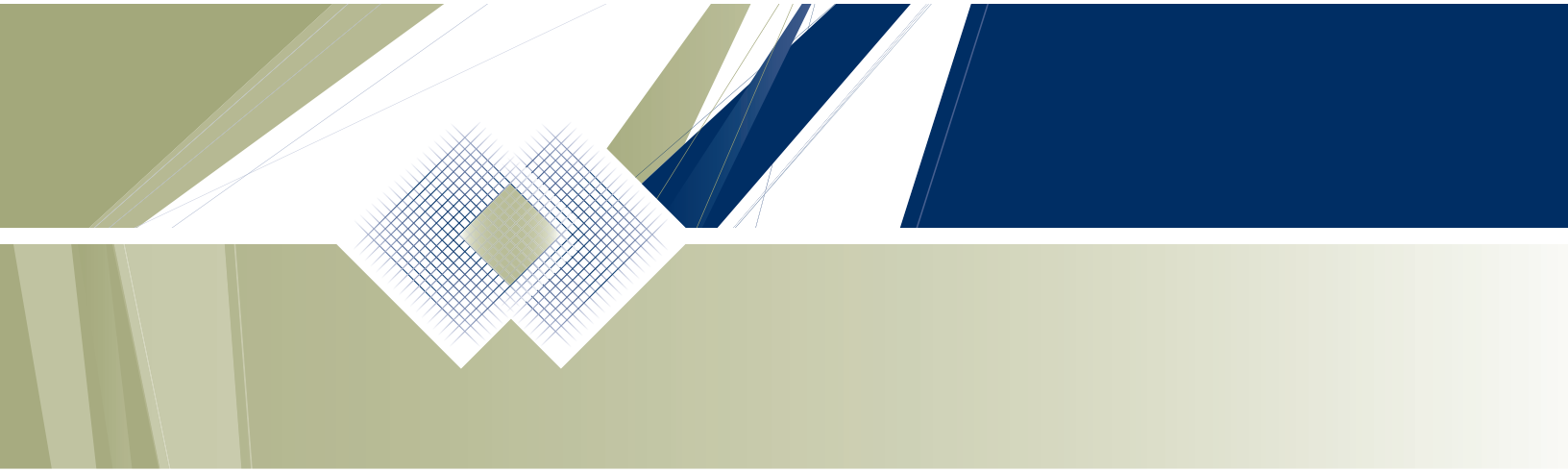
Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages
Commissariat aux langues officielles

Vitality Indicators for Official Language Minority Communities 2: Three English-Speaking Communities in Quebec



The English-Speaking Community of Lower North Shore

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Consulting team

Hugh Maynard, President, Qu'anglo Communications & Consulting

Johnnie Belinda Cluff, Project Manager, Qu'anglo Communications & Consulting

Associate Consultants

Susan Grundy, Director, Grundy Marketing Inc.

Jack Jedwab, Executive Director, Association for Canadian Studies

Steering committee

Kevin Craft, Townshippers' Association

Meeka Faucher, SADC Côte-Nord

Rachel Garber, Townshippers' Association

Jennifer Johnson, Voice of English-speaking Québec

John Klassen, Voice of English-speaking Québec

Cornella Maurice, Coasters' Association

Ana Osborne, Netagamiou Community Learning Centre

Helen Walling, Voice of English-speaking Québec

Project management

Ricky G. Richard, Policy and Communications Branch
Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages

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Summary presentation

Introduction

In 2006, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages initiated a research study on vitality indicators for official language minority communities in Canada. The first phase examined three urban Francophone communities outside of Quebec (Halifax, Sudbury and Winnipeg), and the second phase looked at three English-speaking communities in Quebec outside of Montréal:[1] Québec City, the Eastern Townships and the Lower North Shore (which includes 14 small remote communities between Kegaska and Blanc-Sablon).

Community	Type of Community	Population with English as the First Official Language Spoken	Population (%)
Québec City	Urban	9,780	1.9
Eastern Townships	Urban (Sherbrooke)	7,390	5.1
	Regional (Memphrémagog)	8,350	18.7
	Regional (Brome-Missisquoi)	11,050	24.3
Lower North Shore	Remote (Minganie–Basse-Côte-Nord)	3,505	82.5

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census

This study was carried out because official language minority communities across Canada (English-speaking in Quebec, French-speaking in other provinces) are increasingly mobilizing to maintain their "vitality." They face real challenges, which stem from their minority context and from demographic trends, to retain their young people, their schools, their employment base and their culture and identity.

But what is "community vitality," and how can it be measured to determine whether progress to enhance it is being made or not?[2] Indicators have been a coveted, albeit elusive, tool for reinforcing vitality. In recent years, increased government accountability and a more strategically oriented community leadership have been evident. These mutually reinforcing factors have given prominence to vitality indicators, or at the very least, to the importance of measuring progress. In addition, the amendments that were made to Part VII of the *Official Languages Act* in 2005 now require federal institutions to take "positive measures" to enhance the vitality of linguistic minority communities and to promote linguistic duality.

This study approaches community vitality from a practical angle. To evaluate the results of efforts, community priorities must first be identified: What are the broad or specific objectives that a community has set for itself? Vitality indicators are not very useful in and of themselves or in the abstract; they are usually linked with a specific result. Moreover, official language minority communities are responding to their own respective challenges and have varying amounts of resources or capital to contribute to community vitality.[3] Before a general sense of the most salient vitality indicators can be established, grassroots community initiatives must first be examined, in addition to the results-based activities that are supported by the public or private sectors in the communities themselves.

The communities are seeking to better understand the factors that affect their vitality and the measures they need to put in place to improve their condition. Community vitality is often a reflection of how the factors contributing to the community's condition are perceived and how and whether this perception has changed over time. Because vitality is often rooted in such perceptions, its assessment cannot exclusively rely on a quantitative measurement of population and community resources (i.e., census and survey data). While such sources of information remain important in the assessment of certain

1 The Montréal area was the subject of an extensive community outreach and assessment activity in 2007 under the Greater Montreal Community Development Initiative, which was conducted by the Quebec Community Groups Network.

2 Further details on the various elements of community vitality can be found in a variety of reports published by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages.

3 Marc L. Johnson and Paule Doucet, *A Sharper View: Evaluating the Vitality of Official Language Minority Communities*, Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2006.

dimensions of community vitality, notably in the sectors of demography and migration, they are best understood in conjunction with qualitative data.

For a fuller understanding of community vitality, it is important to analyze the experiences of official language minority communities through the objectives and experiences of community members. Such an analysis was the aim of this study so that courses of action can be suggested to official language minority communities and the federal government, and the tools the communities need to continue to develop successfully can be provided. The logic models, for example, are seen as potentially useful tools for dialogue between the government and official language minority communities.

1. Objectives

The main objective of the study was to gather information on community development initiatives in sectors identified by each of the designated communities so that vitality indicators that will be useful to them can be established. The specific objectives were the following:

- Identify, within each community, keys to success and best practices related to vitality;
- Prepare logic models, or flow charts, to express the community's objectives and aspirations for each of the four sectors of community activity under study;
- Identify, from an evaluative perspective, quantitative and qualitative indicators that can be used to assess the vitality of official language minority communities based on the priorities they have set for themselves;
- Produce a community study, for each of the three communities, that describes the assets and needs in the sectors of activity studied.

2. Methodology

This study follows the report titled *Vitality Indicators for Official Language Minority Communities 1: Francophones in Urban Settings*,[4] in which community vitality is defined as follows:

> A community's ability to take charge of its development based on several types of resources (demographic, political, legal, social, economic and cultural), that are transformed for the benefit of the community through dynamic leadership.

Another study titled *A sharper View: Evaluating the Vitality of Official Language Minority Communities,*[5] also revealed the importance of a community assessment of vitality, namely an approach that community organizations can use to define development and vitality objectives for their community, in the form of expected outcomes, and to assess the achievement of these outcomes using indicators and a systematic process of data collection and analysis. This study responds to the need to assess community vitality in a practical way by developing and applying a "vitality model," which is defined as a logic model with indicators and data sources.

The English-speaking community in Quebec is a long-standing and diverse community that is composed of the large English-speaking population in and around Montréal as well as of the many vibrant urban, rural and remote communities in the regions of the province. These communities are spread out over a latitudinal distance of 2,000 km and it is important to recognize this distinction because it contributes to some of the difficulties encountered by them. Communities in the regions often exist below the threshold of "where numbers warrant" for English-language services and are geographically isolated and disparate in nature. In addition to meeting priorities shared by all official language minority communities (for example, health and social services, education and youth retention), these communities face further challenges (such as transportation, communications and economic development). This study focused on the English-speaking

4 Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, *Vitality Indicators for Official Language Minority Communities 1: Francophones in Urban Settings*, Ottawa, 2007.
5 Marc L. Johnson and Paule Doucet, *A Sharper View: Evaluating the Vitality of Official Language Minority Communities*, Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2006.

communities outside of Montréal to represent the diversity that is inherent within the official language minority communities of Quebec as a whole, and to examine how community vitality indicators can contribute to development within varied community settings.

The three communities were chosen because they represent the demographic and geographic make-up of English-speaking Quebec outside of Montréal (urban, regional and remote). Montréal is seen as the centre of the English-speaking community in Quebec and has been the focus of a recent initiative examining the challenges related to its development.[6] This study can be considered complementary to that initiative. A great number of English-speaking communities across the province have a very different reality than that of the community in Montréal. The three communities selected are representative of other English-speaking communities that are in urban areas but have a weak demographic density, or are in rural and remote areas where they form an active minority within the region or, in some cases, a majority within local community settings. During recent initiatives, it was observed that these communities were determined to pursue greater vitality and address the range of challenges that they face as official language minority communities.

The study followed a participatory approach that included the establishment of a steering committee composed of eight leading community stakeholders and representatives from the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages and the Qu'anglo Communications consulting team. An orientation session (via teleconference) with the steering committee was held on April 3, 2007, to present an overview of the project, invite general input from community representatives and determine the process (i.e., timing, manner) that would be used to hold the consultations with the task forces in each of their communities. The orientation session also served to develop criteria for the selection of task force members, assist in the identification of the participants for the community task forces and select the four priority sectors for each region.

The main elements of the work plan for the community consultations were the following:

- Define evaluation concepts and terminology;
- Address key vitality questions;
- Build logic models for each sector (based on objectives, results and actions);
- Identify those indicators best suited to assess the degrees of vitality (complete the logic models).

For the community consultations, a task force of leading community stakeholders and experts from the target sectors was created for each of the three communities. Each community task force comprised between 12 and 21 participants who were active community members or experts in a certain sector. These individuals were selected for their ability to describe the development activities, short-, medium- and long-term results, best practices and needs of their community. The community representatives and representatives from the Office of the Commissioner made suggestions on the composition of the task forces; however, the final decision was made by the consultants. A pre-meeting conference call was held with each community task force to review an orientation document and address any questions.

6 Greater Montreal Community Development Initiative, *Building upon Change and Diversity within the English-speaking Communities of the Greater Montreal Region: Pursuing Shared Development Goals and Strategies*, June 2007. Online: http://www.qcgn.ca/page.asp?intNodeID=31297.

Community	Sectors selected for study
Québec City	Youth
	Health and social services
	Arts and culture
	Leadership and visibility
Eastern Townships	Youth
	Health and social services
	Arts and culture
	Economic development
Lower North Shore	Youth
	Health and social services
	Community renewal
	Economic development

The community task force sessions were held in either May or June 2007. A day-long workshop session, facilitated by the consulting team, was held in each community. The sessions consisted of a general discussion to introduce the concept of vitality, followed by a structured discussion examining the main elements of vitality and vitality indicators and how they apply to the various target sectors. Community members were given the specific task of mapping out vitality in each of the sectors by identifying activities (outputs) and the expected results (outcomes) in the short, medium and long terms. Each community task force session was followed by a validation session in August or September 2007, and was supplemented by e-mail and telephone discussions in response to the session findings. Hence, the logic models for each sector were developed to reflect, as closely as possible, the views of community members on the vitality of their respective communities.

3. Conclusions

Although each of the three community studies focused on different vitality sectors, a certain number of general observations can be made about the experience of the English-speaking communities in Quebec outside of Montréal. The general conclusions of *Vitality Indicators for Official Language Minority Communities 2* speak to some of the similarities between the communities.

3.1 Common sectors

When building their vitality model and independently of each other, all three communities selected, from a list of 12 possible sectors, youth and health and social services as two of the four priority sectors to be reviewed. Further, while using slightly different wording, the three communities identified the same objective for both sectors: the retention of youth and a healthy community over the long term. Such consistency in selection clearly indicates the capacity of the logic model to help identify similarities among communities and enable a more general vitality model for the official language minority community as a whole to be built. This model could then be used effectively to help secure program support and policy implementation at the macro level for specific sectors.

3.2 Common indicators

Along with common sectors, a number of common indicators were identified by the three communities as important markers of their vitality. The most prominent of these indicators is awareness, which, although it is a basic component of community development, was elaborated on extensively in the vitality models. Community representatives strongly underscored the importance of raising awareness: that of youth about the programs in place to support them, that of the general English-speaking population about the arts and culture of the English-speaking community around them and that of the French-speaking community about the minority community and its leaders, its participants and its activities. Media presence was also identified as an important overall indicator of awareness. In general, many of the short-term objectives described in the logic models appear to be steps in generating more awareness in many areas in order to contribute to progress in the medium and long term.

3.3 Renewal

Renewal was an overarching theme throughout the discussions in all three communities during this study. More specifically, renewal was mentioned in relation to institutional capacity (health and social services), identity (arts and culture), investment in economic growth and, of course, youth—the need to maintain a vital community in which youth can see a future in terms of employment, community and family life in the place where they grew up. Even with the solid base of community organizations and infrastructure of English-speaking communities in Quebec outside of Montréal, a long-term and continued decline in demographics can only have one outcome. A community that loses its critical mass ceases, at a certain point, to be a community. Renewal is a particular challenge for these communities due to their regional, remote and often isolated locations. Preventing volunteer burnout, providing a positive setting for engaging leadership and countering demographic trends by ensuring youth involvement in all sectors are all critical to the development and vitality of a community. It is clear for these communities that, without measurable progress in the area of renewal, there can be no short-, medium- or long-term enhancement of community vitality.

3.4 The drivers of vitality

Although they were only present in two of the three participating communities, the arts and culture and economic development sectors represent the "drivers of vitality"—sectors that, while also viewed by the communities as being inherently beneficial, were considered essential to the overall development of the community. The arts and culture, for example, was not simply viewed as important for its intrinsic values of culture and identity, but was also considered important because it represents an opportunity for intra-community engagement and the prospect of employment for community members. Economic development, while important for job creation, also represents an opportunity to retain youth and build skills within the community, and it can be a cornerstone of a healthy community in the long term (within the population health model). These sectors contribute to community vitality. They are significant contributors identified in part by the vitality model and they can be used to plan a course of action from which the community can draw maximum benefit.

3.5 Geographic location

The impact of geography or location on the vitality of the three official language minority communities was evident. In the Lower North Shore, the predominance of the English language in local communities is offset by their isolation (no road access, expensive transportation, etc.). In Québec City, the advantage of an urban setting supported by the government resources afforded a provincial capital is offset by the small and shrinking size of the English-speaking population that risks being assimilated. In the Eastern Townships, a relatively large English-speaking population is spread out over a vast rural area that encompasses multiple regional and administrative jurisdictions. Each community faces its own challenges that inform its perception of, and potential responses to, becoming a more vital community.

3.6 Empowering communities

A definition of community vitality and the question of how it might be measured to determine whether progress is being made were discussed earlier in this section. As these points have been addressed, at least within the limits of this discussion, the question can then be asked: How will a better understanding of the state of community vitality enable change in the sectors that contribute to the enhanced vitality of official language minority communities?

The answer to this question lies in the further application of the assessment formula. Using the combined parts of the vitality model (the logic model, indicators and data sources), members of a community can set goals for the community with a view to improving its vitality. This exercise is based on a participatory approach that ensures meaningful engagement by communities as well as accountability in the measurement of change. Change comes from power, and empowerment comes from effective organization. Integrating community input into a monitoring framework creates a powerful tool that is well grounded in the community's reality and that has the appropriate indicators to measure outcomes. Such a process helps to empower communities by bringing stakeholders together to set common development goals and by substantiating the claims of these communities to governments and partners regarding the extent and type of support needed for development initiatives.

3.7 The capacity to measure progress

The community's response to creating a vitality model was very positive,[7] and the community consultation process was relatively efficient: a community could easily carry out the creation of a logic model for a priority sector within a day. Measuring progress once the vitality model is created, however, is another matter. Doing so requires communities to face the challenge of collecting and analyzing data effectively. Because much of the current financial support for community development is in the form of project funding, the capacity within communities to continually monitor and manage change is very limited. In addition, most community organizations do not have the expertise to then sort and analyze the collected data without the assistance of hired consultants, which further strains already limited budgets.

The ability to measure progress is as essential to the concept of community vitality as the creation of the initial vitality model. Without the allocation of sufficient resources and the development of supporting expertise, the use of any assessment tool, no matter how well intended and designed, will be limited and less than empowering for official language minority communities. As indicated in *Vitality Indicators for Official Language Minority Communities 1: Francophones in Urban Settings*, official language minority communities need to build their research and evaluation capacity through training and information sharing initiatives, and these initiatives should be supported by access to external (expert) resources and government assistance.

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7 Over 80% of task force participants in the three regions rated the sessions as being "very good" or "excellent."

The English-speaking community of the Lower North Shore

Introduction

As part of a larger research project on vitality indicators, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages initiated a study of the English-speaking community of the Lower North Shore. The goal of the study was to understand vitality and the indicators of progress in the development of each individual community. See the summary presentation for an overview of the objectives, process and observations of the overall project that also focussed on two other communities: the Eastern Townships and Québec City.

This report profiles various aspects of the Lower North Shore's English-speaking community: its history,, current demographics, community resources and a selection of best practices and success stories. The purpose is to provide background and set the context for the vitality model (results, indicators and data sources) described in each of the four sectors, which the community has determined is key to the enhancement of its vitality. Certain community members who are active in target sectors were asked to map out community vitality by identifying key activities, results, indicators and data sources. These were then elaborated and refined by the research team.

1. Methodology

Vitality is a collective aspiration as well as the product of individual activity. The study of the English-speaking community of the Lower North Shore followed a participatory approach by giving community leaders and stakeholders an opportunity to influence the design and implementation of the study. As in previous community studies engaging three French-speaking communities outside Quebec,[8] we relied heavily on active community participation in the study to describe the target sectors. A provincial steering committee composed of eight leading community stakeholders (two from each region), representatives of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages and the Qu'anglo Communications consulting team was created.

An orientation session with the steering committee was held to present an overview of the project, invite general input from each of the communities, and determine the timing and manner through which the consultations would be completed in each of the communities. During this orientation session, the steering committee members selected four sectors to best reflect the priorities of their respective communities, and these became the focus of consultation in each community. The steering committee was also asked to participate in the creation of task forces for each of the chosen sectors, specifically in developing selection criteria for the task force members and in the identification of potential candidates.

8 Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, *Vitality Indicators for Official Language Communities 1: Francophones in Urban Settings*, Ottawa, 2007.

This study provided each of the three English-speaking communities with the opportunity to choose its own four priority sectors. It was therefore possible to see how the process and resulting logic model are adapted to different community circumstances. In the Lower North Shore, members of the steering committee chose the following sectors of activity:

Sectors Selected for Study – Lower North Shore
Youth – Create the conditions conducive to attracting young people to remain on or return to the Lower North Shore to pursue their career and family aspirations.
Health and Social Services – Provide essential health care and social services on 'the Coast', and ensure access, outside of the Lower North Shore, to those services not available locally in the English language.
Community Renewal – Re-build the region's human and social capital after several decades of demographic decline.
Economic Development – Generate employment opportunities and economic wealth that provide the foundation for engaged individuals, self-sufficient families and sustainable communities.

For the community consultation on the Lower North Shore, a task force of leading community stakeholders was created, composed of 21 participants who were active community members or experts in a certain sector. These individuals were selected for their ability to describe the community development activities, short- and long-term results, best practices and the needs of their community. Despite the remote nature of the Lower North Shore communities, the task force for the region was the largest of the three and reflected the keen desire of these communities to participate in a collective development process when given the opportunity.

The community task force session was held at the Municipal Building in Blanc-Sablon on May 24, 2007. The session was in workshop format and included a general discussion on the concept of vitality as well as a structured discussion on the main elements of vitality and indicators, and how they apply to the activity sectors identified by the community. The community task force session was followed by validation sessions with sub-groupings of the task force held at the offices of CJAS community radio station in St-Augustin on August 7, the offices of the Coasters Association in St-Paul's River on August 9, and the office of the Centre local de développement in Blanc-Sablon on August 10, 2007.[9] These were supplemented by e-mail and telephone contributions to the session findings.

2. Overview of the English-speaking community of the Lower North Shore

2.1 Population

2.1.1 History

The Lower North Shore is located across from the western coast of Newfoundland where the Strait of Belle Isle opens into the Gulf of St. Lawrence, stretching from Blanc-Sablon (at the Labrador border) to Kegaska (opposite the eastern tip of Anticosti Island.) This is a sub-region of the provincial Côte-Nord administrative region. Fourteen communities are spread along 400 kilometres of rugged coastline, and in most cases accessible only by ferry, plane or snowmobile (in winter.) The two easterly municipalities, Bonne-Espérance and Blanc-Sablon, are connected by road to southern Labrador with a ferry to Newfoundland. There are two principal Innu communities located in La Romaine and Pakuashipi.

For thousands of years, the plentiful resources of the Lower North Shore attracted different peoples seeking fish, whale, seal oil and fur. Starting about 9,000 years ago, the area was settled by the Inuit and Innu followed by Basque, French, and English settlers. In 1534, French explorer Jacques Cartier sailed along the Lower North Shore and proclaimed it "the land God gave to Cain." In the 1760s, Britain gained control of North America, and British companies took over many of these trading posts. Bilingual fishing merchants from the Jersey Islands arrived

9 The validation process was conducted with sub-groupings as a practical consideration related to the remote nature of the communities, which are not all connected by road. The consultant visited the three locations and met with small groups of some of the task force participants rather than bringing them all back to one location by air transport.

to set up industrial codfish processing plants, which drew in new waves of settlers. The biggest and most recent wave of settlement came from Newfoundland in the 19th century. These newcomers introduced Newfoundland traditions and contributed to the unique cultural mix of the Coast, which is today predominantly English-speaking with a significant proportion considered to have a Métis heritage.

Once considered boundless, the cod stocks that initially attracted so many settlers and fishers to the region collapsed in the 1990s, and a moratorium on cod fishing was declared by the federal government in 2003. Although the stocks are currently renewing, the collapse of the Atlantic cod fishery has resulted in significant socio-economic dislocation in the region. While residents are shifting to other economic activities out of necessity (other fish species, non-timber wildlife resources such as wild berries, and eco-tourism), many have had to migrate temporarily or permanently for employment elsewhere. This remote region has witnessed a significant decline in population over the last few decades, and it is estimated that approximately half of the region's adult population leaves the Coast at some time during the year to secure employment.[10]

The collapse of the region's main economic activity has also resulted in the out-migration of youth, who have few employment opportunities within the region, and an increase in social challenges related to the unstable economic situation, such as substance abuse and the burden of caring for the elderly. The entire problem is compounded by the lack of a coastal road, which makes transportation expensive and uncertain due to the region's geography and often harsh weather conditions. The communities of the Lower North Shore therefore face a double challenge in terms of sustainable development and enhanced vitality.

2.1.2 Demographics[11]

The demographic profile was drawn from the Minganie-Basse-Côte-Nord census measurement area.

Demography

According to the 2006 census, the population whose first official language spoken is English is 3,500 representing 80.0% of the total population of the Lower North Shore area (consisting of Blanc-Sablon, Bonne-Esperance, Saint-Augustin, Gros-Mécatina and the Côte-Nord-du-Golfe-du-Saint-Laurent).

Age

Nearly one in five members of the Lower North Shore English-speaking community is below the age of 15 while 13% are over the age of 65, which is quite similar for the area as a whole (which is not surprising given that Anglophones make up a large majority of the population.)

Origins and migration

Although there are virtually no immigrants, some 18% of the English-speaking population of the Lower North Shore area report that they were born in another province of Canada according to the 2001 census.

Language

According to the 2006 census, the English-speaking community of the Lower North Shore has had relatively low rates of language shift. Some four in five Anglophones on the Lower North Shore declare knowledge of English only and the rate of bilingualism is 20% as compared to 69% for the English-speaking population of the province.

Socio-economic conditions

Unemployment rates are quite high in the Lower North Shore areas where there are concentrations of Anglophones. In 2001, the rate was well over 30% for the English-speaking Lower North Shore population and as high as 60% in, for example, Bonne-Espérance. As a consequence, the incidence of Lower North Shore Anglophones receiving government transfer payments was well over 30%, considerably greater than the

10 Coasters Association, 2007, anecdotal evidence from community members.

11 Since not all data from the 2006 census were available at the date of publication, data in this section are from the 2006 census unless otherwise specified.

rates for Anglophones elsewhere in the province and with respect to the overall provincial average. These statistics reflect a high dependence on seasonal work in the fishery and out-of-region employment (construction, hunting and fishing camps, etc.).

2.1.3 Summary

Generally, the English-speaking communities of the Lower North Shore have been witnessing a slow but steady decline in population that is marked by three predominant demographic features (comparative to the overall population of the region): there is a higher proportion of seniors, the level of bilingualism is lower than in other English-speaking communities (reflecting the isolated nature of many Lower North Shore communities), and there is a higher level of unemployment that results in seasonal and temporary migration in search of work.

2.2 Community resources

As members of a historic community, Lower North Shore English-speaking residents have developed considerable community resources. The community hosts a varied and active cultural life encompassing theatre, visual arts, music, heritage attractions and museums, news media, sports, educational institutions and more.

Arts and Culture

- Museum Centre, St-Paul's River
- Michael Osborne (artist)

Education

- Littoral School Board
- One high school (St-Paul's River)
- Seven combined high school/elementary schools
- One elementary school (Old Fort Bay)
- Two community learning centres
- Two adult education centres
- One daycare, six sub-daycares

Health and Social Services

- Lower North Shore Coalition for Health (LNSCH)
- Seven Centres locaux des services communautaires (CLSCs)
- Table Régionale Intersectorielle sur la Promotion, la Prévention et les Services en Milieu Scolaire (TRIPP)
- Centre de réadaptation pour personnes alcooliques et toxicomanes (CANAL)

Communications

- Television – two community television cooperatives (Chevery, Blanc-Sablon)
- Radio – three community radio stations (CFTH-Harrington Harbour, CJAS-St-Augustin, CFBS-Blanc-Sablon); CBC, Quebec Community Network
- Print – Coastar (quarterly), Chevery News, Mecatina News, Coastal Breeze (quarterly)

Economic Development

- Lower North Shore Fisherman's Association
- Multi-species Fisherman's Association
- Inshore Traditional Fisherman's Association
- Harrington Harbour Fish Co-op
- Centre Aquaculture Côte-Nord (La Tabatière)
- Tourisme Basse-Côte-Nord
- Three local tourism committees
- Centre local de développement (CLD)
- Société d'aide au développement de la collectivité (SADC)
- Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec (MAPAQ)
- Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)

Youth

- Junior Rangers
- One 4-H Club
- Carrefour Jeunesse
- Two youth centres (La Tabatière, Blanc-Sablon)
- Summer youth camps (5)
- Scouts Canada (Chevery, Harrington Harbour)

Social & Religious

- Lower North Shore Women's Coalition
- Fourteen church groups
- Chevery Women's Group
- Anglican Diocese
- Catholic Diocese
- North Shore Deanery

Heritage

- Whiteley Museum (St-Paul's River)
- Middle Bay Interpretation Centre
- Roswell Interpretation Centre (Harrington Harbour)
- Providence Island Interpretation Centre
- Jos Hébert Museum (Tête-à-la-Baleine)
- Monseigneur Scheffer Museum (Blanc-Sablon)
- Traditional Skills Network, Quebec Labrador Foundation
- Oral History Project, Commission Scolaire du Littoral, Coasters Association

Sports

- Inter-community hockey tournaments
- Local sports and leisure committees
- Two indoor arenas (Blanc-Sablon, St-Augustin)

Seniors

- Harrington Harbour Seniors Home
- Meals-on-Wheels (Chevery)
- Local Table for Seniors
- Comité de solidarité de services adaptés (Chevery)
- Domestic Aid Co-op

Community

- Coasters Association
- Community Economic Development & Employability Committee
- Quebec Labrador Foundation
- Rangers
- Regional Development Council

Transportation

- Nordik Express (maritime ferry)
- Air Labrador
- Quebec Provincial Airlines
- Route 138 snowmobile trail
- Apollo ferry (Blanc-Sablon-Ste-Barbe, Newfoundland and Labrador)
- Barge, helicopter, taxi boat services

2.3 Best practices by target sector

For the purposes of this study, English-speaking Lower North Shore participants chose four priority sectors. This section presents highlights of initiatives considered best practices or success stories in terms of fostering community vitality.

2.3.1 Youth

Summer camps

In the 1960s, the Quebec-Labrador Foundation installed community swimming pools to teach the children of fishing families how to swim, since most fishers never learn to swim in the cold ocean water. This tradition led community organizations on the Lower North Shore to hold summer camps to increase the recreational and learning opportunities available to youth. These camps began about 20 years ago, providing opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable in small, geographically isolated villages–and fulfilling a need where many parents have to leave their community in summertime for seasonal employment away from the Lower North Shore.

Junior Rangers

The Junior Canadian Rangers are part of the Canadian Rangers, which provides a military presence in sparsely settled northern, coastal and isolated areas of Canada. The Rangers complement other components of the Canadian Forces, which would not be convenient or economical in areas like the Coast. The Junior Rangers program seeks to strengthen remote and isolated Canadian communities through a practical youth program that embraces culture and tradition, and promotes healthy living and positive self-image through traditional and life skills important to these communities, especially outdoor survival. The Junior Rangers program is offered throughout the Lower North Shore.

2.3.2 Health and social services

Lower North Shore Coalition for Health

The Coalition was established in 2005 as part of the Health and Social Services Network Partnership Initiative (HSSNPI) sponsored by the Quebec Community Groups Network and managed by the Community Health and Social Services Network in Québec City. The organization brings together the main community and institutional stakeholders concerned with access to English-language health services, including the Coasters Association and the Centre de services de santé et sociaux de la Basse-Côte-Nord (CSSSBCN). Its role is to carry out community health profiles and foster partnership projects such as the Voices and Choices program for encouraging healthy lifestyles with teenagers.

Telehealth

Another outcome of the HSSNPI project, the Telehealth program provides information and training sessions via video conference to health care professionals throughout the Lower North Shore at the regional health centre and local community service centres (CLSCs). Given the geographic isolation of most of these locations, the Telehealth program is an important communications service between communities and with resources off the Coast.

Lower North Shore Food Guide

Responding to the seasonal availability and generally poor quality of fresh foods, which are both impediments to a healthy diet on the Lower North Shore, the Coasters Association produced a food guide in 2006 to promote healthier lifestyles among the population. The guide contains useful facts and recipes based on local food resources, drawing on recommendations of the Canada Food Guide.

2.3.3 Community renewal

Quebec Labrador Foundation (QLF)
The first QLF programs began in 1961 along the Quebec North Shore and Labrador coasts with volunteers travelling to remote communities to help residents protect their environment, preserve their natural and cultural heritage, build local leadership, and develop sustainable economies. Programs focus on environmental health, biodiversity conservation, place-based education and training, culture and heritage development, river and land stewardship, tourism development, and water safety. In addition, the founder of QLF conducts a rural ministry and administers a scholarship program for young people seeking academic degrees. As part of the program, interns and associates from colleges and universities in Canada and the United States now work with local staff to deliver programs and conduct activities at the community level. The QLF has been a bedrock of development activities in the region for four decades.

Community learning centres
Part of a three-year initiative funded through the Quebec-Canada Education Entente, this pilot project supports the development of a group of community learning centres (CLC) to serve as hubs for English-language education and development in their respective communities and to offer models for future practice. Three community learning centres are located in schools along the Lower North Shore (Chevery, La Tabatière and St-Paul's River), providing educational and support services for the broader community in partnership with various agencies, which pool their resources and share responsibility for service delivery. Given the lack of road and communications infrastructure, such institutions are extremely important to the availability of educational and complementary services, from pre-school to career training.

2.3.4 Economic development

Coast Fest 2008
While the major celebrations of Samuel de Champlain's founding of the first permanent settlement in North America will take place in Québec City during the summer of 2008, the Lower North Shore is capturing some of this promotional and tourism wind in its sails with the Coast Fest. The Lower North Shore was visited by the Vikings and European fishermen well before Champlain, and claims to be the first port of call by Jacques Cartier in 1534 during his epic voyage. The region is investing a great deal of energy in heritage and eco-tourism activities as an alternative economic sector, and the quadrennial Champlain celebrations are an opportunity to bring much needed attention to the natural resources of the area.

Non-timber forestry resource development
The major assets of the Lower North Shore are tied to its natural resources. With the demise of the fishery, community organizations have been investigating other avenues for sustainable economic development. One of these involves exploiting non-timber resources, such as wildberries (found in abundance), exotic mushrooms and seaweeds. Currently, assessment studies are underway to determine what potential these natural resources have as an alternative economic activity.

Cooperatives
While the English-speaking communities have been much less involved in the cooperative movement in Quebec, which has been a major motor of rural and regional development over the last century, the communities of the Lower North Shore are actively looking at these socio-economic structures as a means to revitalize economic activity. A cooperative to provide domestic aid to seniors has already been created, and assessment studies are being carried out to establish a northern greenhouse cooperative (a spin-off of the food guide project) to increase the supply of locally produced fresh vegetables.

3. Vitality indicators for the English-speaking community of the Lower North Shore

For each of the four target sectors of the Lower North Shore, i.e. youth, health and social services, community renewal and economic development, the task force constructed a **vitality model** (a logic model[12] with indicators and data sources) based on the main objective of supporting efforts to enhance vitality. As the term suggests, a logic model communicates the logic behind a sector—in effect, the rationale from beginning to end. The logic model's purpose is to communicate the underlying set of assumptions or hypotheses that the community has about a sector and why certain activities, initiatives or programs will provide a course of action that is a good solution to an identified problem. The logic model depicts the situation in a visual way to convey the relationships between contextual factors and the inputs and processes that result in some form of outcome. The structure of the logic model helps to focus on outcomes (results) instead of outputs (activities).

The **results** define what is to be achieved and the **indicators** define what is to be observed in order to verify whether, or to what extent, progress is being made. Indicators are signposts of change—they enable the status of development outcomes and progress to be verified. The **purpose of indicators** is ultimately to support effective program planning, management and reporting. Indicators make it possible to demonstrate results, and can help produce results by providing a reference point for monitoring, decision making, stakeholder consultations and evaluation. Indicators are only intended to indicate—not to provide scientific proof or explanations about detailed change in all aspects of the program environment.

When selecting good indicators, the critical issue is credibility, not precision in measurement. The challenge lies in capturing key changes, in other words, combining what is substantively relevant with what is practically feasible to monitor. The measurement of change should not take precedence over program activities that generate the changes to be measured. Ultimately, it is better to have indicators that provide approximate answers to some important questions than to have exact answers to many unimportant questions.

The following section presents the vitality model for each of the four sectors chosen by Lower North Shore communities.

3.1 Youth

For the purposes of this study, youth refers to two different age groups: 15- to 24-year-olds, and 25- to 35-year-olds.

The vitality model for the youth sector focuses on three main areas of activity.

Promotion: Members of the Lower North Shore English-speaking community feel that youth do not fully appreciate the possibilities of continuing to live in the area. Increasing the level of awareness through promotion and resource materials will help promote the opportunities that do exist and lead to more positive attitudes toward living on the Coast.

Life skills: Members of the Lower North Shore English-speaking community believe that youth require greater personal capacity to be able to live and work on the Lower North Shore given the geographic and socio-economic situation of the region. An increase in programs and activities that strengthen life skills, such as camps and summer programs, will contribute to an overall improvement in the ability of youth to continue living on the Lower North Shore.

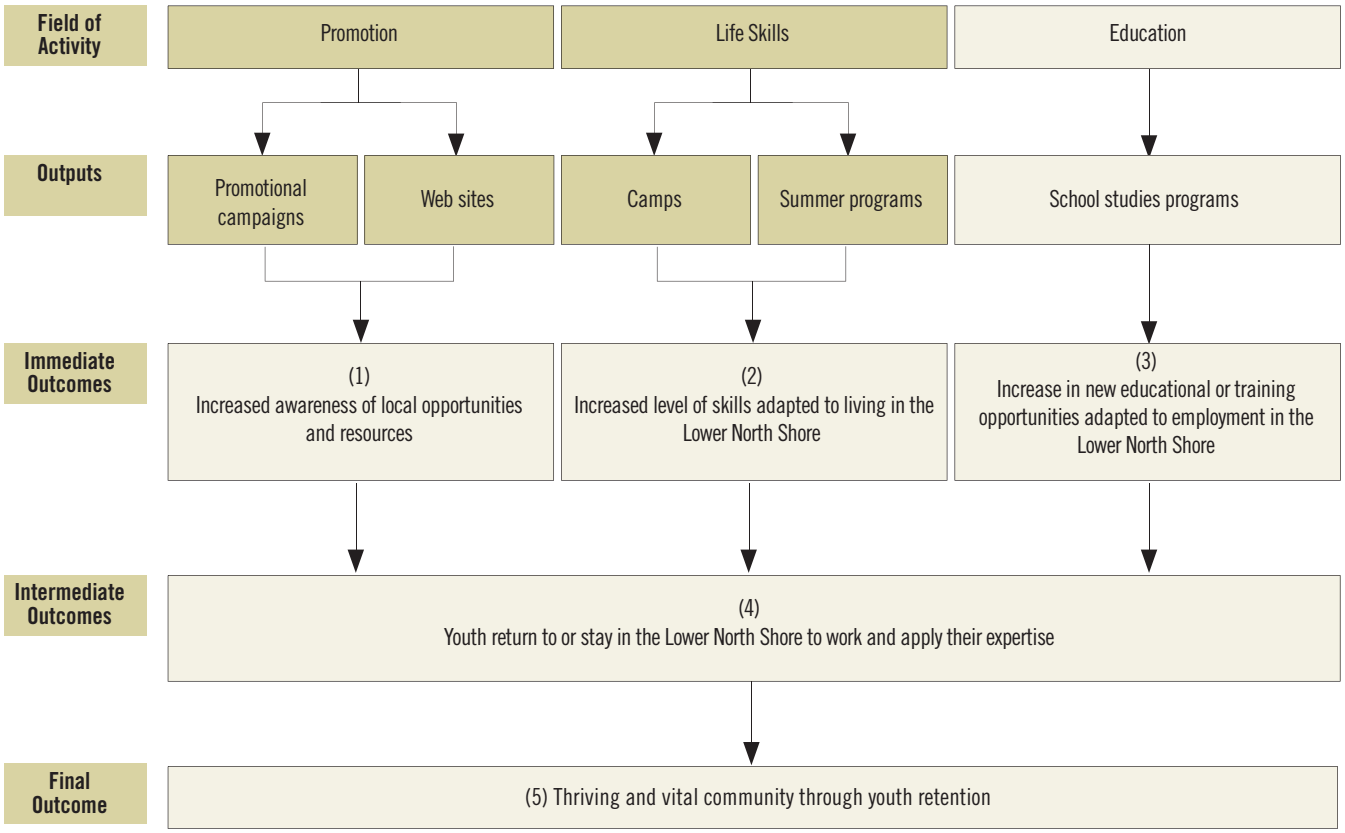
Education: The Lower North Shore has a much higher rate of youth drop-out before completing high school than other regions in the province. Youth with an incomplete education have no choice but to leave the Coast as they lack the necessary training and skills (including adequate knowledge of French) required for the region's limited number of job opportunities. An increase in new education and training programs adapted to job opportunities on the

12 The logic model and indicators were adapted from Connie C. Schmitz and Beverly A. Parsons, *Everything You Wanted to Know About Logic Models But Were Afraid to Ask*, prepared for the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and Carter McNamara, *Guidelines and Framework for Designing Basic Logic Model*, prepared by Authenticity Consulting, LLC for www.managementhelp.org.

Lower North Shore will enable youth to continue living on the Coast in the short and medium term, and encourage others to return after leaving for post-secondary studies or work experience.

In the long term, the Lower North Shore English-speaking community will benefit from the increased retention of youth, wich will in turn result in a more dynamic and sustained future for the community.

Logic model: Lower North Shore – Youth sector



Note: Shaded areas indicate activities, outputs or outcomes (results) already underway.
Non-shaded areas represent possible activities or results to be achieved.

Indicators and data sources – Youth sector

Expected outcomes	Indicators	Data sources
Immediate: 1. Increased awareness of local opportunities and resources	• Level of desire to return, or the perceived potential to return, to the Lower North Shore • Youth attitudes (satisfaction) toward community • Web site traffic	• Survey of community organizations and institutions • Youth survey (before leaving, while away, upon return) • Record of Web site navigation
Immediate: 2. Increased level of skills adapted to living on the Lower North Shore	• Number of programs or activities for youth (15-24 yrs.) • Number of participants (15-24 yrs.) • Level of participation by community, parents • Number of certificates issued	• Surveys of community organizations and institutions • Community organizations' administrative records • *Ibid* • Educational institutions' administrative records
Immediate: 3. Increase in educational/ training opportunities adapted to employment on the Lower North Shore	• Number of programs or activities for youth (15-35 yrs.) • Number of participants (15-35 yrs.) • Number of certificates issued • Level of youth (15-35 yrs.) receiving EI benefits, social welfare • Number of youth (15-35 yrs.) involved in business establishment and employment growth	• Surveys of community organizations and institutions • Community organizations' administrative records • Educational institutions' administrative records • Government or agency records • *Ibid*
Intermediate: 4. Youth return to or stay in the Lower North Shore to work and apply their expertise	• Proportion of youth (15-35 yrs.) as volunteers • Proportion of youth (15-35 yrs.) starting new businesses or finding new jobs • Number of human resources available (number of client files opened, meetings held, etc.)	• Surveys of community organizations and institutions • Government or agency records • *Ibid*
Final: 5. Thriving and vital community through youth retention	• Number of youth (15-24 yrs.) programs or activities available • Proportion of youth (15-35 yrs.) as residents of the Lower North Shore	• Surveys of community organizations and institutions • Census statistics and transportation users/usage

3.2 Health and social services

The vitality model for the health and social services sector focuses on three main areas of activity.

Promotion: Improved levels of information and better cooperation between government and communities will lead to greater awareness and mobilization for community members to take care of their health.

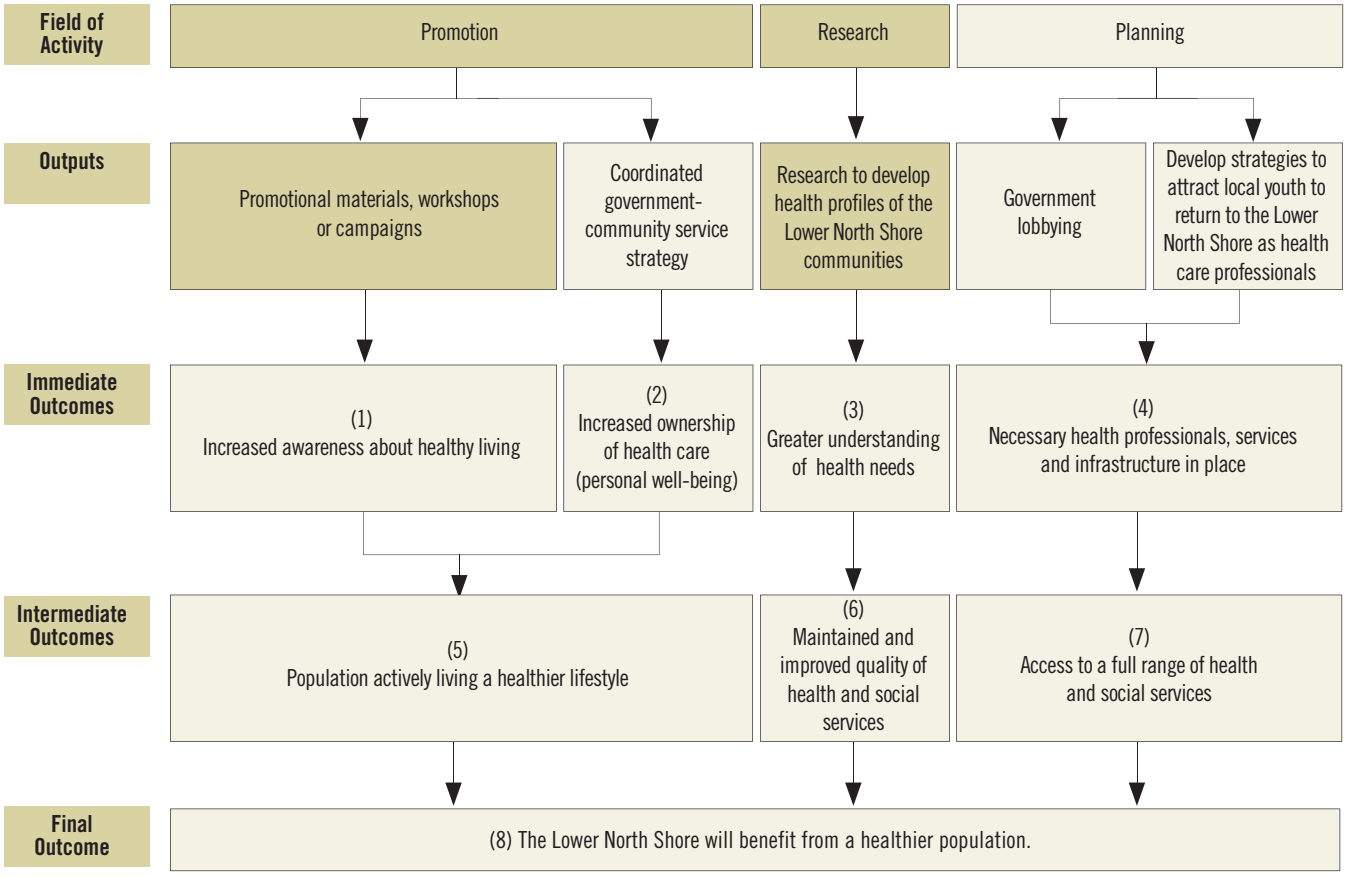
Research: Members of the English-speaking community of the Lower North Shore believe that more in-depth knowledge is required on the state of health and availability of health services. This can be accomplished by carrying out health profiles for each of the 14 communities in the region.

Planning: The English-speaking community of the Lower North Shore believes that strategic planning and concerted action are required to ensure the presence of appropriate health professionals and accompanying infrastructure.

In the medium term, these activities will encourage residents to live a healthier lifestyle. The quality of health and social services will be maintained and even improved, and there will be access to a full range of health and social services both on and off the Coast (individuals often have to fly to Sept-Iles, Québec City and St-Anthony, Newfoundland and Labrador, for services).

In the long term, the Lower North Shore English-speaking community will benefit from a healthier population.

Logic model: Lower North Shore – Health and social services sector



Note: Shaded areas indicate activities, outputs or outcomes (results) already underway. Non-shaded areas represent possible activities or results to be achieved.

Indicators and data sources – Health and social services sector

Expected outcomes	Indicators	Data sources
Immediate: 1. Population is more aware of the benefits of a healthier lifestyle	• Participation rates at information sessions • Availability and uptake of health and social services documents • Number of information requests • Web site traffic	• Community organizations' and agency administrative records • *Ibid* • *Ibid* • Web site navigation
Immediate: 2. Population mobilized to take greater ownership of health care (personal well-being)	• Existence of community health profiles • Rates of participation in recreation activities, adoption of a healthy diet, levels of substance abuse, participation in preventative health and social services programs	• Community organizations' and agency administrative records • Government press releases, budgets, institutional documentation
Immediate: 3. Greater understanding of the health needs of the community	• Existence of community health profiles	• Community organizations' and agency administrative records, population health statistics
Immediate: 4. Have the necessary health professionals, services and infrastructure in place	• Presence of the necessary health professionals, services and infrastructure • Number of health professionals in each discipline • Number of local professionals • Existence of all health care services (on and off the Coast) in both official languages • Number of qualified bilingual professionals • Levels of program funding • Existence of agreements providing emergency services	• Agency and government administrative records • *Ibid* • *Ibid* • *Ibid* • *Ibid* • *Ibid* • *Ibid*, media releases, community organizations' administrative records
Intermediate: 5. Population actively living a healthier lifestyle	• Levels of substance abuse • Social indicators of a healthy lifestyle (weight, teenage pregnancies, etc.)	• Agency statistics • Population health profiles

Expected outcomes	Indicators	Data sources
Intermediate: 6. Maintained and improved quality of service	• Rates of beneficiary satisfaction with health and social services • Provincial ranking	• Agency administrative records, user surveys • Government records
Intermediate: 7. Access to a full range of health and social services in both languages (locally and off the Coast)	• Presence of the necessary health professionals, services and infrastructure	• Agency and government administrative records
Final: 8. The Lower North Shore will benefit from a healthier population	• Mortality rates • Morbidity rates[13] • Average life expectancy • Level of participation in the workforce • Level of participation in community life	• Census statistics • *Ibid* • *Ibid* • *Ibid* • Surveys by community organizations

3.3 Community renewal

The vitality model for community renewal focuses on three main areas of activity.

Marketing and promotion: Members of the Lower North Shore English-speaking community feel there should be more promotion of the opportunities for community involvement and its rewards.

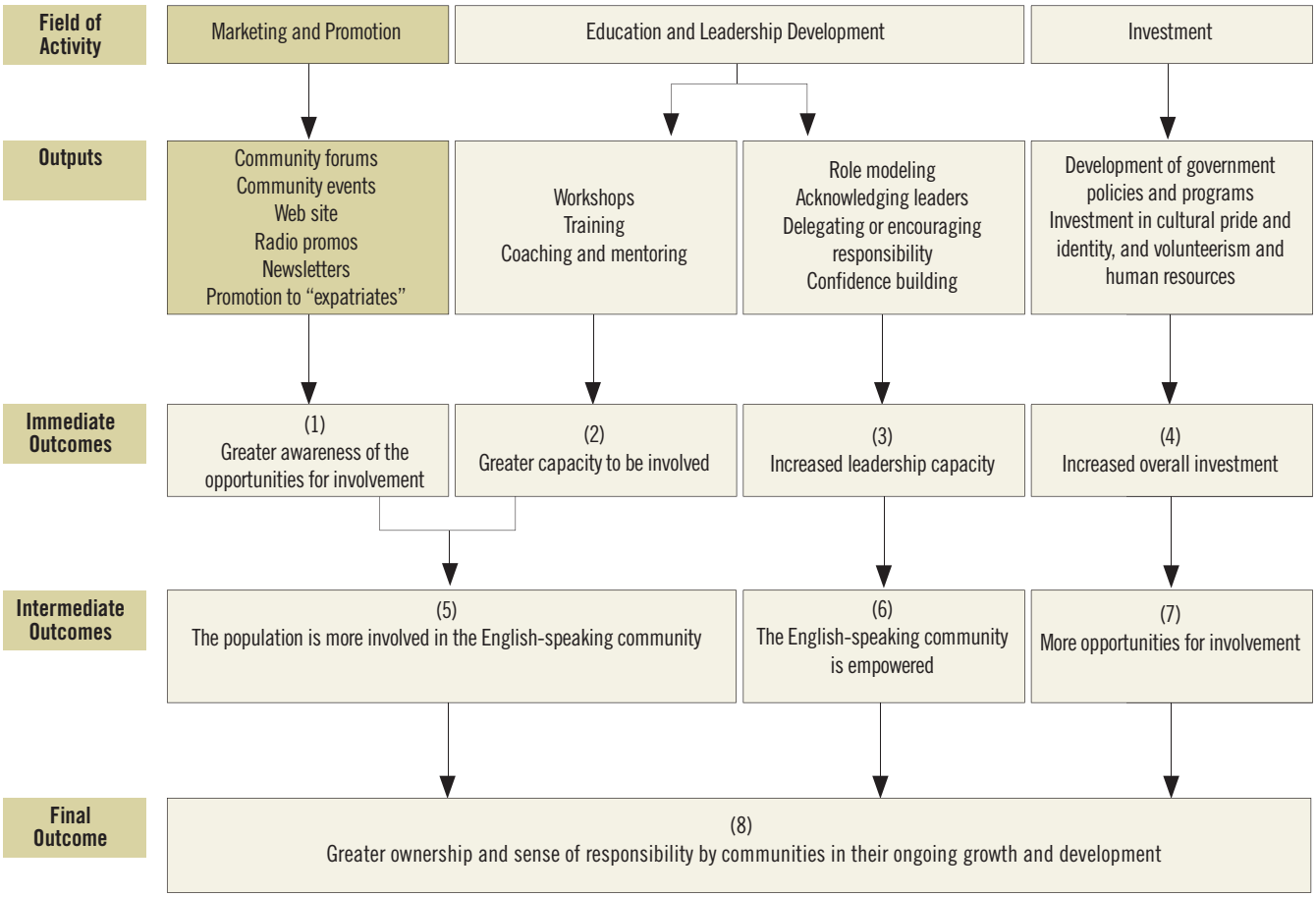
Education and leadership development: The English-speaking community of the Lower North Shore believes that leadership capacity should be strengthened through workshops, coaching and mentoring activities.

Investment: More programs and policies should be developed in response to community needs, as well as investment in the essential elements of social capital, such as cultural pride, volunteerism and human resources.

In the medium term, the activities will lead to greater involvement of residents in building the community, an improved sense of empowerment to overcome the challenges the community faces and more opportunities for people to become involved in community development activities.

13 Morbidity rates: proportion expressed in a percentage, of the people who are sick in the total population.

Logic model: Lower North Shore – Community renewal sector



Note: Shaded areas indicate activities, outputs or outcomes (results) already underway.
Non-shaded areas represent possible activities or results to be achieved.

Indicators and data sources – Community renewal sector

Expected outcomes	Indicators	Data sources
Immediate: 1. There is greater awareness of the opportunities for involvement, making a contribution, and their rewards	• Measure media usage and audience (Web site navigation, newspaper subscriptions, listening audience) • Number of information requests received by community organizations and institutions • Attendance at community events, forums, etc. • Membership rates in community organizations	• Media coverage study • Community organization and institutional administrative records • Community organization administrative records • *Ibid*
Immediate: 2. There is greater capacity to be involved in the English-speaking community	• Number and duration of educational/ training activities • Number of persons completing educational/training activities • Number of partners involved with community organizations • Measure sense of ownership/belonging/ responsibility to community	• Institutional administrative records • Self-reporting scale in year 1 (baseline longitudinal study) • Institutional and community organization administrative records • Survey of community organizations and individuals
Immediate: 3. There is increased leadership capacity in the English-speaking community	• Number of leaders recognized through events, newspapers, radio announcements, Web sites, etc. • Amount of change in leadership roles (number of new leaders, change in leadership positions, age, gender of leaders) • Measure of actions taken and delegated by leaders • Number of succession plans for leadership positions (community groups) • Participation level in leadership activities • Levels of confidence and trust in community leadership • Assessment of public awareness of leadership roles and responsibilities (individuals, organizations)	• Survey of community organizations and partner institutions, media coverage study • *Ibid* • Self-reporting scale in year 1 (baseline of longitudinal study) • Community organization administrative records • *Ibid* • Survey of community organization members and individuals • *Ibid*, media coverage study

Expected outcomes	Indicators	Data sources
Immediate: 4. There is increased overall investment in the English-speaking community (i.e. social capital)	• Number of government consultations per year • Number of programs or services needed by community established each year • Success rate of community group applications for support • Number of volunteers and amount of volunteer hours • Number and types of partnership arrangements and involvement (incl. off-coast engagement)	• Government, agency and community organization administrative records, media coverage study • *Ibid* • Government and community organization administrative records • Community organization administrative records • Institutional and community organization administrative records
Intermediate: 5. The population is more involved in the English-speaking community	• Number of persons involved in projects and activities (over three years) • Number of initiatives between communities • Amount of funding received by community organizations	• Community organization administrative records, survey of community members • Institutional and community organization administrative records • Agency and community organization administrative records
Intermediate: 6. There are more opportunities for involvement	• Number of projects, activities created (over three years)	• Agency and community organization administrative records
Intermediate: 7. The English-speaking community is empowered	• Number of different persons involved in formal community positions	• Community organization administrative records
Final: 8. Greater ownership and sense of responsibility by communities in their ongoing growth and development	• Number of projects and activities that encompass and involve all Lower North Shore communities • Sense of ownership/belonging/ responsibility in the community	• Institutional and community organization administrative records • Self-reporting scale in year 5 (conclusion of longitudinal study)

3.4 Economic development

The vitality model for economic development focuses on three main areas of activity.

Research: Members of the Lower North Shore English-speaking community feel that more research is needed to improve the level of information on economic opportunities in the area.

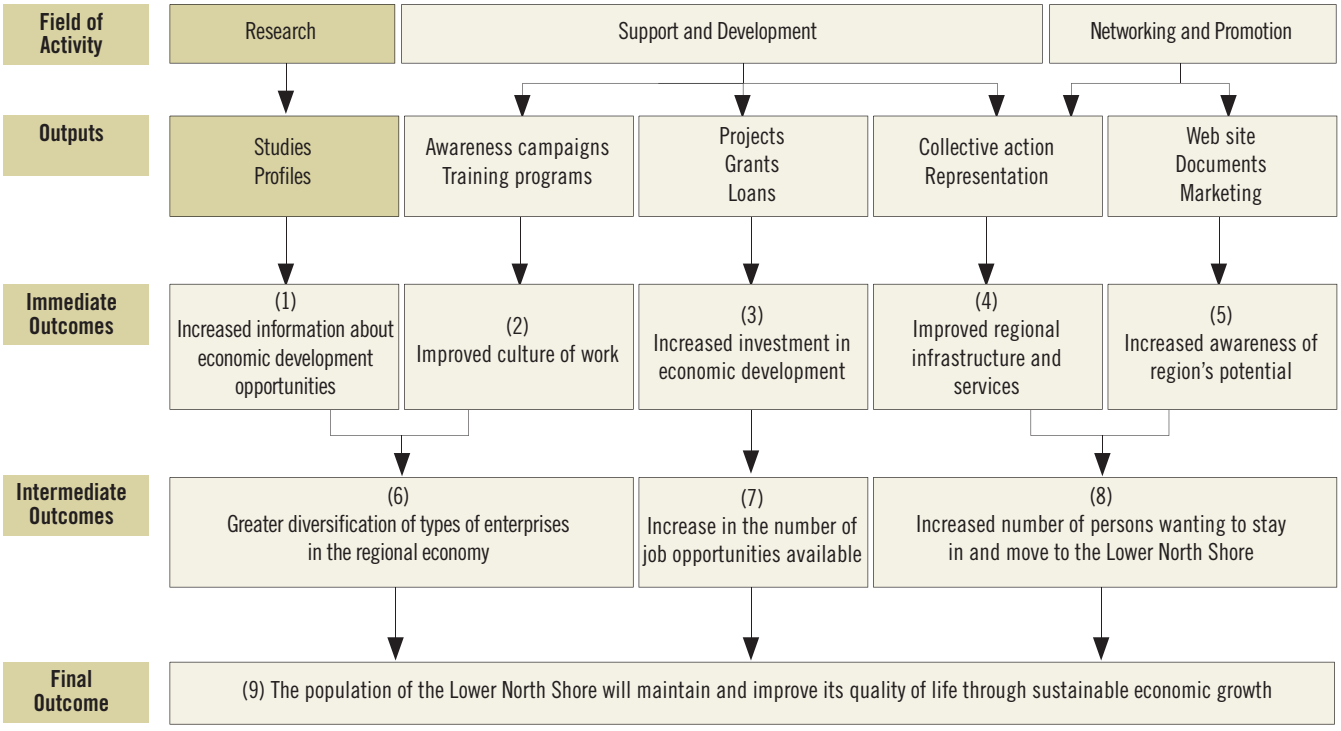
Support and development: The English-speaking population of the Lower North Shore believes that awareness and training programs are necessary to help improve the culture of work, and that additional financial resources are required to increase investments in economic activities. Target areas of investment should be those that add value to existing enterprise, further develop the natural resources of the area, and improve regional infrastructure.

Networking and promotion: The region's potential should be promoted through advertising and marketing efforts, especially outside the region.

In the medium term, these activities will lead to greater diversification in the regional economy, increase the number of jobs for a vital community and increase the number of persons wanting to make the Lower North Shore their home.

In the long term, the Lower North Shore English-speaking community will be able to maintain and improve its quality of life through a stable population supported by sustainable economic growth.

Logic model: Lower North Shore – Economic development sector



Note: Shaded areas indicate activities, outputs or outcomes (results) already underway.
Non-shaded areas represent possible activities or results to be achieved.

Indicators and data sources – Economic development sector

Expected outcomes	Indicators	Data sources
Immediate: 1. Increased information about economic development opportunities	• Number of research studies completed	• Government, institution and community organization documentation
Immediate: 2. Improved culture of work (increased entrepreneurship and skill level of the workforce)	• Levels of education • Training skills • Rate of hiring from Lower North Shore and non-traditional season • Number of new education and training programs • Number of new businesses	• Census statistics • Institutional skills profiles • Agency administrative records • Institutional administrative records • Agency administrative records
Immediate: 3. Increased investment in economic development through added value to existing economic activity, and further developed natural resources	• Number of investors • Amount of dollars invested • New partnership ventures • New services and infrastructure • Number and types of jobs	• Agency and institutional administrative records • *Ibid* • *Ibid* • *Ibid*, government announcements • Census statistics, agency administrative records
Immediate: 4. Improved regional infrastructure and services, in particular the accessibility and affordability of regional transportation	• Decreased cost of transportation • Frequency and number of available modes of transportation	• Survey of transportation services • *Ibid*

Expected outcomes	Indicators	Data sources
Immediate: 5. Increased awareness of the region's potential	• Web site traffic • Number of information requests received • Number of visits by potential investors/ developers • Number of tourists • Number of marketing campaigns	• Record of Web site navigation • Institutional, agency and community organization administrative records • *Ibid* • *Ibid* • *Ibid*
Intermediate: 6. Greater diversification of types of enterprises in the regional economy	• Number and types of new businesses and industries	• Census statistics, agency administrative records
Intermediate: 7. Increase in the number of job opportunities available	• Number of new jobs (with residence) • Number of self-employed	• Census and regional agency statistics • *Ibid*
Intermediate: 8. Increase in the number of persons wanting to stay in and immigrate to the Lower North Shore	• Levels of population • Net migration • Types of population, permanent vs. part-time • Age structure	• Census statistics • *Ibid* • *Ibid* • *Ibid*
Final: 9. The population of the Lower North Shore will maintain and improve its quality of life through sustainable economic growth	• Rates of employment • Number of permanent residents on the Lower North Shore	• Census and regional agency statistics • *Ibid*

4. Conclusions

4.1 Renewal

The predominant concern expressed on the Lower North Shore during this study was the question of renewal: how to enhance the vitality of the community so that youth see a future in working and living in the place they grew up. This is especially a challenge for the English-speaking communities of the Lower North Shore due to their remote and isolated location, and their dramatic socio-economic upheaval stemming from the collapse of the fishery. In addition to increasing the number of English-speaking youth that stay in the area for the long term, the Lower North Shore communities described community renewal (leadership, volunteers, capacity) as being a key part of assessing vitality.

4.2 Services and infrastructure

Although service was an important element in the health and social services vitality model, access and availability as well as basic infrastructure such as transportation and communications, were common concerns throughout the four sectors chosen by the Lower North Shore communities. These were not just related to access in English but also to local availability of any kind without having to take a plane to Québec City or Montréal. The vitality model for the Lower North Shore speaks directly of the need for significant investments in services and infrastructure that other regions take for granted.

4.3 Economic development

While economic development is important to all communities, the English-speaking communities of the Lower North Shore have come very close to losing some of their communities simply because there are no jobs to be had at all. The region faces the massive challenge of rebuilding its economic base, a task made difficult by the fact that many geographic and economic links are with Newfoundland and Labrador, and some communities are almost entirely English-speaking and isolated socially and politically from the rest of Quebec. The vitality model elaborates the important elements that need to be addressed to develop the regional economy for the long term.

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