FEBRUARY 2016 REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS
SUMMARY REPORT

Presented by

rrps nb sprn
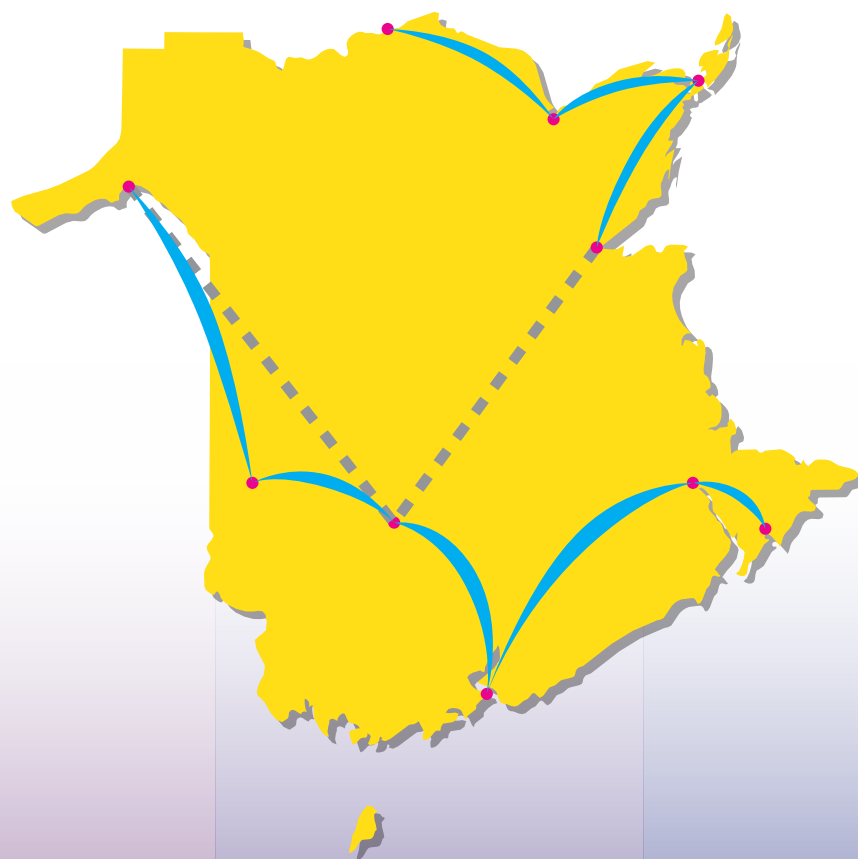
1/02	**CAMPBELLTON** 9am-12pm				
2/02	**BATHURST** 9am-12pm	10/02	**WOODSTOCK** 9am-12pm	15/02	**SAINT JOHN** 9am-12pm
3/02	**SHIPPAGAN** 9am-12pm	11/02	**EDMUNDSTON** 9am-12pm	17/02	**MONCTON** 1pm-4pm
4/02	**MIRAMICHI** 9am-12pm	12/02	**FREDERICTON** 9am-12pm	30/03	**SACKVILLE** 9am-12pm

JOIN US IN DISCUSSING WHAT MATTERS IN YOUR COMMUNITY!

UNIVERSITÉ DE MONCTON
EDMUNDSTON MONCTON SHIPPAGAN

NBCC COLLEGEWORKS.

Ensemble pour vaincre la pauvreté
Overcoming Poverty Together

UNB UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK
EST. 1785

ccnb CCNB

Contents

Executive Summary

From February 1st to April 6th 2016, the New Brunswick Social Policy Research Network (NBSPRN) visited ten communities (Campbellton, Bathurst, Shippagan, Miramichi, Fredericton, Moncton, Saint John, Woodstock, Sackville, and Edmundston) engaging over eighty individuals from non-profit, private sector, government, and post-secondary institutions. These sessions were meant to connect current post-secondary education activities to local stakeholders' priorities, explore ways of creating sustainable social and economic regions by convening academic researchers and members of the public, private and not-for-profit sectors, and identify possible future opportunities for research, teaching, and outreach.

The sessions were held on campuses within each of the communities and asked participants to share the challenges they were working on in their regions, the barriers they face while addressing those challenges, and how NBSPRN could stay connected with these communities. Information gathered from each session will be used to help NBSPRN to identify and share the needs for each region.

This report brings together the collective responses from all of the sessions to help identify the common challenges and barriers the regions are facing. Not only did the staff of NBSPRN connect with stakeholders within these communities, but the intended outcome of connecting individuals and organizations within these regions was successful in almost every session.

Participants were asked to share the main challenges they face in their communities. The most common responses were:

- Mobilizing people
- Population decline
- Relationship between citizens & government
- Mental health
- Employment

- Lack of data
- Food security
- Rural/urban divide
- Inclusion of new immigrants
- Transportation

- Literacy
- Negative narrative
- Climate change
- Funding
- Poverty

They were then asked to share the barriers they face while working to overcome these challenges. The common themes were lack of collaboration, lack of data, lack of vision, public policy, negative narrative, volunteer engagement, funding, and human resources.

When asked what the best way for NBSPRN to stay connected to these communities would be, participants shared that coming to the region was the best way to stay connected. They also mentioned that piggy backing on existing events in the regions, hosting online sessions, and clearly communicating the value NBSPRN brings to their community as important ways to strength relationships with these communities.

The information gathered at the individual sessions and the collective data will be used to help inform NBSPRN of this future programming and to help make stronger intra-provincial connections to addressing complex issues.

Background

The New Brunswick Social Policy Research Network (NBSPRN) hosted a series of regional engagement sessions in ten communities throughout New Brunswick from February 1st to April 6th, 2016.

The purpose of the sessions was to:

- **Communicate** current post-secondary education activities to local stakeholders and to convey those stakeholders' priorities to post-secondary education faculty, students and staff;
- **Convene** academic researchers, members of the public, private and not-for-profit sectors to explore ways of creating sustainable social and economic regions, and;
- **Identify** potential opportunities for research, teaching and outreach.

Each of the visited communities had a post-secondary institution, and whenever possible the sessions were held at a college or university campus. These communities were: Campbellton, Bathurst, Shippagan, Miramichi, Fredericton, Moncton, Saint John, Woodstock, Sackville, and Edmundston. Over 80 participants attended from the non-profit sector, private sector, general public, post-secondary institutions, municipal, and provincial government. The sessions were two and a half hours long on average and were facilitated bilingually, allowing participants to speak the language of their choice. The agenda used for the sessions is outlined below:

Sample Agenda
Welcome & introductions
Introduction to NBSPRN
Small group discussion 1:   What are the major challenges in your community?   *Quels sont les défis dans votre communauté?*
Small group discussion 2:   What are the barriers you face while addressing these challenges?   *Quels sont les obstacles auxquels vous êtes confrontés à relever ces défis?*
Small group discussion 3:   Who else in this region would benefit from connections with NBSPRN? How can NBSPRN stay connected with this region?   *Quels sont les meilleurs moyens pour le RRPSNB de rester en contact avec cette communauté?*

This report includes the collective responses from all 10 engagement sessions and aims to communicate local stakeholder priorities to post-secondary education faculty, students, and staff. Notes from each of the individual sessions will be used to cater to the needs of those particular regions.

What Are The Major Challenges In Your Community?

Below are the responses to the question, **"What are the challenges you are working on in your community?"** The top two most common responses were:

1) Mobilizing people to make change (due to lack of volunteer availability, and fatigue)
2) Population decline in all regions (especially prevalent in rural communities).

Other common challenges included:

- Lack of trust and relationship between citizens and government
- Mental health of individuals in the regions, and the lack of capacity to properly care for individuals
- Low employment rates and lack of population to fill existing opportunities
- Lack of data or knowledge to use data for decision making
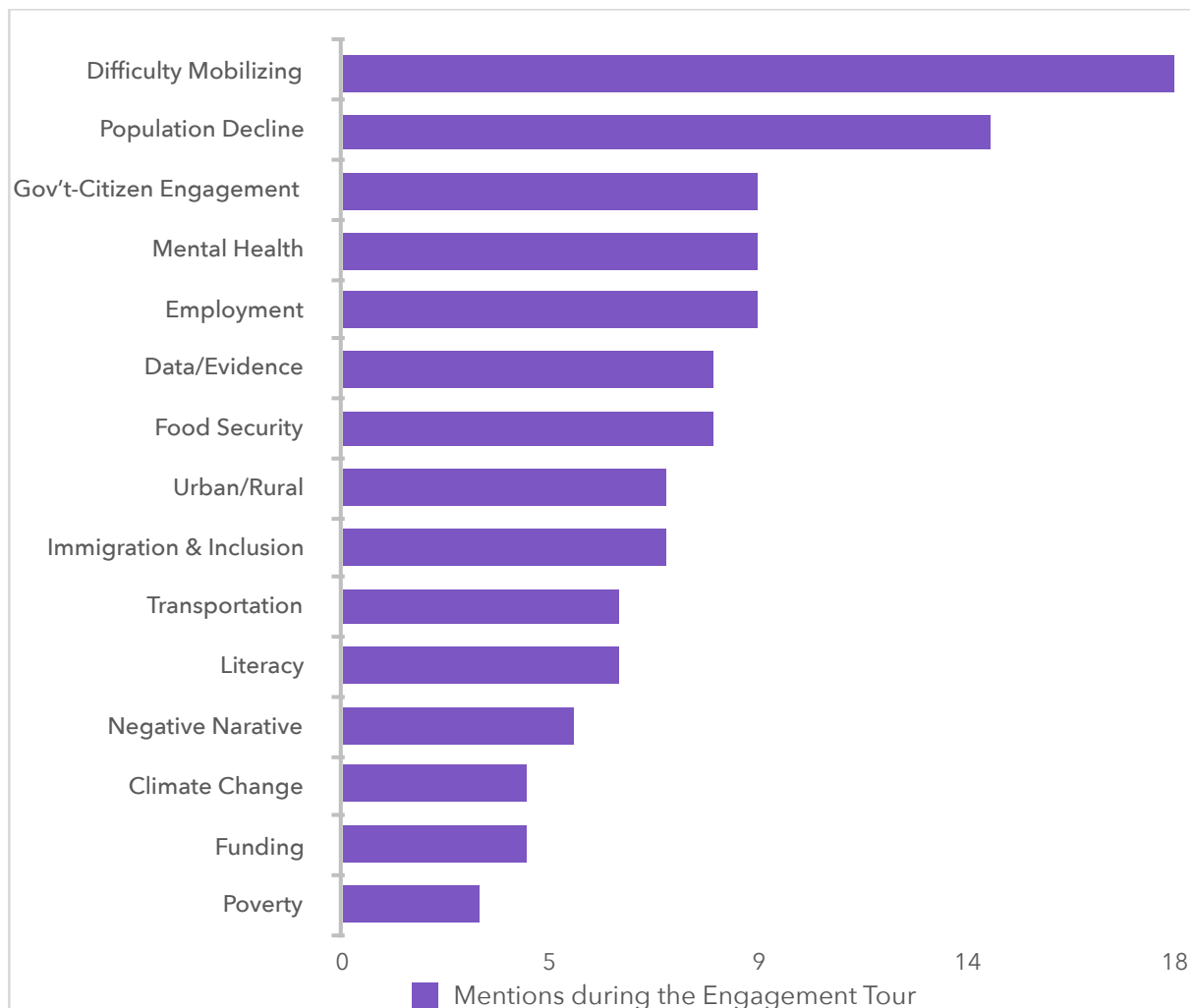- Lack of availability and knowledge of healthy food choices for low income individuals.

Table 1: Responses to the question, "What are some of the challenges facing your region?" and the number of times which a topic was mentioned during the Engagement Tour. These are not determinative; they simply visualize the discussion themes overall.

The responses below are transcribed directly from the sessions, in the language spoken by the participants:

Difficult to Mobilize People

- c'est difficile d'impliquer les gens dans les solutions sociales (e.g. trouver les bénévoles) - il y a un manque d'engagement communautaire
- volunteers to work on projects - recruiting, engaging, sustaining
- volunteers are afraid to commit, burned out, unaware of needs in the community
- la vie est déjà pleine pour les bénévoles
- what is the engagement necessary to move this?
- mobilizing energy for change
- social movements thinking/public narrative
- how to mobilize social change in health systems
- crowdsourcing /co-creating to engage
- no common place to create
- influencing system change
- CIN spends so much time trying to find the "who"= the right person to get things done
- lack of network
- lack of public awareness
- communications - il y a des services qui existent mais c'est toujours difficile de connecter avec les gens
- lack of public understanding
- manquer de la solidarité communautaire/ engager les gens
- pour les arts c'est difficile à amener les gens aux spectacles

Population Decline

- diminution du nombre d'étudiants dans les collèges communautaires. Il y a un mouvement vers les villes et vers le sud
- brain drain
- outmigration
- talent migration
- attraction retention of youth, immigrants, talent
- tax rates not attractive for recruitment
- difficulty in attracting businesses and keeping them here
- vacuum effect in our cities
- average age at NBCC Woodstock campus = 24 years old
- l'emploi
- aging population - businesses without an exit strategy
- les gens quite la région
- risquer de perdre le campus à Shippagan (Université de Moncton)
- without a strong, healthy community - recruiting for college is difficult
- recruitment for the college is difficult without resources ($) to get into the schools. Relationships need to start in grade 8 not grade 12

Government - Citizen Engagement

- education and community engagement
- support to take back the education drive
- connection between productivity and regulatory environment for businesses
- lack of connection between people and government
- disconnect between business and government
- degrading trust between citizens and institutions
- acronym environment
- conversations between federal and provincial

Mental Health

- health system change - middle management pressures and mental health
- health and wellness
- mental health
- mental health care (i.e. mental health patients denied health care services because of lack of respect for mental health)
- missing support for mental health
- mental fitness - ability to withstand stress
- access to mental health care
- lack of physicians
- ASDS is building a mental fitness competence autonomy relatedness (CAR)
- public disconnect with business sector needs

Employment

- fermeture d'industrie - impact économique = une masse de la population sans education formal
- difficulté de remplis des poste (même les postes bien rémunéré) en plus c'est difficile de commencer des nouveaux programmes au college
- sustainable forestry
- mismatch of skills and job opportunities
- difficulté d'attirer les profs qui veulent faire de la recherche
- manque des gens former en culture
- pas d'emploi - une besoin de bons emplois, need for businesses with higher wage positions, currently 78% SME's in the region, disconnect between existing jobs and qualifications/expectations
- manque des ressources humaines dans les organisations sans but lucratif
- rétention des mains d'oeuvres

Data/Evidence

- need to influence policy with the economic case - not many know how to do that
- addiction prevention is difficult to measure
- de convaincre les municipalités que les activités physiques (touristiques) sont importants (ski, raquettes, vélo, etc) et de financier un poste pour gérer ses programmes
- ils ont beaucoup de projet mais pas de recherche (centre des bénévolats)
- les arts contribuent à l'économie et social mais sans les données ou la capacité de communiquer ses données
- défi communautaire - comment lire et utiliser les données (la traduction entre la langue académique et communautaires)

Food Security

- making sustainable food and forestry economically viable
- food security
- food security - can a community supply itself - cost of healthy eating
- no legislation on sale of alcohol
- point of sale of alcohol
- food insecurity
- lack of legislation to help (gardens, chicken coops, etc.)
- food security - those engaged are not the target group

Urban/Rural

- ruralité et mal vu au niveau provincial (i.e. l'amalgamation des écoles augment pas de valeur à l'éducation ni les liens dans les communautés)
- CIN [Community Inclusion Network] is a rural entity with an Urban hub (ESIC)
- massive difference between rural and urban - mentality of students is different, sense of time is different
- vacuum effect in our cities
- il n'y en a pas de programmes au niveau maitrise sur les campus rural
- 300 étudiants à campus de Shippagan la plupart des bacs doivent être finis à Moncton
- 3 petits communautés qui travaillent indépendamment (trop de communautés rurales qui travaillent ensemble, pas de liens entre les communautés donc la communication est difficile)

Immigrations and Inclusion

- inclusion communautaire est difficile
- difficile pour les nouveaux arrivants à intégrer
- marginalized populations in communities/province
- labour legislation and policy concerns with more marginalized groups without labour relations access
- autistic population being pushed through the system and not able to function in work or society
- communications - disconnect between culture activities
- lack of diversity recognition - celebration of cultural diversity - we don't recognize the value of culture

Transportation

- un gros besoin de transport
- Il y a un manque de transport en commun et c'est difficile de commencer un service comme dial-a-ride quand il n'y en a pas des bénévoles
- access to affordable transportation (esp. rural)
- housing is not a focus area however it is still an issue, it is just less visible in the rural areas and hidden through couch-surfing
- transport – il y a des limites au modèle de l'entreprise sociale

Literacy

- le taux alphabétisme élevée
- education
- illiteracy
- literacy rates
- education - not enough resources in the early years
- niveau d'illiteracy est élevé

Negative Narrative

- une mauvaise image de la communauté
- working in narrative shift
- we don't celebrate ourselves - why do we call ourselves 'have not'
- fear of change
- perception - une longue histoire qu'il n'y en a rien a faire dans la région

Climate Change

- climate change adaptation - vulnerable communities
- climate change
- greenhouse gas emissions and climate change - how to have an economy that supports a social wellness
- carbon emissions

Funding

- ecosystem difficult because we are in pain - all about cutting "what will hurt the least"
- education system - funding formula - rules are rigid
- Wellness Network has been a great connection and they were able to fund a food security project with them
- pas d'argent/ressources de faire l'analyse des données

Poverty

- poverty
- lack of money for essential services - i.e. health
- de convaincre le gouvernement provincial de d'appuyer le développement de un poverty intervention tool kit

What Barriers Do You Face While Addressing These Challenges?

Participants were then asked to share the barriers they face in trying to address the challenges discussed in the first question. The three most common responses were:

1) Lack of collaboration between organizations to address the real issues
2) Lack of data or the knowledge to use data properly to make decisions and communicate impact
3) Lack of leadership or vision from within organizations and government. The responses below are transcribed directly from the sessions in the language spoken by the participants.
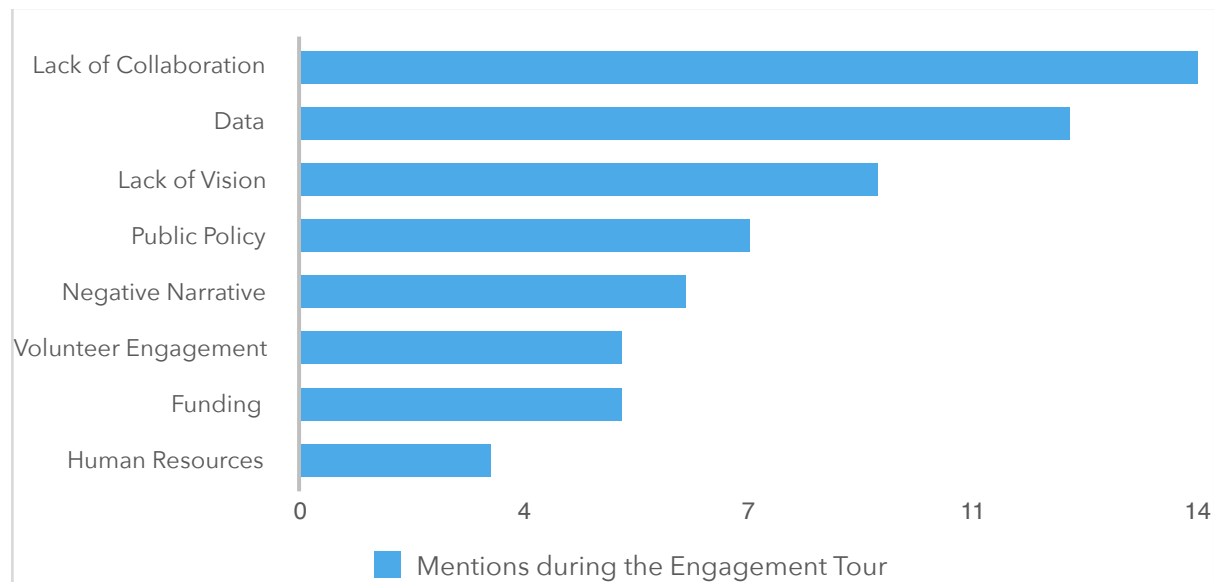
*Table 2 – Responses to the question, "**What barriers do you face in addressing these challenges?**" and the number of times which a topic was mentioned during the Engagement Tour. These are meant to give a visual since of the overall discussions not for determining priorities.*

The responses below are transcribed directly from the sessions, in the language spoken by the participants:

Collaboration (Lack Of)

- community engagement - not forthcoming
- local engagement for Mount A is counter to its mission - must identify the individuals within the university who are best to connect with
- difficult to engage business community
- disengagement
- les communautés dans la région dans une salle ensemble pour travailler sur les défis
- engaging ALL the key players
- government is more interested in listening to industry without change whether or not industry has the best data or not (particularly in resource development)
- communication issue within the campus and between campuses
- rural/urban relationships
- disconnect between sectors
- no incentive to collaborate
- silos
- tough system for outsiders to crack

Data

- NGO's to collect good data without the proper resources (i.e. lab equipment, expertise)
- access to Research Data Centre (RDC) data, took too long to be used in research
- accessibility of information
- knowledge translation
- linking researchers to work together
- lack of data
- lack of evaluation of food security initiatives
- success measured by financials only
- comment utiliser et parler les résultats des données
- compréhension des données
- savoir les bonnes données à collecter
- lack of knowledge of root causes

Lack of Vision

- leadership (lack of)
- taking responsibility and ownership
- communication and understanding different worlds
- short term vision
- ego and rivalry
- lack of action and leadership (slow moving, fear, etc.)
- rhetoric
- championing ideas (lack of)
- define & communicate problem

Public Policy

- federal immigration policy
- need to link federal and provincial policy
- laissez faire development policies
- too many silos in government departments
- political decision making
- red tape
- culture cuts - attraction handcuffed by government decisions

Negative Narrative

- confiance & compétences des gens (perception)
- consciousness of poverty in the region - there is a cultural acceptance that this is as good as it gets
- changer la mentalité
- people/society focused on negatives
- aversion to risk and change
- 'have not' mentality - aversion to change

Volunteer Engagement

- mentalité/perception du rôle citoyen + les vie pleines, 40h/semaine + familles
- solution, les entreprises donnent le temps pour faire du bénévolat
- parler individuellement aux gens avec les demandes spécifiques pour le bénévolat
- finding volunteers (long term engagement and right skills)
- valeur des bénévoles (comment comptabiliser et les liés aux compétences essentielles)

Funding

- not enough time or money
- adequate funding
- money/funding
- insufficient resources (i.e. time, money, people)
- finances to recruit

Human Resources

- lack of capacity
- employment
- employee retention

What Is The Best Way To Connect Within This Region, And With Whom?

The groups were asked what the best way for NBSPRN to stay connected to their regions and who the best people or organizations to contact with. Going into the regions was very much appreciated and mentioned as the best way for NBSPRN to stay connected. Communicating the value of NBSPRN to the various stakeholders and hosting events in the regions either as standalone events or piggy backing on existing events were clearly identified as ways NBSPRN can offer value to the individual communities. Below are the collective responses and the individual session notes identified specific individuals and groups for NBSPRN to connect with going forward.

How
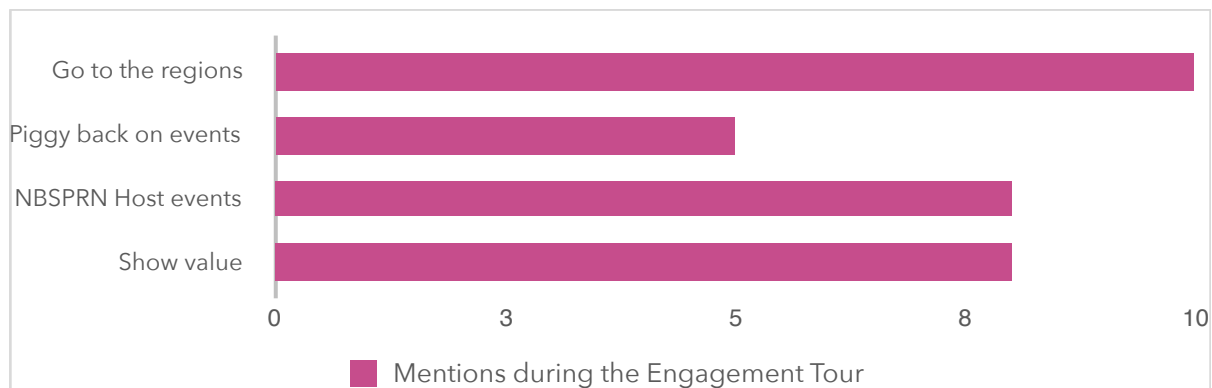
Go To The People In The Regions

- direct contact with local champions, decision makers, influencers
- connect directly the faculty associations - identify profs and researchers who are open to engaging with the community
- connect with department heads to forward to student societies
- meet with societies at the beginning of the term

- quand c'est envoyer a tout le monde, personne le recevoir
- French communication
- go to the regions
- go to the people
- contact humaine
- personal connection - word of mouth is what is really need to make it happen
- direct invitations

Attend/Piggy Back On Events In The Regions

- invite NBSPRN to events
- connect with student services - directly with the student union exec
- attend Department Research days
- get on Wellness Network mailing list

- community orgs don't have the time, transportation, and money to always participate - go to them to build connections, work with ESIC to better understand reality on the ground
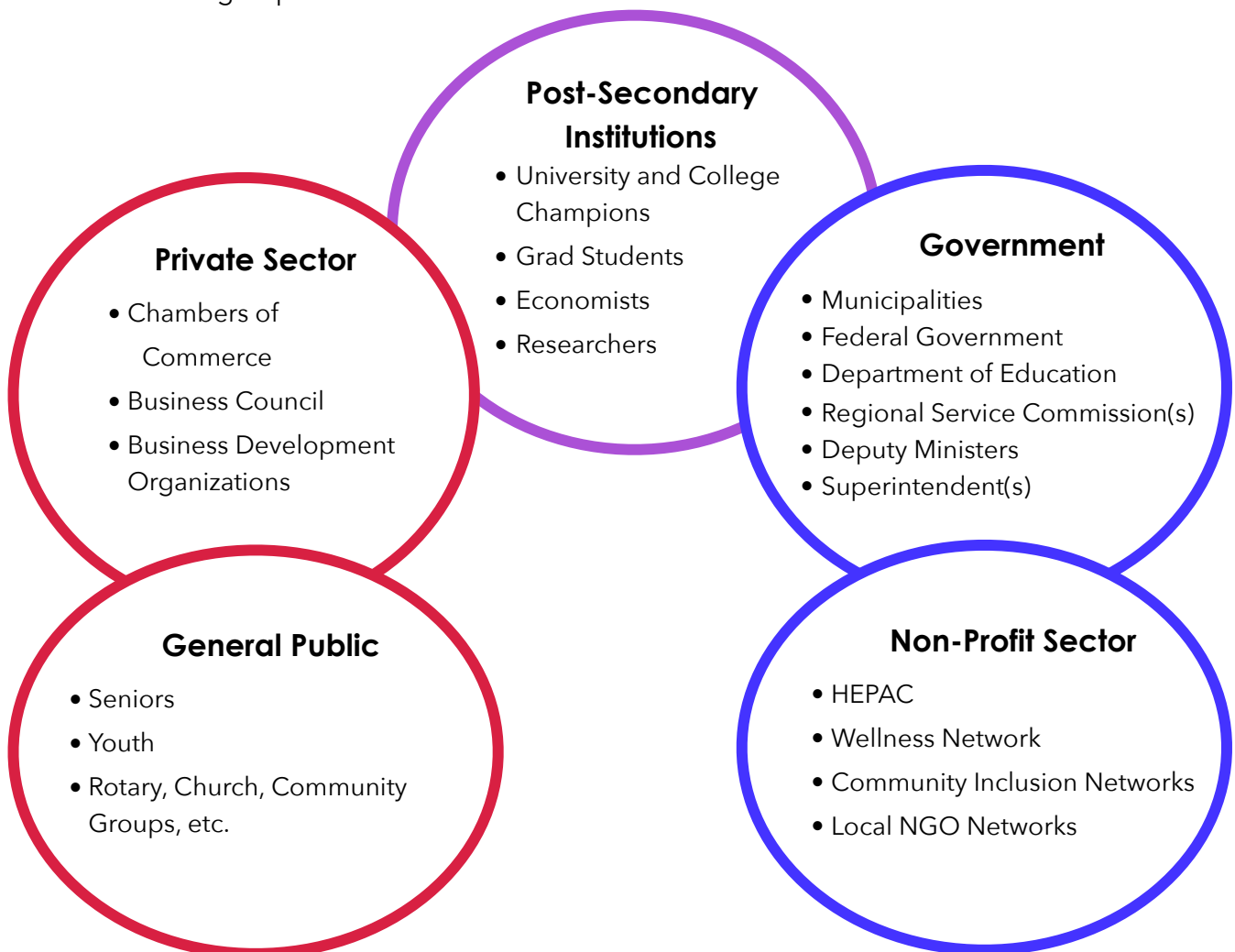
Ideas For Events For NBSPRN To Host

- present to board of chamber of commerce
- make presentations accessible (on public transit)
- host lunch n learns
- hot talks for grad students to share their research
- offer a webinar to HEPAC
- free lunch
- ability to input online
- diversité des organisations autour de la table = le bonne formule

Clear Messaging - Sell The Advantages Of Being A Part Of NBSPRN

- sell the why of NBSPRN and its advantages
- involve stakeholders in planning and presentation - info sharing
- clear description of seminar so they can't say no
- multiple targeted sessions to bring the right people for specific topics
- show value so they can't say no
- offer tangible outcome
- online explanation of how the event applies to you and your org.
- make sure the invitation makes sense to the target audience - social policy is not inviting to everyoneWho

When asked who else NBSPRN should be engaging with these were the most commonly mentioned groups:

Post-Secondary Institutions
- University and College Champions
- Grad Students
- Economists
- Researchers

Private Sector
- Chambers of Commerce
- Business Council
- Business Development Organizations

Government
- Municipalities
- Federal Government
- Department of Education
- Regional Service Commission(s)
- Deputy Ministers
- Superintendent(s)

General Public
- Seniors
- Youth
- Rotary, Church, Community Groups, etc.

Non-Profit Sector
- HEPAC
- Wellness Network
- Community Inclusion Networks
- Local NGO Networks

What Next?

These sessions have proven to be very informative in helping NBSPRN better understand the challenges, barriers and stakeholders in each of the 10 communities as well as a more general understanding of the common challenges and barriers in the province.

This information will be used in a number of ways:
First, the Network intends to share this document with its Advisory Board and will use it as a starting point to future engagement opportunities across the province.

Second, over the next 6 months, the Network intends to follow-up with session participants to engage in the way suggested («What is the best way & with whom do we connect with in this region?»). The Network is committed to working with these stakeholders.

Finally, using the key themes identified by participants during the sessions, the Network has prepared an initial reference document (APPENDIX A) listing current and past initiatives hosted by existing members or by the Network itself. By including the name of the initiative and a link to its website, readers will be able to uncover preliminary information, key contacts, research and funding opportunities and policy priorities across the province.
The document is of course non exhaustive, and instead will act as a starting point and as a reference document for participants. The Network is committed to brokering connections and hopes readers will reach out for more information.

Appendix A

Themes

Mobilizing People
- [GovMaker Conference](#)

- [New Brunswick Social Polity Research Network](#)

- [21 Inc](#)

- [Student Ambassador Program](#)

- [NBSPRN Monthly Newsletter](#)

Population Decline
- [InspireNB](#)

- Research Reports of [NB-IRDT](#)

- [Centre d'études en veillissement](#)

Mental Health
- [Access Mental Health](#)

- [Mind the Heart](#)

- [Société Santé et mieux-être en Français](#)

- [ACCESS New Brunswick](#)

- [Association canadienne pour la santé mentale Nouveau-Brunswick](#)

- [Provincial Strategy for the Prevention of Harm for Children and Youth](#)

Employment
- [NouLab](#)

- [InspireNB](#)

- [New Brunswick Social Policy Research Network](#)

Data/Evidence
- [NB Institute for Research, Data and Training](#)

- NB-RDC

- Maritime Spor Support Unit (MSSU)

- Canadian Open Data Summit

- Data 4 Impact

- New Brunswick Health Council

- New Brunswick Indicators Dashboard

Food Security
- NouLab, Food security

- New Brunswick Food Security Action Network

- Good Food Greater Fredericton

Urban/Rural
- Urban and Community Studies Institute

- Canada Research Chair in Rural Social Justice

- NouLab, Rebuilding Rural NB

- Chaire de recherche du Canada en études acadiennes et en milieux minoritaires

- Donald J. Savoie Institute

Immigration and Inclusion
- New Brunswick Multicultural Council

- Forum for Immigrant and Newcomer Women in New Brunswick

- Chaire de recherche du Canada en relations intergroupes

Transportation
- Urban and Community Studies Institute

Literacy
- NouLab

- Literacy Coalition of NB

- Moncton Regional Learning Council

- Elementary Literacy Inc

- CompéTI.CA

- NB2026: Citizen Engagement Initiative on Education

- Centre de recherche et de développement en éducation

Climate Change

- [Year of the Environment 2015-2016, Mount Allison University](#)

- [Faculty of Forestry and Environmental Management, UNB](#)

Funding

- [Funding Opportunities With NBSPRN](#)
- [New Brunwick Health Research Foundation](#)
- [New Brunswick Innovation Foundation](#)

Poverty

- [Provincial Forum: Basic Income?](#)

- [Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation](#)

- [NouLab](#), Social Housing

- [Community Action Group on Homelessness](#)

- [New Brunswick Non Profit Housing Association, Inc.](#)