

Stronger Economies Together

Strategies for Building New Economic Opportunities

Module Six: Exploring Regional Assets and Barriers

Lionel J. Beaulieu, Purdue Center for Regional Development, Purdue University
Michael Wilcox, University of Tennessee



Module Six: *Exploring Regional Assets and Barriers*

Module Six explores the regional assets and barriers to consider before finalizing regional goals.

Using the *Participants' Guide*

The *Participants' Guide* contains handouts designed to assist participants in planning their economic development effort.

Group Exercises

- Slide 3: Reflecting on the last session
- Slides 7-8: Tools to uncover hidden people assets (Handouts One and Two)
- Slides 12-14: Uncovering Assets of Voluntary Associations & Local Formal Institutions (Handout Three)
- Slide 17: Defining the capitals (Handout Four)
- Slide 21: Sample Assets and Barriers Table (Handout Five)
- Slide 22: Group Activity (Handout Six)
- Slide 25: Final reflections

References

Beaulieu, L.J. (2002). Mapping the assets of your community: A key component for building community capacity. *SRDC Publication: 227*. Mississippi State, MS: Southern Rural Development Center. Retrieved from http://srdc.msstate.edu/trainings/educurricula/asset_mapping/asset_mapping.pdf

BusinessDictionary.com. (2011). *Voluntary associations: Definition*. Retrieved from <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/voluntary-organization.html>

Emery, M. & Flora, C. (2006, Spring). Spiraling-Up: Mapping Community Transformation with Community Capitals Framework. *Community Development: Journal of the Community Development Society*, 37, 19-35.

Etzen, D.S. & Baca-Zinn, M. (2001). *In conflict and order, understanding society*, (9th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.



Flora, C.B. & Flora, J.L. (2008). *Rural Communities: Legacy and change* (3rd ed.). Boulder, CO: Westview Press. Retrieved from <http://www.soc.iastate.edu/staff/cflora/nrcrcd/capitals.html>

Jacobs, C. (2007). Measuring success in communities: Understanding the community capital framework. *Extension Extra*. South Dakota State University. Retrieved from <http://agbiopubs.sdstate.edu/articles/ExEx16012.pdf>

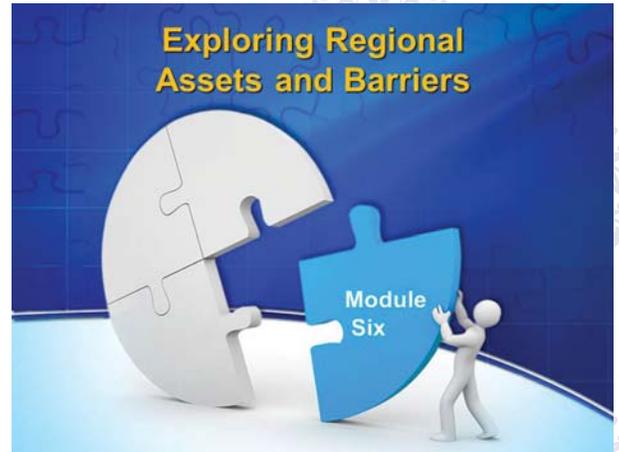
Kretzmann, J.P. & Mcknight, J.L. (1993). *Building communities from the inside out: a path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets*. Chicago, IL: ACTA Publications.

Instructions:

This module explores the regional assets and barriers teams need to consider before finalizing regional goals.

Script:

“This module, Exploring Regional Assets and Barriers, will familiarize you with (1) tools available to help discover the variety of assets existing in the region and (2) possible barriers that might impede the successful pursuit and achievement of your team’s regional goals.”



Slide: 1

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

This module will focus primarily on the evidence-base for the plan. One component of evidence is an assessment of the regional assets and barriers that may help or hinder the regional plan's progress.

Script:

“One element of evidence-based is an assessment of the region's assets and potential barriers that may interact with the regional plan. This module will explore this component of your high quality plan in detail.”



Slide: 2

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Before beginning this module, assessing progress to date is important. In particular, the regional teams should review its vision statement and SMART goals as they will become guideposts for this session.

Script:

“Before focusing on today’s session, let’s take a minute review the work from the last session. [Ask teams/volunteers who were refining the vision statement and SMART goals to read their revisions. Allow for discussion.]

These elements will serve as the guideposts for today’s session.”

Reflecting on the Last Session

Review of:

- Vision statement
- SMART goals
- Other thoughts or comments?



Slide: 3

Time: 5-10 Minutes

Instructions:

Briefly cover each of the bullet points on this slide.

Script:

“In this module, we will explore the asset-based community development (ABCD) approach to regional planning which includes a discussion of the four areas of regional assets and resources. Next, we will examine the seven community capitals and outline the value of linking the asset-based community development process with the seven community capitals framework. Finally, you will have the opportunity to apply the ABCD and community capitals concepts to your region, a process that will help uncover the many regional resources that can be tapped to help meet your team’s regional economic development goals. At the same time, we will honestly assess barriers that might threaten your team’s regional efforts.”

Outline of Module Six

- Introduce asset-based community development (ABCD)
- Explore the link between the ABCD process and the seven community capitals framework
- **Deliverable:** Conduct an initial assessment of regional assets and barriers
- **HQP:** Draft assets and barriers assessment for plan

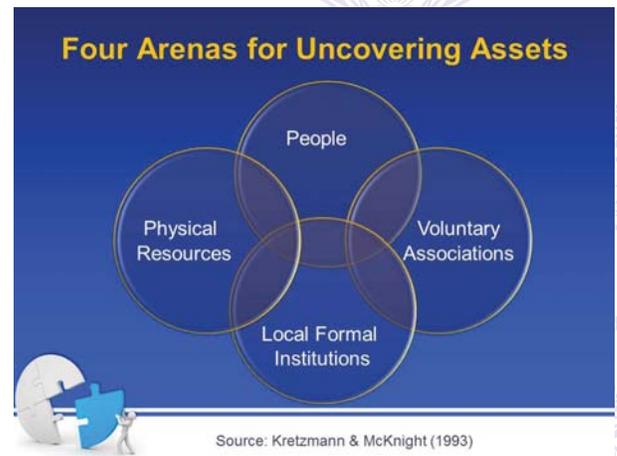


Slide: 4

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions :

This information is adapted from a volume by John Kretzmann and John McKnight titled, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*. Published in 1993, this book helped launch the growth of the asset-based community development movement in the U.S. and in a host of countries across the globe. It remains a highly respected process relevant for communities and regions of all types – rich or poor; urban or rural; demographically diverse or not; growing or declining; etc. This slide introduces the basic framework for doing asset mapping. Simply put, we seek to discover the capacities of individuals, voluntary associations, and local formal institutions, as well as the breadth of physical resources that exist in the region.



Slide: 5

Time: 1 Minute

Source:
Kretzmann, J.P. & McKnight, J.L. (1993). *Building communities from the inside out: a path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets*. Chicago, IL: ACTA Publications.

Script:

“The assets that exist in a region, or its communities and counties, can be discovered in the following four arenas:

- People
- Area physical resources
- Voluntary associations
- Local formal institutions

Let’s explore each of these in more detail in the next few slides.”

Instructions:

This slide introduces the asset-based community development (ABCD) approach – including the value of uncovering the talents and skills of both key leaders and of regular citizens.

Script:

“Successful regions get people involved in regional improvement activities. The asset-based community development (ABCD) approach argues that many local people who have skills and talents can be mobilized to help carry out the activities necessary to achieve your regional goals. You just have to take the time to identify the visible, as well as the more hidden, assets of local people.

Certainly, the most obvious assets are among those who serve in leadership positions in the region such as business, education and government leaders. Others, because of their family history or reputation, are seen as influential people. At the same time, we have a sizable number of local people whose skills and talents are rarely, if ever, mobilized for the purpose of helping improve their communities or regions. The ABCD approach reminds us to tap both traditional and nontraditional people resources to take an active part in the regional initiatives.”



The slide features a dark blue background with the title "People Assets" in yellow. A yellow circle with the word "People" is in the top right. A list of three bullet points is on the left, and a small image of a pot of soup is on the right. A small figure with a puzzle piece is at the bottom left.

People Assets

People

- Uncovers hidden talents and skills of people in your region
- Identifies people in key positions with access to important resources
- Taps the skills/talents of citizens who can help



Slide: 6

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Introduce the regional team to two tools that have been developed to uncover the skills of individuals who may be valuable in helping carry out a variety of regional economic development activities. Handout One: Capacity Inventory of Individuals identifies the skills, talents and interests of individuals across a variety of job-related categories. Handout Two: Community Participation and Leadership Inventory helps find people that have the beginning seeds of community leadership. Encourage the team to use either or both in the regional planning and implementation activities.

Script:

“How might your team find local people with the talents and skills to advance your regional development goals and strategies? Two important tools will help you with that challenge. Handout One: Capacity Inventory of Individuals and Handout Two: Community Participation and Leadership Inventory are helpful tools in this endeavor.”

[Move to the next slide that offers, in table form, information on each of these tools.]



Slide: 7

Time: 2 Minutes

Handouts:

One- Capacity Inventory of Individuals

Two- Community Participation and Leadership Inventory

Source:

Beaulieu, L.J. (2002). Mapping the assets of your community: A key component for building community capacity. *SRDC Publication: 227*. Mississippi State, MS: Southern Rural Development Center. Retrieved from http://srdc.msstate.edu/trainings/educurricula/asset_mapping/asset_mapping.pdf

Instructions:

Briefly highlight the information outlined in this table. Encourage the team members to use these handouts after the session to gather important information from community residents.

Script:

“This table highlights what the two people tools are designed to do and why they are important to your regional efforts.

Capacity Inventory of Individuals: Helps identify the full spectrum of skills, talents, and interests that local residents have developed at work, school, home, or other community venues. Individuals are asked to identify those skills/talents in which they feel they excel or ones they most enjoy using.

Community Participation & Leadership Inventory: Finds a pool of potential leaders and volunteers in the region. A large number of people who have not taken community leadership roles have the ingredients that make them ideal candidates. All it takes is an opportunity to exercise these talents or to be asked to contribute to some worthwhile regional effort. Many of these individuals have had a modest amount of involvement in community activities, civic clubs, parent/teacher groups, or other organization-related activities. These experiences, however limited in their nature, provide the building blocks for expanding leadership in the region.

Applying this second tool helps locate people who have had some type of active involvement in one or more of the organizations highlighted in this inventory or who have worked on specific issues of importance to their neighborhoods or communities. These efforts represent the very seeds of leadership. Handout Two can help your regional team uncover the leadership potential that exists in local people, including those who have been historically left out of decision-making activities. The key is to make sure these individuals are offered the opportunity to further advance their leadership skills and to be part of your broader, more inclusive regional team.”



Tool	What It Does	Why It's Important
Capacity Inventory of Individuals	Zeroes in on the skills people have developed	Finds people with the skills needed to get projects and programs implemented
Community Participation and Leadership Inventory	Finds emerging leaders and uncovers leadership potential in the region	Expands leadership and broadens the number of people working on regional goals

Slide: 8

Time: 5 Minutes

Instructions:

Discuss some of the elements of the physical resources asset mapping step.

Script:

“The physical resources asset mapping arena includes a variety of resources, both natural and human-made. A few are listed on the slide, such as water resources (rivers, lakes, oceans), land areas (farms, mountains, forestlands), and sites of historical or cultural importance. Vacant and underutilized buildings are also included. From the ABCD perspective, these vacant facilities are not eyesores in a community, but assets that can be used for new and innovative purposes (such as business incubators). Also the quality and variety of the housing stock and the region’s road/transportation system are important physical resource considerations. Finally, important educational, workforce, and health-related structures are viewed as critical assets. What other types of physical resources are in this region?” [Allow for brief discussion.]

Physical Resources Natural & Human-Made

Physical
Resources

- Water and land-related amenities
- Vacant and underutilized buildings
- Historical and cultural sites
- Recreational facilities and parks
- Housing stock
- Educational centers
- Health facilities
- Roads and transportation systems



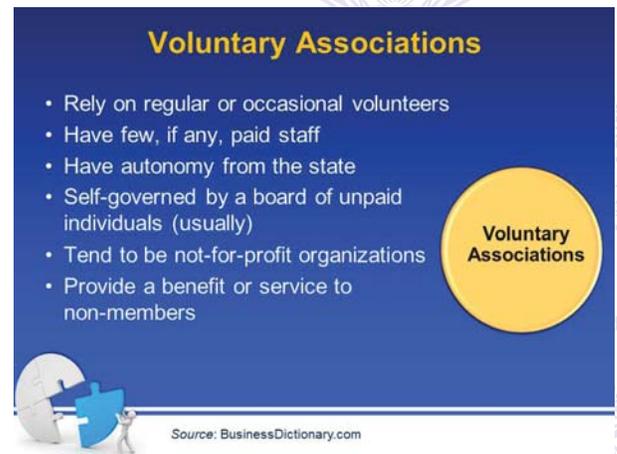
Slide: 9

Time: 5 Minutes

Instructions:

Highlight the characteristics of voluntary associations listed on the slide.

Script:



“Let’s define what is meant by voluntary associations:

Voluntary associations represent groups that work together on matters of shared interest. Some common features of voluntary organizations are outlined in the slide:

- Rely on regular or occasional volunteers
- Have few, if any, paid staff
- Have autonomy from the state
- Are self-governed by a board of unpaid individuals (usually)
- Tend to be not-for-profit organizations
- Provide a benefit or service to non-members

Certainly, voluntary groups can help promote the betterment of any neighborhood, community, or region, and it’s often through these types of groups that people are first willing to contribute their time and skills to worthy causes.”

Slide: 10

Time: 2 Minutes

Source: BusinessDictionary.com. (2011). *Voluntary associations: Definition*. Retrieved from <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/voluntary-organization.html>

Instructions:

Showcase the definition of local institutions.

Script:

“Local institutions are formal organizations that carry out, on an ongoing basis, activities to meet the important needs of local residents. Having strong local institutions can help a region survive and thrive. When local institutions are weak or absent, the vitality of a region can be jeopardized. In general, social scientists identify five primary institutions found in most societies – family, education, economy, political, and religion.”



Local Institutions

Local Formal Institutions

Formal organizations that:

- Provide programs, facilities and services to meet needs of residents
- Carry out functions vital to long-term community sustainability
- Influence the region's vitality by their presence and strength

Source: Etzen and Baca-Zinn, 2001; Sparknotes.com, 2006

Slide: 11

Time: 1 Minute

Source:

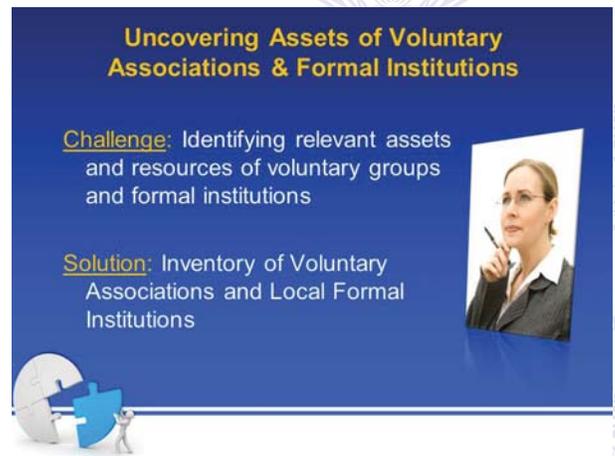
Etzen, D.S. & Baca-Zinn, M. (2001). *In conflict and order, understanding society* (9th ed.), Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Instructions:

Begin a discussion of Handout Three, a specific tool that can identify the voluntary associations and local formal institutions helpful in advancing the regional priorities.

Script:

“Now that we briefly defined both voluntary organizations and local formal institutions, you realize that identifying the relevant assets these groups can bring to your regional effort can be a challenge. Use Handout Three: Inventory of Voluntary Associations and Local Formal Institutions to help gather information about these organizations in your region. The next slide explores the information the survey collects.”



Slide: 12

Time: 1 Minute

Handout Three: Inventory of Voluntary Associations and Local Formal Institutions

Instructions:

Building on the work of Kretzmann and McKnight (to whom we referred in an earlier slide), this slide lists key information the regional team might want to collect on the voluntary associations and local formal institutions found in the region. Discuss this list with the team, sharing the additional information outlined in the script. Once you've reviewed the list and examined Handout Three, ask if they want to make any adjustments/additions to the form. If changes are recommended, the group should modify the document and then be prepared to implement it in their region.



Information Collected

- Mission or purpose
- Physical location
- Number of members and/or employees
- Current & planned activities or programs
- Partnering organizations
- Current resources:
 - Buildings
 - Equipment
 - Expertise
 - Grants, donations
 - External resources

The slide features several small images: a globe, a group of people in a meeting, a classroom, a person holding a large blue puzzle piece, and a piggy bank.

Slide: 13

Time: 5 Minutes

Script:

“The key information to collect from relevant voluntary associations and formal institutions in the region are listed on this slide:

Mission & Purpose: Helps determine if their reason for being is consistent with the efforts of your regional team

Physical Location: Understanding the geographic distribution of voluntary associations and key local institutions can aid in inviting and mobilizing groups across the region

Number of Members/Employees: Represents important ‘people’ resources this organization can access to help carry out various activities associated with your regional efforts

Current & Planned Community-Oriented Activities/Programs: The organization may have relevant projects or programs that can complement or add value to your regional goals and strategies. No need to reinvent the wheel. If projects or programs you need to support your regional efforts are already in place, tap the expertise of these organizations/institutions to be part of your team’s work in the region. Likewise, taking a look at the activities they have planned over the next 3-5 years can help you determine if their plans complement some of the goals and activities your SET team may be thinking of pursuing.

Script (Cont.):

Groups with which the Organization Works Closely

(Partners): Networking, networking, networking! Involving organizations with extensive networks of contacts that can be mobilized to support your regional efforts is a plus. By inviting a key organization to be part of your team, you are, in essence, expanding your reach to the many other groups and people with whom this organization works.

Current Resources: As you work in the region, knowing what groups have facilities available for meeting space or computer labs for training activities is helpful. Furthermore, knowing the specific areas in which these groups have technical or subject-matter expertise could be quite useful as you pursue your regional activities. Certainly, knowing if they have grants or monetary resources that can be tapped to support your regional work is quite important. For example, some may have funds that can be used to create micro-loan or angel investment programs needed to help support local entrepreneurial activities. Others may have strong working ties with federal agencies with grant funds or low-interest loans to support local and regional efforts. Finally, some groups may be linked to larger national organizations that have grants to support regional economic development activities.

Your team can use this key information as you develop your regional economic development plan.”

Information Collected

- Mission or purpose
- Physical location
- Number of members and/or employees
- Current & planned activities or programs
- Partnering organizations
- Current resources:
 - Buildings
 - Equipment
 - Expertise
 - Grants, donations
 - External resources

Slide: 13 continued

Time: 5 Minutes

Instructions:

Please use either one of these options with the regional team members.

Option 1:

We want to demonstrate the value and utility of Handout Three: Inventory of Voluntary Associations and Local Formal Institutions. Ask the regional team to identify the different voluntary groups and/or formal institutions to which they currently belong (i.e., Red Cross, Kiwanis, Jaycees, women's faith sharing group, soccer club). List all of these on a flip chart. Once the list is complete, pair up a person who does not belong to a particular voluntary associations or formal institutions with a team member who does belong to that organization. Ask the nonmember to use Handout Three to interview the member. Have the interviewer record the information on the handout. [NOTE: If you have more people who aren't involved in any type of voluntary or formal organization, have additional group members observe the interviews.]

While the interviews are taking place, post 5-6 flip chart sheets labeled "Current Projects" and 5-6 sheets labeled "Future Projects" around the room. After about 15 minutes of interviewing, stop the discussions and ask the interviewers to write the following on the designated charts:

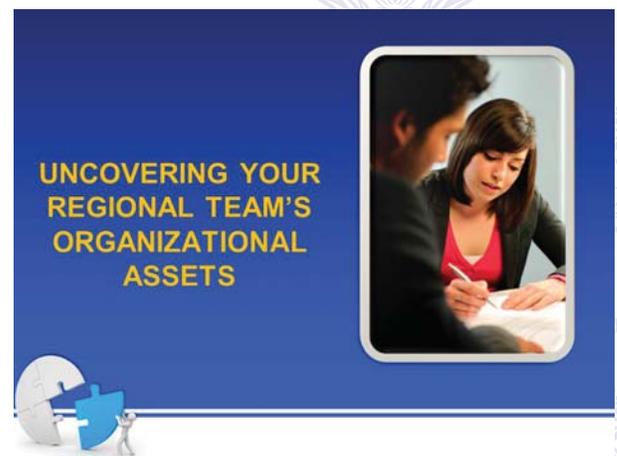
Current Projects:

- Name of the organization discussed
- 2-3 activities the organization is doing right NOW that may relate to the regional plan (brief description)

Future Community Projects:

- Name of the organization discussed
- Specific activities the organization hopes to get off the ground within the next 3+ years that may be related to the regional plan (brief description)

Debrief: When the posting to the charts is completed, ask the entire team to walk around and review the information. After a few minutes of reflecting, ask for their comments about the information. Any surprises? Do they see the value of collecting this type of information from relevant voluntary associations and formal institutions in the region?



Slide: 14

Time: 20+ Minutes

Instructions (Cont.):

Option 2:

Have each person complete the form, and then have them post information on flip charts located around the room with different topics listed on each of the sheets: (1)

Organizations or institutions to which you belong; (2) organization or institution **current activities** relevant to the regional planning efforts; (3) organization or institution's **future activities** related to the region's plan; and (4) **external resources** that the organization or institution can access that could contribute to regional economic development initiatives. Once charts are complete, debrief as described above.

This activity is designed to help the group realize the value of gathering this information since various groups may be focusing their attention on issues similar to those being considered by the SET regional team. By linking the hard work of these organizations, the team increases the level of resources and energy that might be available to tackle these issues of shared interest in the region.

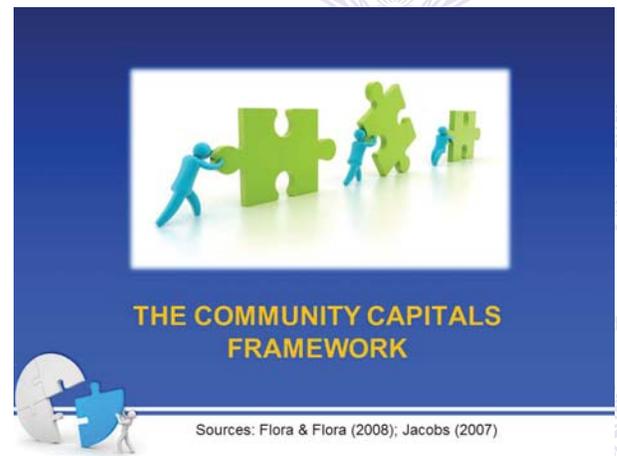


Slide: 14 continued

Time: 20+ Minutes

Instructions:

After completing the discussion of asset mapping, introduce another framework developed by Cornelia Flora and Jan Flora, two community sociologists at Iowa State University. They note that communities have seven different types of “capitals” that serve as resources for a community or region. Use this slide to introduce the community capitals concept to the team.



Script:

“Now that we’ve explored the four types of assets in a region, we want to examine a second important framework that focuses on ‘community capitals.’ Developed by Cornelia and Jan Flora from Iowa State University, the framework suggests that the lifeblood of any community or region is shaped by the availability and strength of seven types of capitals. These capitals are resources that can be invested for the pursuit of positive changes in a region.

What are these seven capitals?” [Go the next slide.]

Slide: 15

Time: 1 Minute

Sources:

Flora, C.B. & Flora, J.L. (2008). *Rural Communities: Legacy and change* (3rd ed.). Boulder, CO: Westview Press. Retrieved from <http://www.soc.iastate.edu/staff/cflora/ncrcrd/capitals.html>

Jacobs, C. (2007). Measuring success in communities: Understanding the community capital framework. *Extension Extra*. South Dakota State University. Retrieved from <http://agbiopubs.sdstate.edu/articles/ExEx16012.pdf>

Instructions:

Name the seven community capitals and pose the question below.

Script:

“The seven capitals include Natural, Cultural, Human, Social, Political, Financial, and Built Capitals.

Why should we even care about the seven forms of capital in region? [Invite comments.]

The reason is pretty straightforward. Research has shown that places that invest and strengthen these capitals help contribute to vibrant communities and regions, including the development of strong economies and a high quality of life.”



Slide: 16

Time: 3 Minutes

Instructions:

Distribute Handout Four: The Seven Types of Community Capitals and have participants follow along as you briefly discuss the different capitals. The handout provides participants with a bit more information, including examples of each type of capital.

Script:

“The slide provides a synopsis of each of the capitals, and Handout Four provides a bit more detail, including some specific examples.

The biggest payoff for a region occurs when it is able to strengthen as many of these capitals as possible. Regions that are strong on many of these capitals are more likely to have strong, sustainable economies. Think about communities you know that are doing well, and I can almost guarantee that you will discover that they rate pretty high on several of these capitals.”

[Invite participants to share their observations on prospering communities and discuss which of the capitals they believe are strong in these communities.]

Defining the Capitals

Capitals	Definition
Natural	Quality & quantity of natural & environmental resources
Cultural	Values, norms, beliefs & traditions; includes historic material goods
Human	Education & skills of residents; learning opportunities, programs to build local leadership
Social	Connections among people & organizations; links inside & outside of region
Political	Ability to influence & enforce rules and regulations. Access to influential people in govt. positions; level of citizen engagement
Financial	Financial resources available for development efforts
Built	The infrastructure of the region – facilities, services, physical structures.

Slide: 17

Time: 5 Minutes

Handout Four: The Seven Types of Community Capitals

Instructions:

The scenario in the script demonstrates the “spiraling up” associated with community capitals

Script:

“One question that often comes up is something like this: ‘Is there a specific community capital that a region should try to invest in first, versus some other community capitals?’ The answer depends on the unique strengths and needs of each region. In other words, there is no one size fits all when it comes to which capital should be given precedence in the region over other community capitals. The region has to take stock of which capitals need immediate attention.

We know from past research studies that investments made in strengthening a specific type of community capital can often spur improvements in other community capitals.

Let’s assume for a moment that local leaders have reached out to a diversity of people in the region, seeking input on what should be included in their strategic plan for the region. The effort to touch base with more people strengthens communications and dialogue between local leaders and residents. In fact, local leaders decide to meet every three months with various communities and groups as a way to secure input and ongoing feedback from local residents. This activity brings about positive changes in two capitals – political and social. People feel more connected to local government and community leaders (political capital), and this helps build a greater amount of trust among these groups (social capital).

Let’s further assume that during these discussions, local residents urge the local leaders to focus attention on retaining and expanding local businesses and investing in new entrepreneurial ventures, so exciting new innovations can be launched in the region. The local leaders, working with the local chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, Extension community development educators and community college staff, launch a comprehensive business retention/expansion program. The team visits with local businesses and firms to find out what could be done to help sustain and build these enterprises. As a result, training and technical assistance is provided to these businesses, which improves the human capital skills of the business owners and of their employees. A local bank, when informed that some of the local firms are hoping to expand their operations, works with



Slide: 18

Time: 5 Minutes

Source: Emery, M. & Flora, C. (2006, Spring). Spiraling-Up: Mapping Community Transformation with Community Capitals Framework. *Community Development: Journal of the Community Development Society*, 37, 19-35.

Script (Cont.):

these businesses to secure the financial capital needed to grow their businesses. The improved financial position of these businesses allows them to lend more support to local schools and other worthwhile regional programs (thus contributing to social capital). Furthermore, the fact that these firms don't close their doors means that local buildings are not vacated, thus helping keep these built capital resources in productive use.

Suppose then, that the other major effort local leaders implement is an entrepreneurship program. With the help of the community college, chambers of commerce, the school system, and civic leaders, an incubator site is established at the community college. The program targets high school students to adults. The community college has mentors to help the entrepreneurs, and it creates an entrepreneurship support network to allow existing and potential entrepreneurs to seek advice and assistance from one another (human and social capital). To help with start-up funds, banks and the community foundation create a low-interest program (financial capital).

With the launch of the entrepreneurship initiative, talented youth and adults begin to stay in the region. Also, the effort attracts people with good education and workforce skills to the region. The influx of these talented individuals helps expand the human capital assets of the region.

Through this example, you can see how the initial effort by local leaders to reach out to citizens creates a domino effect, stimulating a variety of activities that have positive impacts on many community capitals. This symbolizes the spiraling up that occurs when you decide to strategically invest in one or more of the capitals. These investments have a catalytic effect on several other community capitals.”



Slide: 18 continued

Time: 5 Minutes

Source: Emery, M. & Flora, C. (2006, Spring). Spiraling-Up: Mapping Community Transformation with Community Capitals Framework. *Community Development: Journal of the Community Development Society*, 37, 19-35.

Instructions:

While determining assets is vital to a region's success, so is taking a realistic look at potential barriers that may interrupt or interfere with realizing their regional goals or strategies. Taking time to identify those factors that can serve as roadblocks for the regional team provides an opportunity to plan strategies to address these.

Script:

“We’ve discussed ways to identify regional assets and then classify them according to which capital they most closely align. However, anticipating potential roadblocks that you might face in the region can help you be prepared to address them before pursuing your goals. Keep in mind that some of these barriers might be either present in the region or outside of the region (such as one of the state agencies).”

Exploring Possible Barriers: The Other Dimension to Consider



Consider forces that might hinder achievement of your regional plan from:

- Within the region
- Outside the region

What can be done to address these possible barriers?



Slide: 19

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Now the regional team is ready to put some specific work into the asset mapping related to their regional goals. Have them divide into small teams around the regional goals they hope to pursue to build on one of the region's economic clusters. Take them through a process to discover some of the regional assets that can be mobilized to help the team pursue this goal, and get them to consider some of the barriers they may face as they seek to carry out the work in the region.

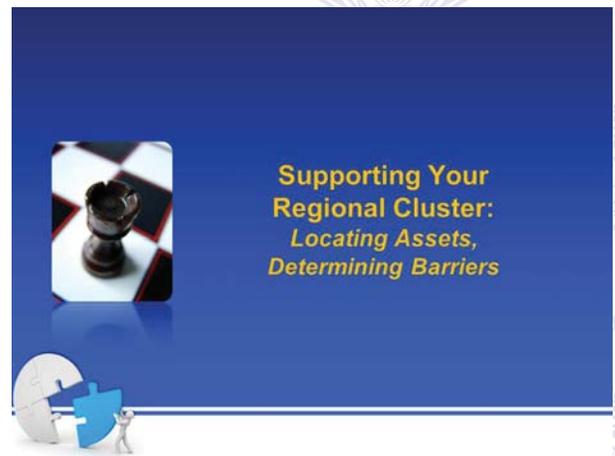
Script:

“Now that you have regional goals in mind and a baseline understanding of assets, we are ready to work on the details of the assets and barriers evidence base for the regional plan. Specifically, we will identify:

1. assets that might be available to support your strategy
2. the different capitals these assets represent
3. barriers that might interfere with your team's ability to get the strategy off the ground.

The next slide shows an example of this tool's potential value.”

[Move to the next slide.]



Slide: 20

Time: 1 Minute

Instructions:

Distribute Handout Five: Linking Assets, Community Capitals and Barriers- Sample, and walk the group through the example.

Script:

GOAL: Establish a public-private funded business incubator center in the region and house 15 business start-up firms in the facility (by December 2014) that provide goods/services to the region's identified cluster.			
Asset Type	Regional assets	Type(s) of capital	Potential Barriers
People	1. Chamber of Commerce President 2. Community college President 3. Community college faculty 4. Elected government leaders 5. Industry leaders	1. Human, Social 2. Human 3. Human 4. Financial, Natural, Built 5. Social, Financial, Human	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Citizens opposed to investing tax monies in this initiative• Lack of coordination among gov't leaders
Voluntary Associations	1. SCORE Chapter 2. Entrepreneur Network 3. Entrepreneurs Foundation 4. Junior Achievement 5. School PTAs	1. Human, Social, Cultural 2. Human, Social 3. Financial 4. Human 5. Human, Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disagreement on where to house incubator• Lack of coordination among organizations
Formal Institutions	1. Community College Bus Center 2. Community Bank and Trust 3. Community Foundation 4. City/county governments 5. State Econ. Dev. Regional Office	1. Human, Financial 2. Financial 3. Financial 4. Financial, Natural, Built 5. Built, Human, Natural	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Banks reluctant to lend money for the facility• Decline in state support for regional activities
Physical Resources	1. Empty Commercial Building 2. Community College Incubator 3. Public Library Computer Lab 4. School meeting rooms/labs	1. Built 2. Built, Human, Social 3. Built, Human 4. Built	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost• Availability of library• School leaders reluctant to open buildings after hours

“Here is an example of how assets, capitals, and barriers can be captured in a single table when considering a specific regional goal. As you can see, the goal is inserted at the top first, which, for this example, is to create a business incubator center, funded by public/private investments, that will house in the facility by December 2014, 15 business start-up firms that can provide goods and services to the region’s cluster. This strategy is designed to invest in businesses that represent import substitution activities, or to plug leakages in the region’s identified cluster(s).

Slide: 21

Time: 10 Minutes

Handout Five: Linking Assets, Community Capitals, and Barriers-Sample

Next, list assets in the region that could help with this strategy, classified by the four major types discussed in this module – people, voluntary associations, formal institutions, and physical resources. Then, label which community capitals these assets appear to best represent. Please note that some assets can represent more than one type of community capital.

For instance, city and county governments (listed under formal institutions) and their elected leaders (such as city and county commissioners/supervisors listed under people assets) control at least three community capitals relevant to this effort: (a) financial capital since they have government funds that could be used to support the incubator center or they could levy taxes to help pay for part of the cost of such a center; (b) water and/or energy resources needed by the center which represent natural capital; and (c) built capital, as they own a facility that could be used to house the center.

At the same time, local governments could be a possible barrier. Unless city and county governments agree to work together on the business incubator center, it is quite possible that they can impede its creation because they can’t agree on whether it should be done or where in the region it should be located.”

Instructions:

Have the SET team work on the Assets, Capitals and Barriers for their regional goals. Note that there are two options for completing this activity. We recommend that you start with the first option. Once the team has had a chance to get oriented to this tool, then have them use the handout to gather information on the asset/capitals/barriers associated with other goals the team is considering as part of its regional economic development plan.

Activity:

Distribute copies of Handout Six, and use one of the following strategies for completing this activity.

Option 1:

Divide the participants into 5 small groups of equal size. Assign each group a flip chart paper posted on the wall labeled with one of the four types of assets (people, formal institutions, physical resources, and voluntary associations). A fifth flip chart sheet should be labeled Barriers.

Indicate that they should build a list of assets and barriers related to the regional goal they've selected. The first four groups should list the people, voluntary associations, formal institutions and physical resources, as their poster indicates, that could be involved in helping with the strategy. The fifth group will focus on the barriers that might interfere with the implementation of the regional strategy the team has selected for this exercise.

[NOTE: For those working on the four types of assets, ask them to label each asset with the first letter of the community capital that the asset best represents. They can use Handout Four to help with this.]

ROUND 1: Give each team seven minutes to write the relevant information on the poster paper.

ROUND 2: Have the groups rotate counterclockwise to the next flip chart sheet and give them six minutes to add new information.

ROUND 3: Continue the rotation, giving the teams five minutes to work on the next sheet.

ROUND 4: Continue the rotation, allowing four minutes to work.

ROUND 5: Finish up with three minutes on the groups' final stop.



Slide: 22

Time: 45 Minutes

Handout Six: Assets, Capitals & Barriers

Instructions (Cont.):

Once the rotation has been completed, have the group review the information and ask them to offer their thoughts about what has been generated from this exercise.

Debrief: Key questions you should ask the team to discuss:

1. Do we have the a good mix of assets in the region that can be tapped to help us achieve the selected goal?
2. Do these assets represent several of the community capitals? If not, should we proceed with this goal?
Are there specific capitals in which we need to invest that will provide the foundation needed to create a spiraling up effect noted earlier?
3. Are the barriers significant, and if so, how do we address these possible roadblocks?

Option 2:

Divide the team into small groups and have them use the Assets and Barriers Table to identifying assets/barriers related to the remaining regional goals the SET team selected. Give the small groups about 20-30 minutes to complete this task. Ask each team to designate someone to serve as the recorder and spokesperson who will share the results of their small group work with the rest of the regional team members.

When the small groups have completed the handout, call on the spokesperson from each group to share their findings. What assets did they identify? Do these assets tend to cover several of the community capitals? What barriers were identified?

Debrief: When all reports have been presented, ask the group to respond to the following:

1. Do we have the a good mix of assets in the region that can be tapped to help us achieve the selected goals?
2. Do these assets represent several of the community capitals? If not, should we proceed with this strategy? Are there specific capitals in which we need to invest that will provide the foundation needed to create a spiraling up effect noted earlier?
3. Are the barriers significant, and if so, how do we address these possible roadblocks?



Slide: 22 continued

Time: 45 Minutes

Handout Six: Assets, Capitals & Barriers

Instructions:

Depending on the number of goals the regional team has identified at this point, they may have a need to prioritize the goals. Some guiding thoughts are listed on this slide. Things to consider include (1) where the greatest support in terms of available assets exist, (2) where the potential barriers are minimal or manageable, and (3) the goals that are most needed to move the identified clusters forward. If the regional team only has a small number of well supported goals, this step may not be needed. However, if the team still has a large number of goals (more than 5), then this step would be essential in helping them move forward toward a focused plan.

Also, before the next session, the regional team should have a final set of goals and should write their evidence-based segment of the plan that discusses the assets and barriers that will accompany the goals.

Script:

“Taken together, do the goals the regional team has identified seem manageable? The High Quality Plan guidance recommends a maximum of five goals to prevent too broad a focus. Considering the assets and barriers associated with each goal can help to prioritize these into a more manageable package. Likewise, considering which goals may be most pressing in helping the identified cluster(s) move forward is an important point.

Before we meet again, getting a final list of SMART goals that the region wants to pursue will be vital. Also, with this list in hand coupled with today’s work, the region is ready to write the evidence base for these goals. This is a two-part section. One part is centered on the assets and barriers that will come into play. The other part is related to the industry clusters selected as we have discussed previously. Those two sections together provide the evidence basis for the goals.”



Next Steps

- Prioritize goals:
 - Identify goals with more assets and community capitals
 - Note those with greatest barriers
 - Consider which ones may be most pressing
- Finalize the list of goals
- **HQP:** Write the evidence-based asset and barrier segment

The slide features a blue background with a white border. On the right side, there is a photograph of a person in a blue shirt and black shorts climbing a set of concrete stairs. In the bottom left corner, there is a graphic of a white puzzle piece and a blue puzzle piece.

Slide: 23

Time: 5-20 minutes depending on how much work, if any, is needed to prioritize the goals

Instructions :

The Assets and Barriers Table identified a number of organizations, representing different community capitals, that might be worth reaching out to face-to-face or by telephone. The SET team can use Handout Three: Inventory of Voluntary Associations and Local Formal Institutions to help gather pertinent information about each of these organizations. The team should feel free to add other items to the inventory document that might relate specifically to the regional goals or strategies they hope to address. Having this information in hand may be very valuable as the final plan takes shape over the next two sessions.

Script:

“The Assets and Barriers Table that you have just completed has generated an impressive list of voluntary and formal organizations that might help advance your regional goals and strategies. You may find following up with these organizations so you can find out about their current and future community-related activities to be well worth your time. This would be the ideal time to use the Inventory of Voluntary Associations and Local Formal Institutions to collect key information from these groups.”

In addition. . .

As you identify key voluntary associations and formal institutions:

- Interview leaders & members
- Collect pertinent information using the Inventory to Voluntary Associations and Local Institutions
- Link the activities/interests of these groups with your regional goals and strategies



Slide: 24

Time: 3 Minutes

Instructions:

Take a few minutes to ask individuals what they felt were the major insights gained in this session. What did they find most valuable and what remains a bit unclear? Take the time to clarify these items, as appropriate.

In addition, please make sure the group is clear on activities that need to be accomplished prior to the next meeting.

Final Reflections

- What are your insights from this module? Anything still confusing?
- What assignments need to be completed before the next SET meeting?
- Other issues to clarify or discuss?



Slide: 25

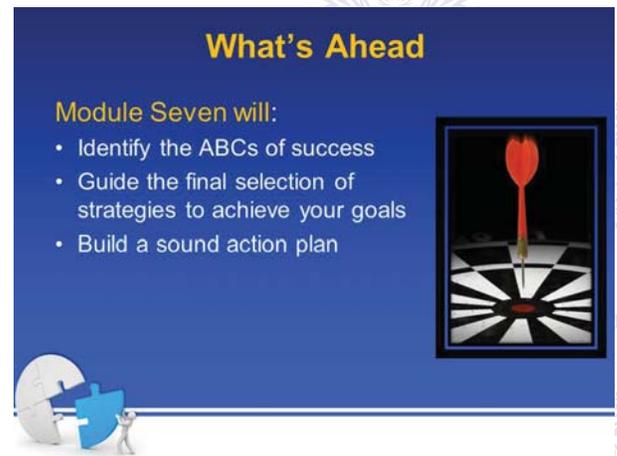
Time: 2 Minutes

Instructions:

Briefly review what will be covered in Module Seven.

Script:

“During the next session, you will identify the ABCs of success, select strategies to achieve your goals, and build a sound action plan for your region. Thanks again for your hard work today.”



What's Ahead

Module Seven will:

- Identify the ABCs of success
- Guide the final selection of strategies to achieve your goals
- Build a sound action plan



Slide: 26

Time: 1 Minute



Acknowledgements

The Stronger Economies Together (SET) Program is sponsored by USDA Rural Development (USDA RD), in partnership with the Regional Rural Development Centers. In particular, USDA RD provided financial support for this important initiative while the RRDCs organized the team of land-grant university-based Extension and research faculty who worked on the development of the SET training modules and the generation of the data products.

Key partners involved in the development of SET educational materials include:

- Extension and research faculty from a variety of land-grant universities in the U.S.
- The National Institute of Food and Agriculture, USDA, that works hand-in-hand with the RRDCs and the land-grant university system across the U.S.
- The Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce for granting us permission to use selected portions of its *Know Your Region* training products.



United States Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture

