

Collaborative Partnerships: The Community Collaboration Story

presented at

Rural Matters!

Forging Healthy Canadian Communities

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presented by

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Rural Development Institute

Brandon University



Overview

- **About RDI**
- **Community Collaboration Model**
- **Community Collaboration Process**
- **Application of the Model**
- **Model Lessons Learned**
- **WaterWolf Regional Round Table**
- **Yukon Regional Round Table**
- **Yukon Advisory Group**
- **Discussion**

Rural Development Institute

The Rural Development Institute is a research unit of Brandon University in western Manitoba that focuses on rural and northern Community Development research, practice & policy.



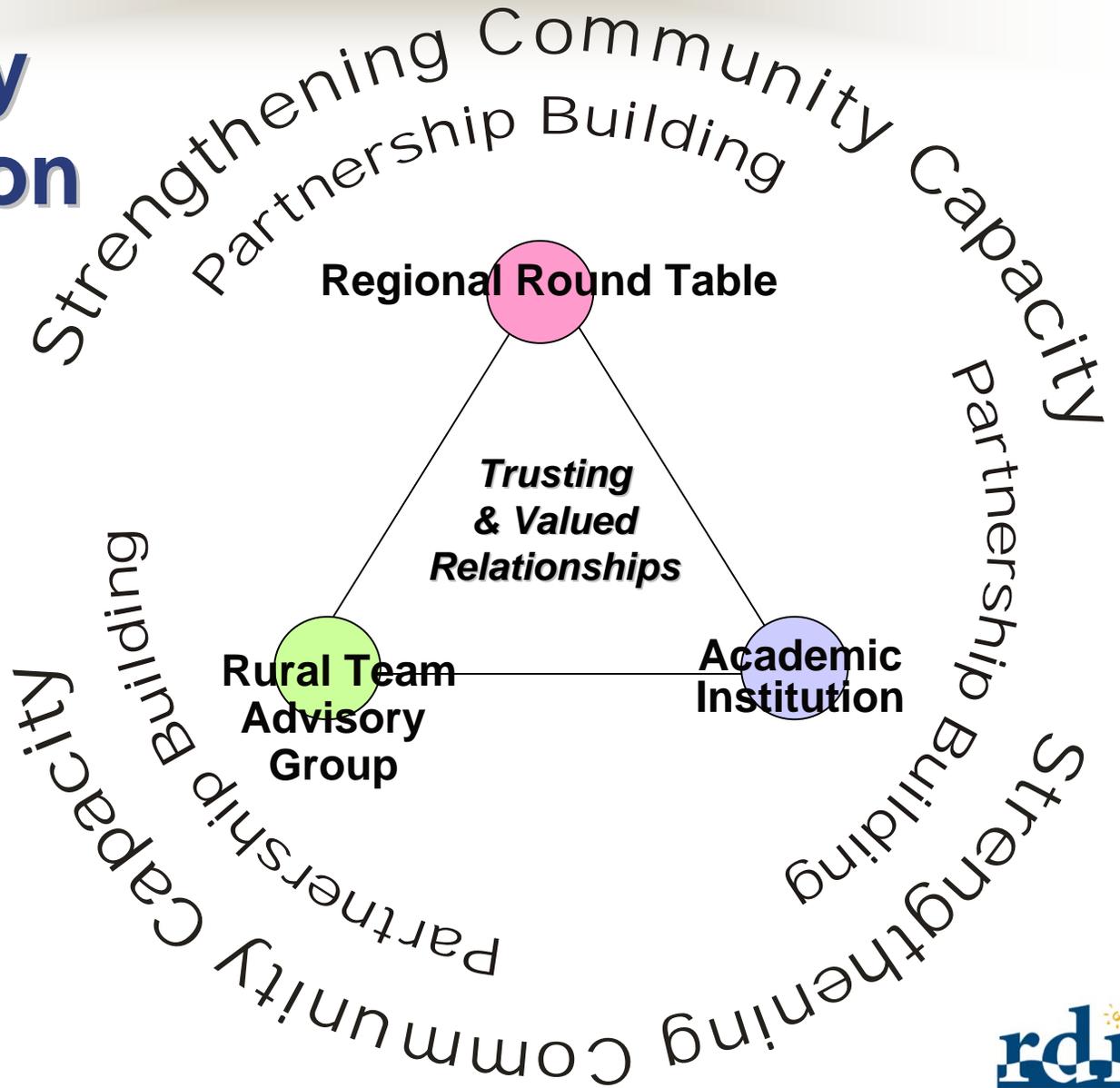
Research Interests

- Community economic development
- Community leadership
- Environmental & agro-economic issues
- Information technology: utilization & access
- Policy and program research & development
- Rural & northern health
- Rural & northern tourism
- Rural & northern adaptation & change

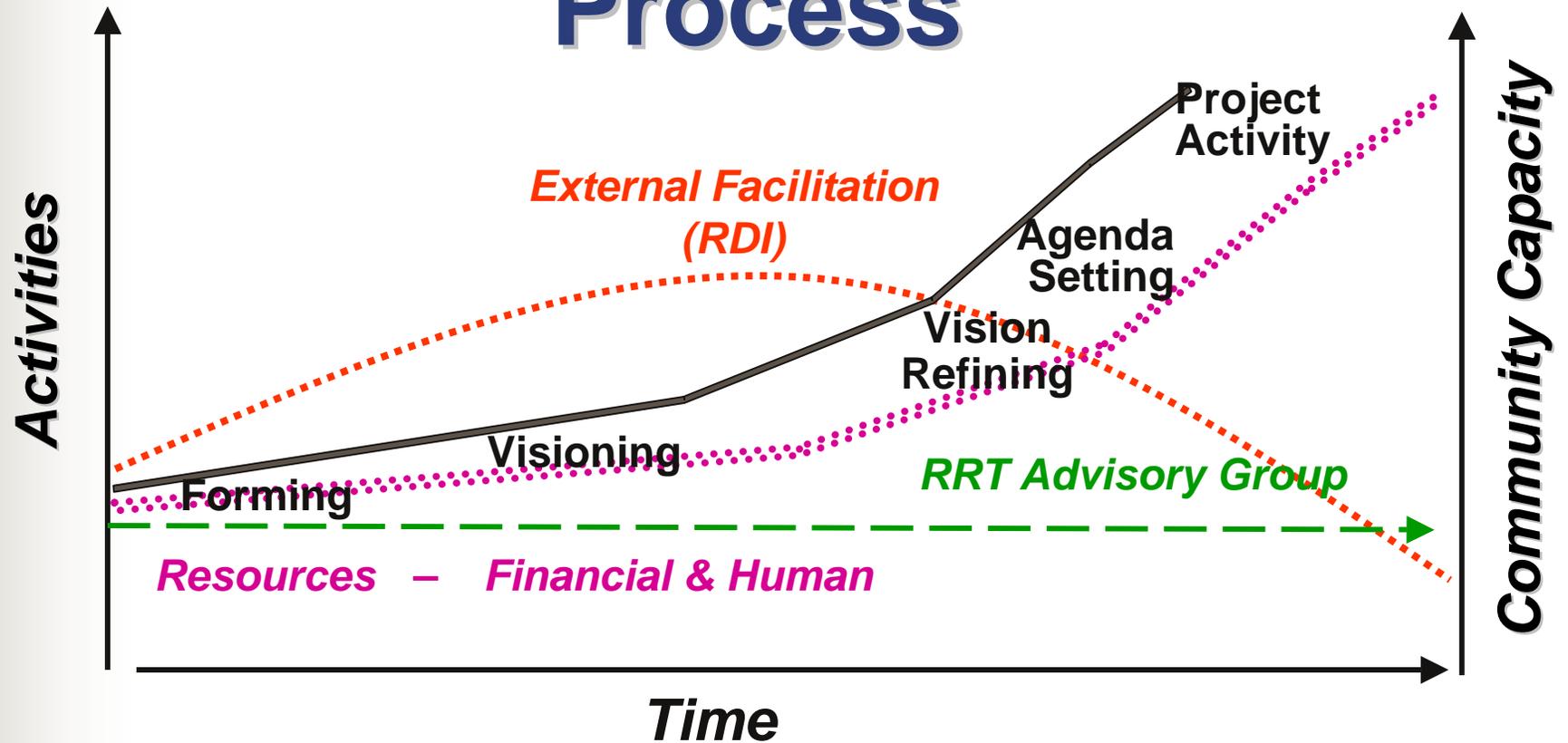
Community Collaboration Model

Collaboration

- Inclusion*
- Equal partnership*
- Shared power*
- Shared responsibility*
- Encouragement*
- Cooperation*
- Empowerment*

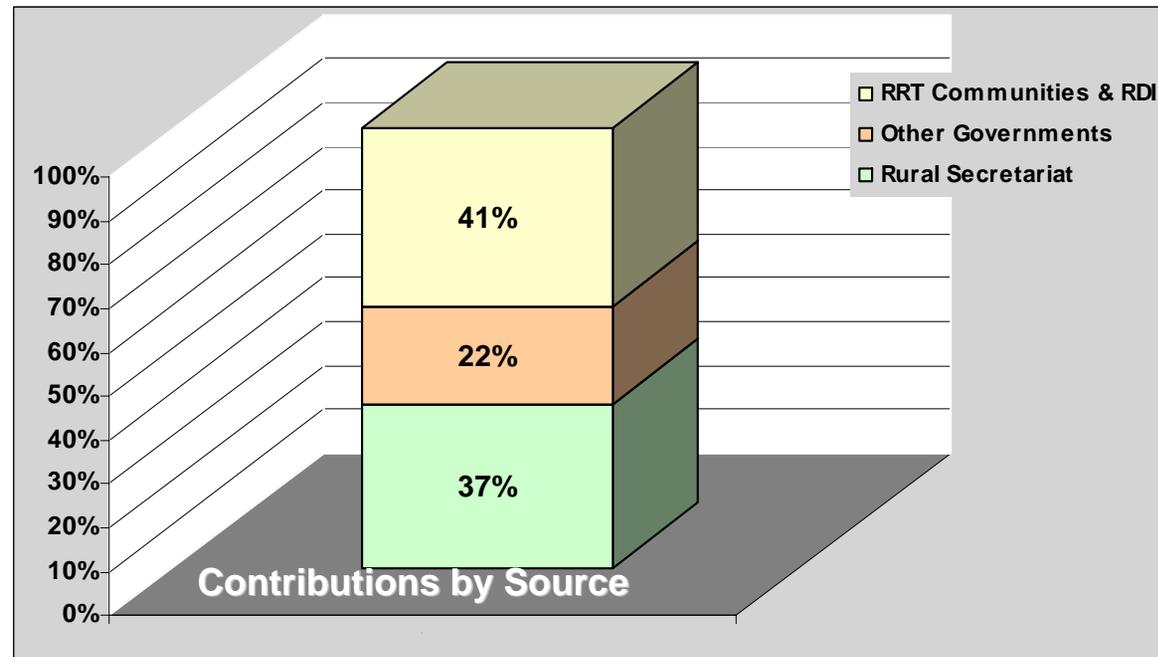


Community Collaboration Process



Building Community Capacity

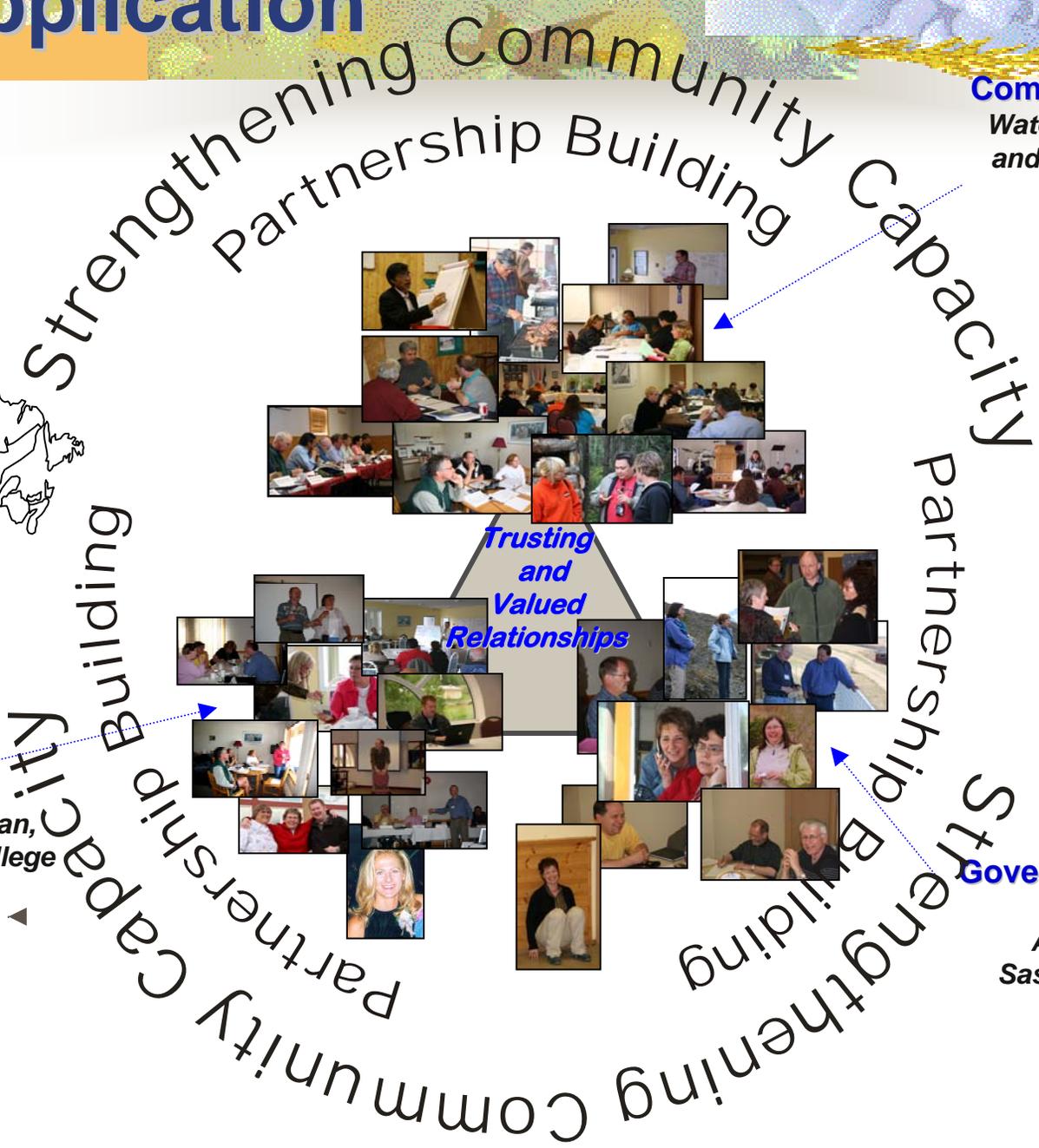
Project Contributions



- **Regional Round Table and Advisory Group members' participation and travel time were significant in-kind contributions.**

- **All participants' time was valued equally.**

Model Application



Community Partners
WaterWolf (SK), Yukon
and Manitoba/Nunavut

**Eighty-five
Communities,
Three Rural
Teams,
Four
Academic
Institutions**

Academic Partners
Brandon University,
University of Saskatchewan,
Malaspina University-College
and Yukon College

Government Partners
Rural Team
Advisory Groups in
Saskatchewan, Yukon
and Manitoba



Excerpts from Evaluations

The value of face-to-face meetings was emphasized by a number of regional round table members as being of great importance.

We cannot change our past, but we can change our future.

We need to look at a different model, although it's a hard thing for people to get their heads around, the things we have done for fifty years are not working.



We didn't notice the difference that relationships made to a group until we didn't have the relationships anymore.

Excerpts from Evaluations



Volunteer administration posed challenges for the regional round tables, as those charged with the administration responsibilities were often carrying out those responsibilities “off the side of the desk”, that is, in addition to their “regular jobs”.

Travelling to each of the communities and First Nations has been a huge learning [experience] for me.

Prior to the regional round table, I had never been to many of the other communities.

As I travel I am learning about each community, their assets, their opportunities, and their challenges.

The regional round table has more influence that we originally recognized. Now we need to focus on how to use the influence for positive changes in our communities.

Excerpts from Evaluations

The regional round table has helped build understanding between government departments, communities and First Nations. This understanding will be a key asset toward building trust.

Communities did not realize the power they held collectively.

Results so far have exceeded my wildest dreams. I never in a million years dreamt we would be sitting around a table representing some 45 municipal governments all talking about working together and envisioning a new Saskatchewan. I follow along in wonder.

This level of cooperation and working together is quite extraordinary.



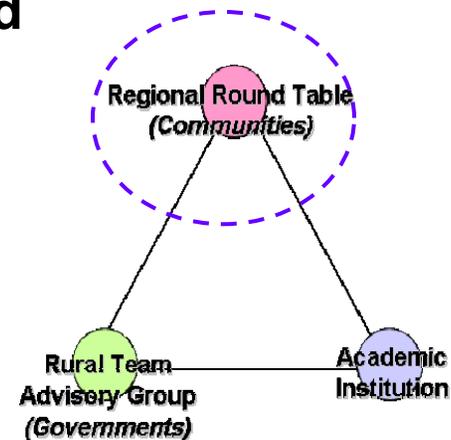
Lessons Learned: Model

- Developing trusting and valued relationships and partnerships within and between communities, governments and academic institutions require deliberate **effort; time; financial resources** and committed, skilled and sustained **leadership**.
- Partnership-building processes should be considered **investments**. Resources are needed to develop, maintain and grow these investments.
- Regional governance is different than regional government: it is not necessarily about replacing legacy governments, but evolving to have **additional forums** for **planning** and **decision-making**.

Lessons Learned: Communities

To effectively partner with governments & academic institutions, regional round tables need:

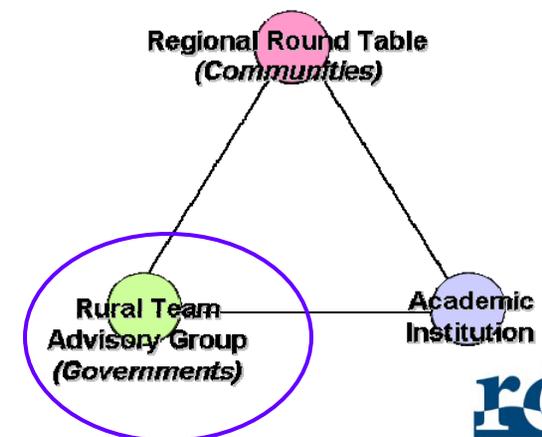
- individuals who have the desire, skills and time to devote to the partnership and relationship-building efforts
- organizational infrastructure including
 - a vision, goals and objectives
 - terms of reference for membership
 - defined roles for executive
 - defined roles for coordination and administration
 - established communication processes
- to contribute resources



Lessons Learned: Governments

To effectively partner with regional round tables & academic institutions, governments need:

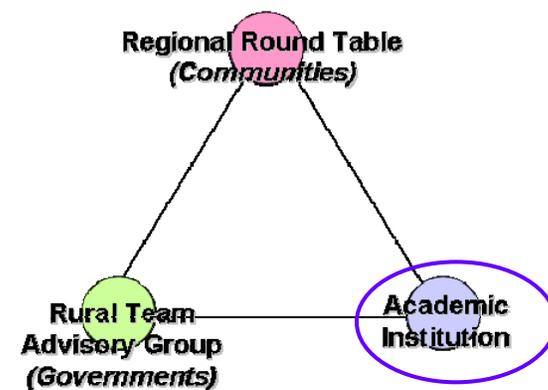
- to move from funding deliverables to supporting capacity development
- to better manage complex accountability structures
- to better manage files horizontally
- government representatives to have mandates and reporting structures that are flexible enough to work with communities & regions in non-traditional ways
 - move from *“under the radar”* to *“in the radar”*
- flexibility, creativity and innovation in program and accountability structures to fit with and adjust to community interests
 - permission to be creative to accomplish agreed-upon goals



Lessons Learned: Academic Institutions

To effectively partner with regional round tables & governments, academic institutions need:

- to find new and creative ways to engage the human and capital resources of universities and colleges to be more engaged in community development processes
- to enable communities to view academic institutions as resources to their efforts
- to view communities as something more than research laboratories
- to better understand and value community service by
 - refining understanding of how community service is defined when individuals are “judged” for advancement purposes.





*Who represents communities
and regional round tables?
Who represents governments?
Who represents academic
institutions?*

Can you tell?

Collaborative Partnerships



Model Lesson Learned

The Community Collaboration Model was successfully initiated in other areas of rural and northern Canada; however, the Model cannot necessarily be replicated from province to province to territory because successful community collaboration processes need to be designed with an understanding of the unique characteristics of the communities and the region involved.

One size does not fit all.

For Additional Information

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Websites

WaterWolf Regional Round Table: www.waterwolf.org

Yukon Regional Round Table: www.brandonu.ca/rdi/yrirt.asp

Rural Development Institute: www.brandonu.ca/rdi

Government of Canada's Rural Secretariat: www.rural.gc.ca

