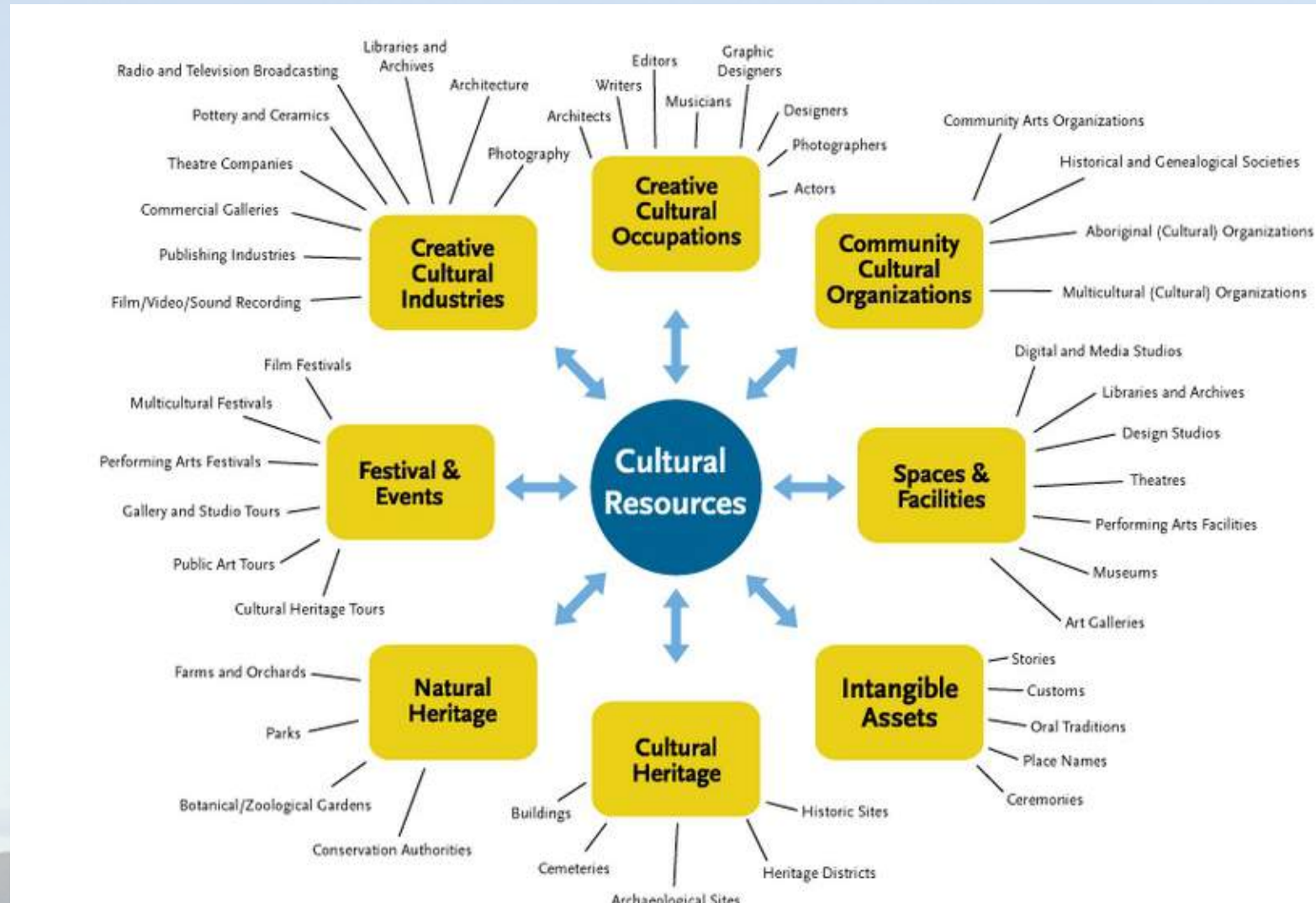
# Case Study Regions



# Branch Cultural Heritage Asset Mapping



# Branch Cultural Heritage Inventory



# Great Northern Peninsula Asset Mapping Study



# GNP Asset Mapping Study



# Socio-Economic Trends in Study Regions

Region	Population (2016)	Land Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Population Density (residents/km <sup>2</sup> )	Nearest City	Key Sectors	Population change, 5-year	Median Age	Unemployment Rate	Regional Boundaries of Initiative
<b>Tip of Northern Peninsula</b>	11,315	10471.53	1.08	Corner Brook (285 - 475 km)	Healthcare & social assistance: 16.1%; Manufacturing: 13.4%; Natural resources: 12.5%	-7.6%	52	37.3%	Rural Secretariat region
<b>Gros Morne</b>	3,335	1816.23	1.84	Corner Brook (124-167 km)	Healthcare & social assistance: 15.8%; Construction: 13.3%; Accommodation & food services: 12.2%	-5.1%	53	38.0%	National Park boundaries
<b>Bonavista Peninsula</b>	27,425	7601.56	3.61	St. John's (102-310 km)	Construction: 15.1%; Retail trade: 13.9%; Healthcare & social assistance: 13.3%	-2.9%	51	21.0%	Rural Secretariat region
<b>Cape Shore</b>	6,190	2941.72	2.10	St. John's (130-162 km)	Construction: 17.0%; Healthcare & social assistance: 11.8%; Retail trade: 11.1%	-5.1%	55	23.0%	Regional Economic Development Board
<b>Killick Coast</b>	4,205	96.54	43.56	St. John's (26 km)	Construction: 14.2%; Healthcare & social assistance: 13.9%; Retail trade: 13.4%	13.2%	40	12.2%	Integrated Community Sustainability Plan region

# Project Initiators





“It was just coming out of conversations that we were having around the table, and us wanting to dig in a little bit deeper of what was going on”.

Personal communication (Bonavista Peninsula),  
March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019.



# Motivations for Initiative



“I was trying to tell the story: ‘Look people, just...look at how much is here. What can we do? Why, why are these assets and resources not being put to use?’ They’re very valuable. And...there should be something happening around the use of these resources”

Personal communication (Branch), March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

“I think we were trying to capture that period in time, and there was so much happening, and we wanted to figure out how we could capture it so that we could kind of...figure out where we were going and trying to collect what was happening. It seemed like it was a lot of things happening but nobody was capturing it”.

Personal communication (Bonavista Peninsula),  
March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

# Level of Community Engagement



“...more a sense it was university-driven, yeah. We were a primary source of information for the university, yeah. And that was it”

(Personal communication (GNP), March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019).



“...the question was simple: ‘what in your community would you like to preserve?’ And we did just sticky notes, you know...And there was 75 people on a Sunday afternoon, which was, you know, towns of Branch’s size, was unheard of...”

Personal communication, March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

# Political Shifts





**“...the reason it stopped was there was a change of government...there was no other reason...the demise of Council happened through a phone call a couple of hours before the Budget came out”**

Personal communication (Bonavista Peninsula), March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019.



“I think it kind of died because the RED Board closed...I think if the RED Boards had stayed around, the project would have continued...”

Personal communication (Branch), March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019.



# Recap of Key Findings

- Rural NL communities and regions have used asset mapping in different ways:
  - Bring attention to undervalued assets in the community
  - Understand changes happening due to development and other pressures
- Two competing narratives about rural NL communities and regions
- Reliance on regional development institutions
- Vulnerability to political shifts (e.g. change in government)
- More community engagement = greater perceived outcomes

“... you don't have to tell my story. We...I can tell my story. But you have a story. You have a different story. You look at what's different to your community and try to promote it in that way”

Personal communication (Bonavista Peninsula),  
March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019

# Assessment of Factors for Asset Mapping Success

Initiative	Scale of Initiative	Timeframe	Initiating Organization(s)	Framework Used/Use of Software	Motivations for Initiative	Level of Community Engagement	Outcomes of Project	Barriers to Success	Potential for Follow-up
<b>AM - Great Northern Peninsula</b>	Regional development body (REDB)	2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ACOA</li> <li>Grenfell Campus researchers</li> </ul>	Community capital framework informed by ABCD	Create initial inventory of regional assets to demonstrate potential for economic development, inform private and public investment	Low	Extensive inventory of regional assets with potential to be displayed visually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scope of project prevented in-depth analysis of assets at regional level</li> <li>Sub-regional divides (e.g. north vs. south side of Bonne Bay, east vs. west side of Northern Peninsula)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with regional organizations (e.g. CBDC Nortip, VTTA)</li> <li>Potential for sub-regional initiative</li> <li>Integration with MNL asset management program</li> </ul>
<b>AM - Bonne Bay</b>	Regional development body (REDB)				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand changing conditions within and across communities, inform private and public investment</li> </ul>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong regional organizations (Gros Morne Co-operating Society, Parks Canada, etc.)</li> <li>STAR process asset inventory created in 2016</li> </ul>
<b>CHR - Branch</b>	Municipality/ Regional Development Body (REDB)	2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zone 18 RED Board</li> <li>Destination St. John's Memorial University researchers/NL Statistics Agency</li> <li>Town of Branch</li> </ul>	Cultural heritage framework adapted from Ontario Cultural Planning Toolkit; Creation of website with GIS-based inventory of assets using multimedia tools; plan to link to Community Accounts	Communicate the value of the community's cultural assets and potential for economic development; preserve community heritage	High	Community pride and sense of hope; cataloguing of community's cultural heritage assets; creation of website displaying assets visually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defunding of RED Boards in 2012</li> <li>Inability to translate asset inventory into a tangible community development tool</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sub-regional initiative in Cape Shore communities</li> <li>Potential to connect regional cultural asset mapping to similar Irish initiatives</li> </ul>
<b>Killick Coast Sustainability Self-Assessment/ICSP</b>	Inter-municipal (3 municipalities)	2010-2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Municipalities</li> <li>Zone 19 RED Board</li> </ul>	ICSP NL framework (5 pillars of sustainability)	Initial motivation from financial incentive; later interest in using ICSP committee to share resources, information, and advocate for communities	Moderate	Creation of ICSP; creation of inter-municipal committee that met for seven years after plan completion; spin-off regional collaborations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disbanding of ICSP Committee in 2017</li> <li>Perceived lack of relevance of ICSP implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informal cross-community collaborations</li> <li>Follow-up sustainability assessment to monitor changes in the region</li> </ul>
<b>Clarenville-Bonavista Indicators</b>	Regional development body (Rural Secretariat region)	2013-2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Council</li> <li>Grenfell Campus</li> </ul>	Homegrown sustainability indicator framework informed by resident survey and Regional Council discussions; Later	Understanding rapid socio-economic changes in the region; creating baseline assessment of	High	Creation of regional sustainability assessment tool; dissemination to key regional stakeholders and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disbanding of Rural Secretariat in 2016</li> <li>Sub-regional divides (e.g. Clarenville area vs. tip of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-assessment of region using indicators to monitor progress</li> <li>Integration with existing cross-community and cross-sectoral</li> </ul>

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