



RESTART+
communities in action

Restart + Communities' Toolkit
A practical guide on *why* and *how* to
set up a Restart + Community Alliance

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WE BUILD

regional alliances for
community growth



WE TRAIN

the facilitators of
transformative community
regeneration



WE PROMOTE

self-learning through
open
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EARLY LESSONS FROM RESTART COMMUNITY ALLIANCES FROM ACROSS EUROPE





BACKGROUND

The Restart+ project has emerged from an awareness of the increased needs that small communities are facing, especially after the economic crisis and the global recession. The effects of the economic crisis are still very evident in communities across Europe. Small towns and villages have been worst hit: cuts in public services, the closure of businesses and high levels of unemployment all contribute to the hollowing out of community life. Through the Restart+ project we aim to provide free tools and resources which equip leaders of community groups, public authorities and educational institutions to adopt an innovative approach to community reactivation.

Most states, regions and local authorities have a development or regeneration strategy that should ensure community investment. While many plans have a collaborative framework, in recent years, the scope of these plans has been limited by budgetary restraints and, in rural areas, more systemic problems of communications & transport.

Restart+ aims to increase investment in community regeneration and to empower small communities to generate alternative streams of income to fund this work. The increasing investment is not just in terms of financial funding, but also in human & social capital.

We plan to move towards this aim by:

Creating 4 pilot **Community Alliances** in 4 EU regions to demonstrate community alliances in practice

Producing this Restart+ **Community Alliance Toolkit** giving users practical resources and clear steps to creating an effective alliance

Creating a **Self-Assessment Tool** to help community leaders identify their strengths and skills for community reactivation

Developing a **Free online course for self study and trainers resources for classroom delivery** offering a step-by-step interactive guide in areas such as

- ✓ *Tackling decline, building on strengths, seizing opportunities*
- ✓ *Formulating your vision*
- ✓ *Organisation and planning*
- ✓ *Diversification, cultural heritage, inclusion and diversity*
- ✓ *Mobilising, the energy to make things happen*
- ✓ *The power of branding*
- ✓ *Communication and dissemination*
- ✓ *Attracting resources*
- ✓ *Measuring impact*
- ✓ *Sustaining progress*
- ✓ *Delivering a 5-day training programme for potential leaders to widen their exposure to best practice*

Driving the Restart+ project forward is a partnership of seven organisations representing the public, private and not for profit sectors.

The project has been funded with support from the European Commission, through the Erasmus+ Programme.

RESTART+ Communities Partners



As the coordinator of the project, [Letterkenny Institute of Technology](#) ensures a fruitful collaboration among partners, as well as building a Restart+ Alliance in Donegal County, Ireland.

[Municipality of Lousada](#) is responsible for launching a Restart+ Alliance in the North Region of Portugal as well as ensuring the sustainability of the project.



Within the project, [Banbridge District Enterprise](#) develops a Self-Assessment Tool to help community leaders identify their strengths and skills for community interaction. launch a Restart+ Alliance in Northern Ireland in as well as ensure the evaluation of the project.

[Momentum Consulting](#) develops a free online course for self-study and trainers resources for classroom delivery offering a step-by-step interactive guide for the community leaders.



[NERDA, the North-East Regional Development Agency](#), is responsible for launching a Restart+ Alliance in North East Region of Romania and for producing the Community Alliance Toolkit.

[European E-learning Institute \(EUEI\)](#) ensures the digitalisation of the tools and resources created within the project as well as the implementation of the online course.



[University Industry Innovation Network \(UIIN\)](#) ensures the visibility of the project with its outreach, dissemination and marketing materials, contribution to each output of the project and implementation of the international project launch.



INTRODUCTION

Why form an alliance?

A Restart + Alliance is a relatively small group of key people who come together as a catalyst for change in a particular place. It brings together a balanced set of representatives from public, private and non-profit community organisations working on social, economic or physical regeneration.

Across Europe there are a lot of networking and strategic bodies that fit into this description and a lot of time is already being invested in these bodies. However the kind of alliances we are proposing are different in that they are driven by community aspirations, knowledge and passion and not external ideas of what the community should be.

There are a lot of very dedicated community volunteers working hard in their own individual ways. These volunteers have a wealth of experience and knowledge about their communities, but few channels to express this knowledge or to match it to opportunities for regeneration.

When local people are offered the chance to come together and channel resources into the community, as for example in the Big Local programme in the UK, there is a willingness to innovate and a high level of responsibility for the proper spending of resources.

When it comes to community regeneration there is no one size fits all approach. Balancing community issues with the needs and drives of large public or private bodies is tricky, particularly when regeneration resources often flow from large and highly regulated organisations. This is why we have pilot Restart Alliance projects running in four regions and will feedback experience from these on our website.

We see the potential benefits from an effective community regeneration alliance as:

If any of these potential benefits resonate with you or your community then you should consider scoping the possibilities for building an alliance in your area.

Remember there are no quick fixes. Community decline is a long, complex process, and reversing it will take a long term commitment. But there is knowledge out there that can make the process quicker, easier and more understandable. Creating change can be challenging but the rewards can be exponential.

Benefits from an effective community regeneration alliance

Fast tracking knowledge into and out of communities, allowing communities access to wider horizons, spreading innovation and increasing the pace of change.

A mechanism for pooling resources

More sustainable economic opportunities based in the community, with a particular focus on creating and expanding social enterprises

More emphasis on community heritage and the value of community efforts

More collective influence on local and regional public bodies which are difficult for small groups or organisations to access

What have we learned from the experience of others?

As well as the summary in this section you can check the Restart + facebook page for articles on innovation and pathways to change. Visit us: @ RestartCommunities

Common elements for successful alliances
- Clarity of Purpose
- Mutual Trust and Respect
- Accountability

As a result of the intensification of economic and social inequality in the last decade there has been a renewed debate on the causes and potential solutions. There have also been a variety of practical responses within communities across Europe with varying levels of success. Looking at the research and policy work undertaken by different development bodies gives us an insight into the systematic barriers Restart + Alliances might face, as well as pathways for transformational change.

BARRIERS

Top down funding decisions holding back social innovators and misdirecting resources

Restart + Alliance members reported common experiences of inappropriate funding programmes creating pressure to design projects that were matched to the needs of the funder rather than a particular place. The results were either wasted resources and frustration in recipient communities, or community groups being unable to access resources they badly needed.

“It is very important that you recognise your own capacity and core business as an organisation. With funding applications it is tempting to get side-tracked by pots of funding that appear attractive. It takes bravery to walk away from situations that aren't working for you as an organisation. Decisions like that come from confidence in your organisation and team. Such confidence is built on a track record of successful delivery”.

Lorraine Thompson,
Regional Director, [Donegal Youth Service](#)

A narrow, approach driven by the internal priorities of funders or development

agencies squashes innovation. [The World Economic Forum](#) identified this as one of the major barriers for social entrepreneurship. They conclude:

“In the private sector, if you design a better product, venture capitalists come to you with cash, and expectations for returns on that capital. In the social sector, investors come to a social entrepreneur and say: “we love what you have built, but here are our priorities that must be included in your business execution”. Social entrepreneurs are then tasked with bending their models to serve the needs of the funding community over the needs of those it is their mission to serve. This misalignment is distracting to the scaling efforts of social enterprise and does not allow the entrepreneur to direct growth in the most efficient and effective manner to meet social needs.”

The World Economic Forum found that while funders' decisions determine where resources are placed they do not consistently identify the best solutions, help to refine them or support scaling.

An absence of consistent and patient capital

In a World Economic Forum global survey of social enterprise entrepreneurs nearly half of respondents identified the lack of consistent access to capital as their main barrier to expansion.

While capital is available it has been found to be inefficiently allocated, with luck and personal connections being key elements. Funders are not covering overheads or R&D, limiting growth and creating enormous stress for social entrepreneurs. “To break even, social change implementers must spend tremendous amounts of time raising unrestricted funding to make up the shortfall.”

The “vanity” of donors wanting high profile branded solutions creates redundancy and unnecessary competition. Innovative approaches to funding are not accessible to most social innovators.

Harvard Business Review, Social Impact Investing Will Be the New Venture Capital, Sir Ronald Cohen and William A. Sahlman

Power to Change: [Building an inclusive economy through community business: the role of social capital and agency in community business formation in deprived communities](#)

Public sector gatekeepers blocking access to resources and opportunities

Power to Change is a UK charitable trust that aims to create better places through community businesses. It gathered the experience of community groups in Liverpool who were attempting to develop community businesses. It found that on one side: *“There is a lack of trust: among those local government commissioners and officers who are not yet truly valuing community business’s ability to deliver, and within the community business sector itself, bruised by past encounters.”* While on the community side: *“There is frustration at public sector procurement requirements that preclude them from bidding, and shared stories of communities running into the sand while attempting to take ownership of assets from local authorities.”* Heseltine Institute, University of Liverpool, “Growth, sustainability and purpose in the community business market in the Liverpool City Region” 2019.

In response to this gap between community and gatekeepers Power to Change has created a [support programme](#) to bring together community businesses and with public, private and voluntary sector partners to identify the priorities for creating the conditions that will enable community business to thrive.

Lack of time and priority for making links and knowledge sharing

Both professional staff and volunteers within the Restart+ Alliances report massive pressure on their time with no budget being available for knowledge sharing and link building. One of the reflections below:

“On reflection I don’t think we recognised the importance of networking in the early days of setting up our social enterprise. Though in saying that we probably felt that we didn’t have the resources or the money to invest at the time but I do think the importance of networking can not be underestimated. If I was to do it again I would ensure that we found the money and the time to invest in more networking opportunities from the outset”,

Helen Nolan, Spraoi agus Sport, [Social Enterprise](#), Ireland

This critical gap limits the response community members and groups can make to any regeneration initiative. It also limits the scope of ideas and vision that communities have access to.

Fear of failure

The failure of products and services is generally assumed in the private sector. However risk averse funders in the social sector leave social entrepreneurs much more wary. The impact on

innovation is stifling. Innovation is inherently risky and to produce transformative change will mean making failure an acceptable part of the process.

Lack of investment in building a wide base of knowledge, skills and confidence

Community training bodies report that where training is available, it is focused on core governance skills and is expensive for volunteers or paid staff. The group training available has limited impact without additional follow on resources for 1-1 work and mentoring. Developing vital soft skills, such as confidence, creative leadership or entrepreneurship, requires more intense long term investment than a short group course can offer.

Taking a one size fits all approach to training, without investing in specific knowledge of the situation, hampers uptake by the people who need it most. In an example from The East Area Partnership in Liverpool, a group of women were to be trained to be part of a child care social enterprise. However the women had not been properly consulted and refused to become involved. This was subsequently found to be

the result of drastically underestimating their lack of confidence – many had been non-attenders at school and did not believe they had the ability to pass exams. Time was belatedly invested in confidence building

Successful community businesses stress the importance of critical business skills. The lack of these skills in deprived communities is a barrier to successful community business formation. These are skills which disadvantaged communities in particular have no background in or exposure to.

[Developing human assets](#) is a vital process for sustainable development. It takes a depth of local knowledge and commitment to a well resourced, systematic, approach to reach those consistently excluded from the table.

Major investment programmes failing to trickle down

Trickle down has been the central assumption driving economic development and regeneration investments. This dominant idea is increasingly being challenged. Power to Change investigated the links between major investment projects and older people who were experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. These were found to be potential community entrepreneurs with a wealth of home grown business ideas. However resources had not reached them.

“they lack the opportunities and support to start these businesses. This means that they remain the recipients of support that enables them to manage with their disadvantage, rather than leading responses, improving their social and economic wellbeing and playing an active role in shaping their economy.” [\(RSA\)](#)

The barriers created by a lack of flexible start up capital and complex application forms were found to be widespread. Leading to the conclusion that what was needed was “more flexible use of smaller-scale funding to pump-prime public innovation and social enterprise.” [\(Power to Change\)](#)





PATHWAYS TO CHANGE

Developing resilience and staying power

The impact of the drive and resilience of individuals through a complicated and winding development journey cannot be underestimated. A story from the [Onion Collective's heritage based regeneration project in Somerset in the UK](#) gives an insight into what this means and how it works for the individual and the community.

Social enterprise as a vehicle for inclusive growth

Social enterprise, and more specifically community businesses, can actively strengthen community resilience. Community businesses are buying locally, reinvesting locally and creating new connections inside and outside the community.

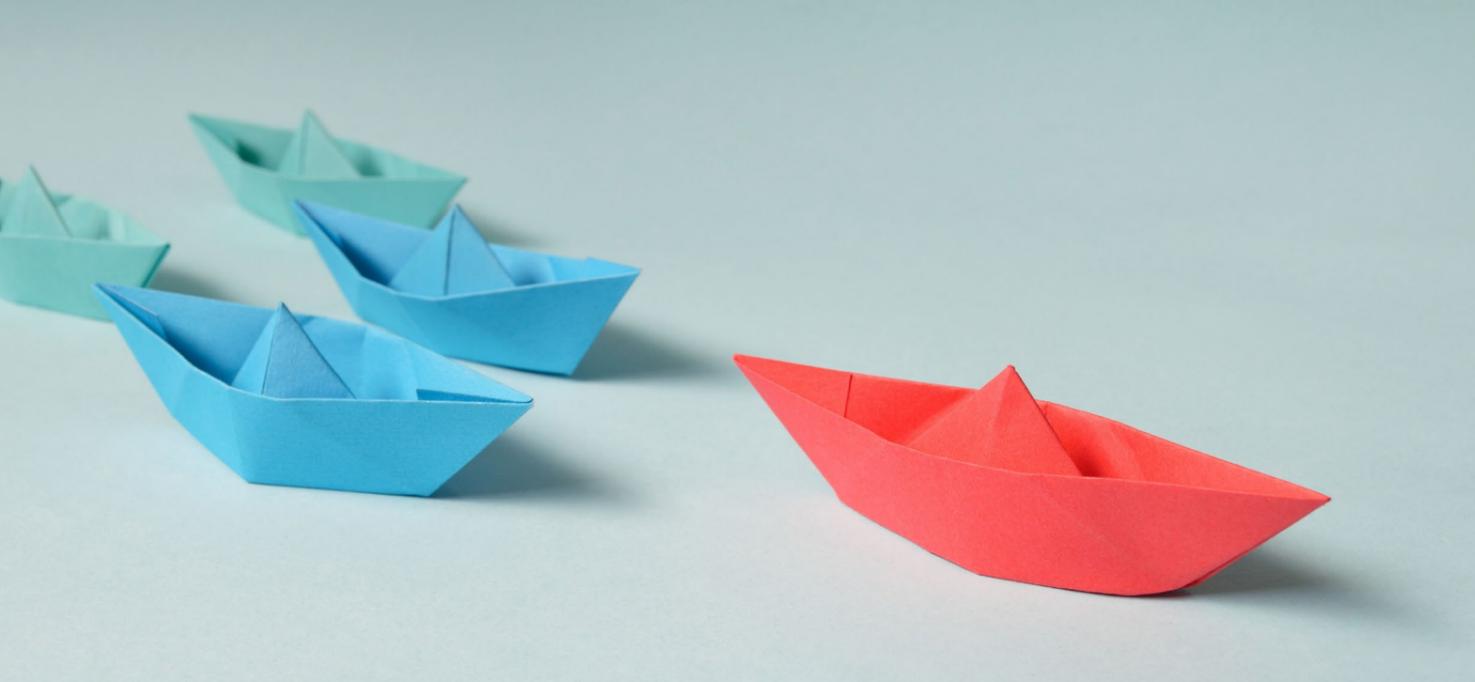
[In some countries](#), such as Sweden, Belgium, Italy, France and the Netherlands, the social economy accounts for employment of between 9% and 11.2% of the working population. However, in the UK relative employment is lower at 5.6%,

Social businesses often create community hubs and community assets that pull investment into the community. They create more secure and better paid jobs for local people. While social enterprises and social businesses are growing and increasing in numbers across Europe, a more general recognition of their value and ability to transform places and the social connection fundamental to inclusive growth could accelerate this pathway to change ([The Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#)).

CASE STUDY

In 2013, two local residents in Tottenham in London started to investigate how they could save their local pub which was due to be sold to a developer with plans to convert the building into flats. After receiving the backing of their wider community, they applied to have the pub classified as an asset of community value (ACV). In the UK voluntary and community organisations can nominate an asset to be included on their local authority's register of assets of community value and will then have the option to buy the property. By holding a series of public meetings, they enlisted the help of fellow residents with an array of skills. From lawyers and designers, to local brewers and bakers, they were able to marshal the expertise required to raise capital through local fundraising initiatives and apply for a series of small grants. They got the pub classified as an ACV and were given the option to buy it and took ownership in March 2015. The pub has been run as a successful community asset ever since, maintaining an important community asset, and forging new connections across the community

Source: [Power to Change](#)



Long term, unconditional, resident led funding

Big Local is a funding programme established in 2012 in England. It was designed from the outset to be radically different from other funding programmes. The vision is of empowered, resilient, dynamic, asset-rich communities making their own decisions on what is best for their area.

Willingness to innovate is one of the characteristics of the Big Local areas that makes it distinct from more traditional community regeneration projects

The programme provides £1m in funding and a range of support to 150 different communities over 10–15 years to make their area a better place to live. It's a radical devolution of power and responsibility which simplifies the rules and red tape.

"We took chances on people that others wouldn't work with,"

Decision making in Big Local areas rests firmly with boards requiring a minimum of 50% resident representation.

They also support a form of leadership which values relationship building and can inspire people, while navigating the challenges of accountability and inclusion which can arise when working in communities.

They have learned from their research that Big Local is rewarding, inspiring and energising. It's seen as an opportunity to take control and deliver the change communities want to see on their terms. The challenges are that the sense of responsibility in wanting to do the best for an area can sometimes be stressful or frustrating.

At its best, leadership in Big Local is distributed and shared. It comes from many different places, some expected, some unlikely. Not all leaders have titles or formal positions. They gain legitimacy and recognition from their community, based on the people they are and what they do.

Following their research [Big Local](#) are pioneering a person-centred approach to leadership including one-to-one mentoring and coaching, working directly with community members in their local area.

Entrepreneurial, whole-place leadership

The [Inclusive Growth Commission](#) in 2016 looked at global examples of how people are finding their way towards inclusive growth, creating a set of pathways towards this goal. These included bringing together, at a place level, business, community and political leaders, formally and informally, to drive system-change. They suggest that the change will require:

1. clarity of vision for what actions are needed
2. the means to respond dynamically as circumstances shift
3. the capacity for economic leadership
4. the ability to think creatively about what (or who) might present an opportunity for sustainable change
5. the courage to experiment, iterate and scale
6. the humility to learn from failure.

The conclude that places with strong entrepreneurial leadership understand the need for a broad-based movement for

change, building legitimacy and channeling collective community energy. This idea was echoed by the Centre for Local Economic Strategies in the UK who concluded that:

"A programme of dedicated community business champions rooted in deprived communities can act as a resource to enable social action and encourage community business solutions."

These community business champions need formal support and training that allows them to understand the needs of the community they work in and communicate the benefits of local collaboration to creating a strong ecosystem for community business growth. Community business champions could be funded in their existing organisations (also likely resource poor) to stimulate, form and operate local networks which bring together existing community businesses, with community, private and public sector anchor organisations in place. ([RSA Inclusive Growth Commission: CLES](#))

Enlisting key influencers

Key influencers have a massive positive or negative impact on the ability of a community regeneration project to thrive and expand. On the one hand some influencers have been found to be unwilling to admit that there was an area of disadvantage within their remit, preferring to maintain a perfect and positive image and blocking access to funding for disadvantaged areas. On the other hand a group that did secure the support of a highly influential political figure found that doors immediately opened and they were

able to survive and attract the investment they needed to grow much more quickly.

"We were struggling on for years trying to make our case and getting nowhere, but when one major politician took us under their wing suddenly things changed and we were able to get the money we needed to develop".

Brendan Curran,
Brownlow Limited, Northern Ireland.





Non-speculative development

CASE STUDY

La Marina Living Lab is an urban laboratory, which seeks to engage citizens in the transformation of “La Marina de Valencia”: the historic harbour of the city of Valencia. The Lab is based on links between research organisations, public bodies, community associations and the private sector.

Instead of the model dominated by large-scale investment of capital and infrastructure, the new model is based on values – inclusivity, open public space, and activities or initiatives for all citizens. The project aims to strengthen the connection between neighbourhood associations, the cultural and artistic vibe, as well as other social entities. It is a participative and open process, focused on the preferences of people who work, study and play in [La Marina](#).

Image credit: La Marina Living Lab

Unleash the potential of local-driven initiatives for social and economic cohesion

CASE STUDY

ADER-SOUSA - Association of Rural Development of Terras do Sousa is a private association of local scope, which has its headquarters in the Monastery of Pombeiro, Felgueiras. Its activity focuses on the municipalities of Paços de Ferreira, Felgueiras, Lousada, Paredes and Penafiel and surrounding areas.

The association aims to promote regional and local development with the intention of improving the social, cultural and economic conditions of its citizens. For the pursuit of its aims and the development of its activities, the Association gives priority to collaboration and cooperation relationships with local populations, as well as all institutions and entities concerned, both national and international.

In fact, since 1991, the Association has been successively recognised as a Local Action Group for the implementation of the three LEADER community initiatives in its territory, followed by the recognition for the implementation of the SP3 of ProDeR and, currently, until 2020, of the DLBC-Rural in the Sousa Lands. Since 1991, Ader-Sousa has supported

more than 400 projects, which have enabled local agents to initiate and/or develop their activity, create jobs, maintain traditions, restore heritage, develop skills, carry out studies, publicise the territory and its products, promote social and cultural support.

Such projects cover the areas of:

- agriculture and agri-food*
- environment and natural resources*
- tourist animation and promotion*
- traditional arts and crafts*
- culture and heritage*
- education, training technical support and research*
- industry*
- proximity services*
- tourism*

Along this path, Ader-Sousa widened the geography of the territory and the partnership, strengthened itself, internalized the growing importance of its mission, outlined a vision - Transforming the Lands of Sousa - into a model of sustainable peri-urban territorial development.



7 STEPS FOR AN EFFECTIVE ALLIANCE

Creating any new group is a process that does not necessarily follow a straight line, so don't agonise over particular elements in the next section. Your alliance will change and grow as you learn and you may follow these steps in a different order, or revisit them as you evolve. Just remember that at the end of the development process every effective project needs a clear, concise vision and action plan, based on a strong, shared knowledge of the place and people you want to influence.



STEP 1. Define and map your community

There are different definitions of “community”, there are geographically defined communities, cultural communities and interest based communities. The detail can be a bit overwhelming if you are not a statistician, but your mapping simply starts with defining the physical area you want to work in.

Within this area any potential funders or investors will want to know the demographics, the physical, cultural and economic assets within your environment and community. The more you understand at this step, the easier it will be to develop strong ideas based on the gaps you can see around you.

Demographics

- Population Numbers*
- Population Profile (gender, age, education, health, economic status – retired, students, working or inactive)*
- Economic circumstances (income levels, local industries, deprivation)*
- Geographical location (rural, coastal, remote etc)*

The kinds of information you need to gather:

Demographic information is generally drawn from a national census, but local government will probably also hold this information. Most of this is freely available on the internet, though it may take a lot of searching. You might want to consider recruiting an alliance member with access to this information and skills in interpreting and presenting it.

Physical Assets

- Transport infrastructure*
- Buildings*
- Environment/Amenities*
- Facilities/Land*
- Connectivity/Internet*

Surveying your physical assets is something all alliance members can contribute to, giving you a potential engagement exercise in the early stages of the alliance. Mapping assets gives you a positive and proactive approach to regeneration. Carrying this out before thinking about gaps changes the thinking process and the quality of ideas that people can envisage.

These less concrete assets are at the very heart of any sustainable regeneration process. Focusing on them at an early stage gives you a constructive basis for your action plan and for motivating the people you need for sustainable development ([Clear Impact](#)), ([County of Santa Barbara Toolkit](#)).

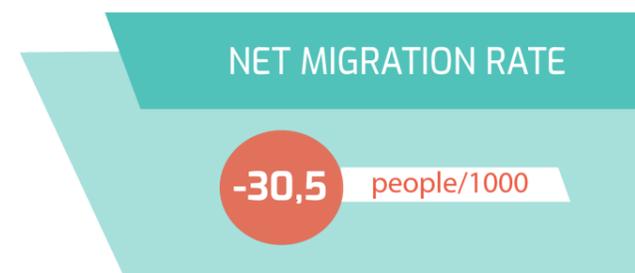
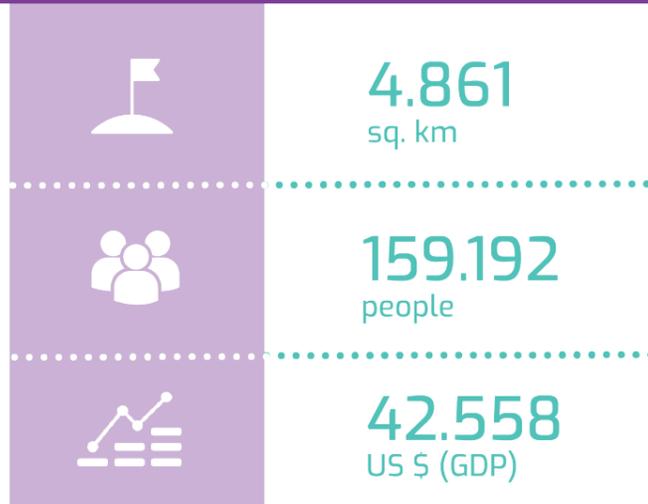
Community Assets

- Community Networks*
- Community groups*
- Cultural Heritage*
- Natural Heritage*
- Community Businesses*
- Volunteers/leaders*
- Online community platforms/social media*

People understand and process information in different ways. Using the results of your asset mapping survey to create a visual tool, such as an infographic, can give you a new perspective on what you want to do and how you are going to achieve your goals.

Take a look at the examples from Restart+ Alliances in the following pages.

COUNTY DONEGAL, IRELAND



Statistics are sourced from:

Wikipedia - list of countries GDP, Wikipedia - list of countries, net migration rate
Eurostat - regions and cities, Eurostat - Data browser
Eurostat Apposso
World Bank - Data

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communities in action

REGIONAL NEEDS

REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHY

The north, west and southwest of the County is surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean – in which there are 13 inhabited islands. Donegal is totally dependent on a road-based transport system reflecting the small internal market and the dispersed settlement patterns



Donegal's towns and villages provide a wide range of services and employment functions which both drive and are supported by their rural hinterlands. The towns have the potential to play a crucial role in regenerating economically stagnant areas of the County.

EDUCATION

Approximately 33% of Donegal's population have a third level qualification. Letterkenny Institute of Technology is the main third level education provider based in the County.



Developmental focus is being geared towards up-skilling and knowledge transfer within the community, based around existing digital schools, libraries and digital hubs in community centres.

MIGRATION AND POVERTY



In 2016, Donegal saw the largest outward migration figures in the country with 6,731 moving elsewhere in the country or abroad since 2011. The young adult population (19-24) in Donegal has decreased by 16.2%, the highest in the country.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Roughly 62% of Donegal's population have access to broadband, meaning a significant 38% do not have access, hindering business and education capabilities.



It is widely accepted that improved connectivity through telecommunications is required to help drive improvement in accessing services and improving opportunities for rural social and economic development.

TOURISM

Tourism is impacted by the lack of public transport to and around the various regions in Donegal. Rural degeneration means a lack of services available to people visiting the County and derelict buildings and areas could have a negative impact on the natural beauty of the area.



Opportunities exist to increase tourism through improving access to transport. Donegal is in the position to capitalise on rural tourism in terms of Adventure & Activity tourism, Food tourism, Eco tourism and Cultural tourism.

ARMAGH CITY, BANBRIDGE AND CRAIGAVON, NORTHERN IRELAND

REGIONAL NEEDS

REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES



1.434
sq. km



210.300
people



76.099
US \$ (GDP)



SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHY

Life expectancy for men is 75.5 years in the most deprived areas and 80 in the least deprived areas. For women it is 81.4 and 82.4. Youth unemployment is an issue in the area.



51% of adults meeting the recommended activity levels.

EDUCATION

In the region, 15% of working age people have no qualifications and 54% are below level 4.



There are 2 universities within 20-40 miles of the borough with significantly lower tuition fees than United Kingdom institutions.

MIGRATION AND POVERTY

Over the past 10 years the region has attracted migrant populations particularly from Poland, Lithuania and Portugal, serving the agricultural, food and manufacturing sectors.



The young population should be exploited and engaged in the professional field.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS



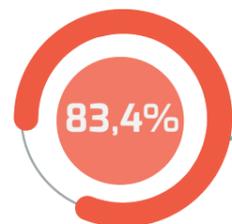
The borough is receiving national government funding to drive up broadband speeds. The expectation is that this will lead to new capacity for homes and businesses.

TOURISM



85% of adults in Northern Ireland engaged in cultural or arts activities every year. The top attraction in the borough is Oxford Island nature reserve, with approximately 200,000 visitors/-year.

The region has significant natural resources and recent strategic shifts within Tourism NI towards cultural and heritage tourism could unlock investments, with a more creative approach to the local offer.



83,4%

URBAN POPULATION



95%

POPULATION WITH ACCESS TO INTERNET



4,5%

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES (OVER 15 YEARS)

LIFE EXPECTANCY

years 80,6

NET MIGRATION RATE

14,13 people/1000

Statistics are sourced from:

Wikipedia - list of countries GDP, Wikipedia - list of countries, net migration rate

Eurostat - regions and cities, Eurostat - Data browser

Eurostat Apposso

World Bank - Data

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NORTH REGION OF PORTUGAL

REGIONAL NEEDS

REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES



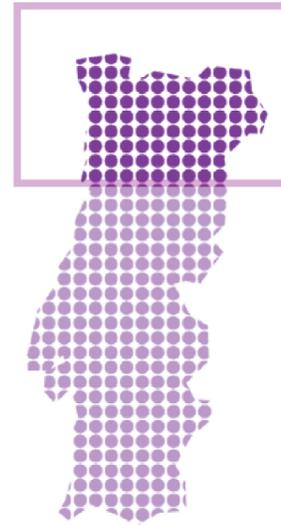
1.831
sq. km



433.000
people



23.186
US \$ (GDP)



65,2%

URBAN POPULATION

74%

POPULATION WITH
ACCESS TO INTERNET

9,8%

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES
(OVER 15 YEARS)

LIFE EXPECTANCY

years 82,0

NET MIGRATION RATE

-13,31 people/1000

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHY

According to national and regional indicators, at an aggregate level, Tâmega and Sousa region stands out because it has a population growth.



Measures to support the establishment of the resident population and re-training of the qualified migrant population, in particular to support employment and the creation of new enterprises present an opportunity.

EDUCATION

With regard to human resources, despite recent favourable developments, a lack of qualifications can be identified in the region, comparatively to the rest of the country.



The existing and diversified professional training offerings, vocational education and professional higher education courses can be seen as an opportunity towards the development of local enterprises and the local economy.

MIGRATION AND POVERTY



There are many communities of Portuguese emigrants throughout the world and the immigration has increased in the later years due to the severe economic crisis that the country has felt.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

The region is covered by a telecommunication system, but services need to be improved, especially access to the internet.



The region is below the national average in broadband internet access, and there is room for this indicator to evolve. Progress has been made in last years since broadband access has increased.

TOURISM

The region needs are: more tourism operators, hotel establishments and other structured tourism offerings and re-branding the region.



Richness and diversity of the natural, historical, cultural, gastronomic and wine making heritage, could attract tourism.

Statistics are sourced from:

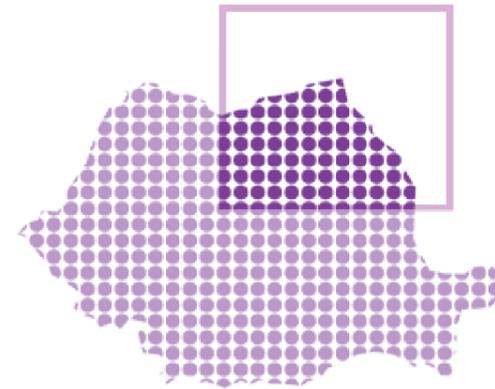
Wikipedia - list of countries GDP, Wikipedia - list of countries, net migration rate
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Eurostat Apposso
World Bank - Data

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NORTH EAST REGION OF ROMANIA

REGIONAL NEEDS

REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES



SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHY

The region is experiencing a continuing phenomenon of population aging and a severe decrease in the young population.



There are 46 urban localities in the region, situated around the most developed cities from the North East region (Iasi, Suceava and Bacau).

EDUCATION

Only 13.2% of the employed population holds higher education, while 33.1% have only primary and/or gymnasium studies.



Existence of Iasi, Bacau and Suceava University Centres with 7 public universities and 4 private universities.

MIGRATION AND POVERTY



The high level of external migration - 9.9% of the population of the North-East Region was recorded as temporarily absent or left for long periods abroad.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Internet penetration among households is low, only 69% of households have access to the internet.



Broadband infrastructure in the urban environment is well developed.

TOURISM

A low number of foreign tourists are visiting the region. In 2013, 94,000 foreign tourists visited the region, which represents 5,48% of the total national visitor numbers.



The region contains many historical monuments of national and international importance, a large number of protected areas and rich cultural manifestations: festivals, theatre performances, concerts, exhibitions.

Statistics are sourced from:

Wikipedia - list of countries GDP, Wikipedia - list of countries, net migration rate
Eurostat - regions and cities, Eurostat - Data browser
Eurostat Apposso
World Bank - Data

RESTART+
communities in action



STEP 2. Map your working environment

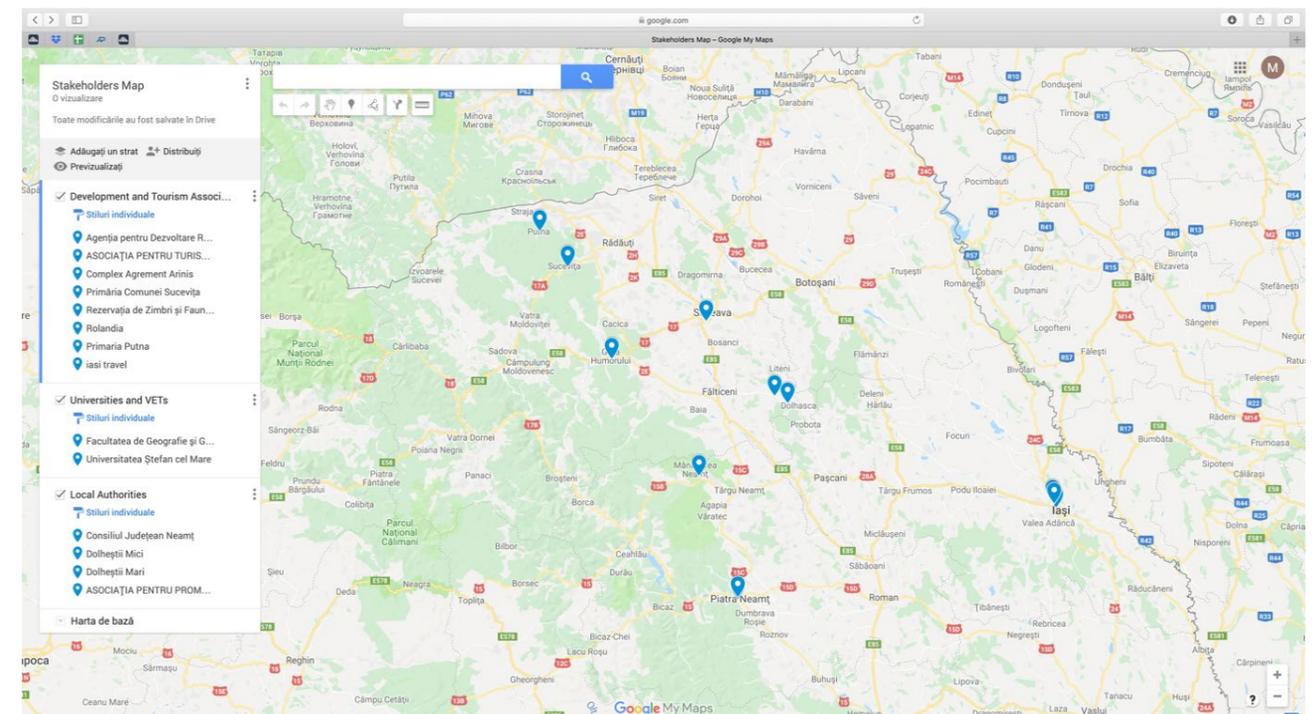
Your knowledge of the wider political and social environment in which you operate will have a major impact on your planning and ultimately your effectiveness as a group.

Your working environment includes

- ✓ *Local, regional and national political figures (identify your potential champions at different levels)*
- ✓ *Local, regional and national development strategies that are most relevant to the gaps you have identified*
- ✓ *Development bodies that are concerned with the same issues or work in the same field of interest you have identified (community & voluntary sector, economic development, local government departments/directorates, regional/national government departments/directorates, further & higher education)*
- ✓ *Local and regional networks*

This environment can be full of different organisations with overlapping remits. The ones that you choose to prioritise will be the ones with remits that most closely match the needs, the gaps and the strengths of your community. These might not always be the most obvious, or the most accessible. If you think of larger organisations as communities in themselves, it will be obvious that each of these stakeholders have their own issues and goals. When you map what their targets and objectives are, you will know how you can involve and work with them effectively. For example the economic development section of local government may have targets for the numbers of jobs they want to achieve and the sectors they want to support. Their strategic documents will state these and the issues they have identified. If these match your core vision and issues you have a potential alliance partner and you know how to approach them for support.

The next step on identifying the working areas is to create a visual format for these regions. The easiest way to do this is to use the Google Map tool. The recommended way of doing this, is to divide the institutions already identified into different categories, eg. local authorities, non-profit organisations, vocational education and training. Below you can find the mapping exercise of Romania:





STEP 3. Find Your Members

The people around you are your greatest asset. It is worthwhile considering what human assets you have immediately available and who you want to find to make your alliance effective.

- Networking
- Administration
- Communications
- Creativity

To ensure that your Alliance is representative, be guided by the map of the community and your working environment, approaching the different types of people and organizations you have identified as key targets or elements for success.

In putting a team together we should remember that a good team contains a mix of strengths and weaknesses, instincts and abilities. People work better together when they have clarity around their roles and the role of others and understand their place in the team.

Human Assets

- Skills
- Time
- Experience
- Connections

The profile of the skills and experience you are looking for

- Leadership
- Financial skills
- Governance
- Influencing

The following exercise can help you think about where people fit in and who you need to recruit.

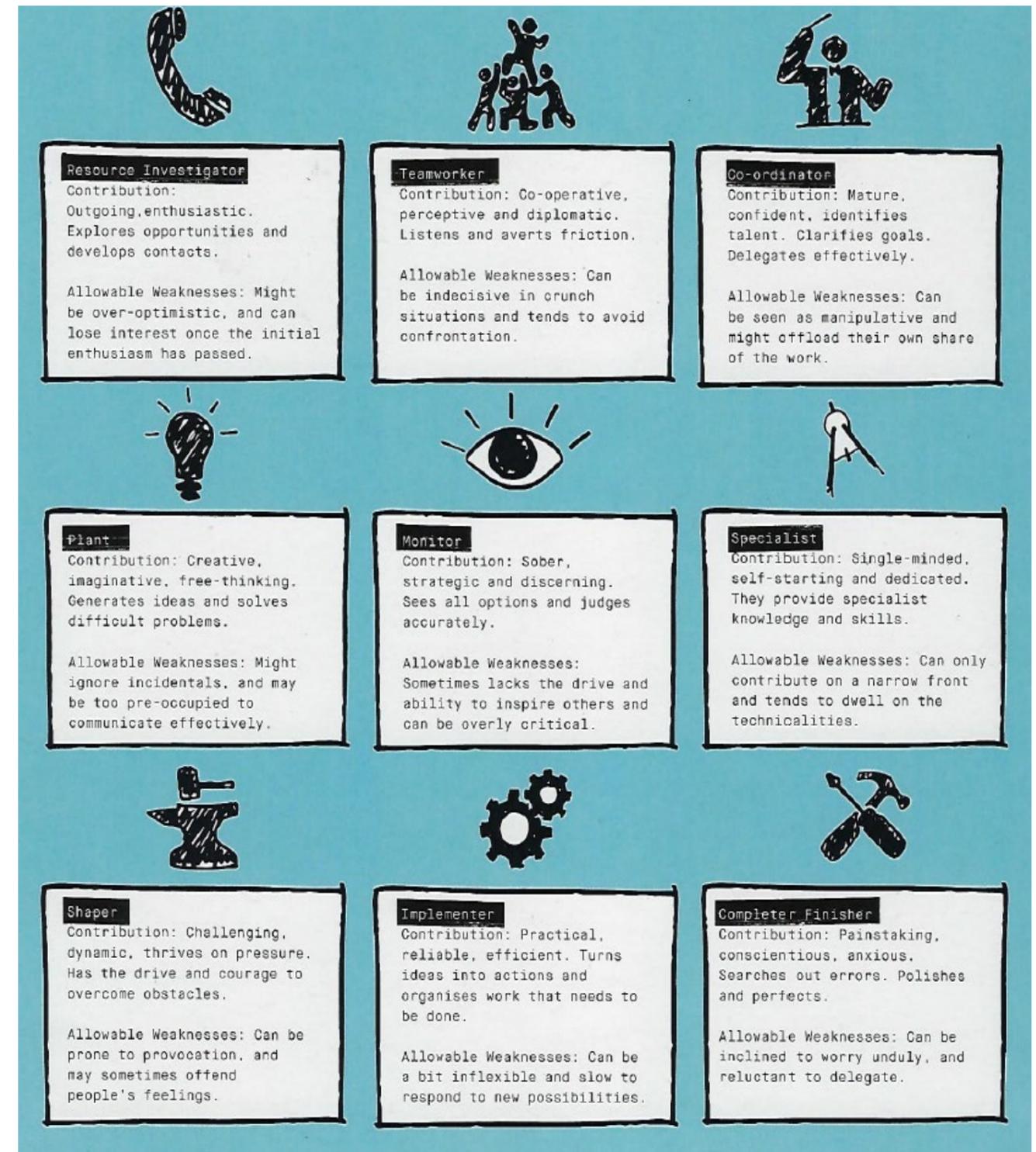
The UNIQUE Process and Book (Authors and Copyright: Cróna O'Donoghue & Dr. Tena Patten, Letterkenny Institute of Technology)

UNDERSTAND YOUR TEAM: WHAT IS YOUR ROLE?

Meredith Belbin was an expert in understanding groups. He realised that groups can often come up with better solutions than individuals. He spent his life researching how groups work, and found out that there are 9 different roles that generally occur when people work together. The teams that perform best contain these roles.

People have different strengths when working in groups, but they also have characteristics that may make them challenging to work with. Overleaf you will find a diagram of the Team Roles that Belbin identified. Of course, many groups do not

have nine members, so for smaller groups, individual members may fulfill more than one role. Use the diagram as a discussion prompt to talk through your own roles, and fill in the table below once you have agreed on your roles. You can find more information [at www.belbin.com](http://www.belbin.com).



In order to get the best mix and the strongest commitment for your particular situation think about the following questions

Ask yourself these questions:

Who has a decision-making role in strategic regeneration, economic and community development?

What is their level of influence?

How do these organisations benefit from their time and commitment to a Community Alliance?

What personal skills, experience or contacts does this person bring?

What benefits are they bringing to the Alliance?

What benefits will they get from the alliance?

In the early stages of the Alliance you might find that some key figures do not respond to your invitations. Don't get discouraged, not everyone is going to understand or sign up immediately to something new. Get the best mix you can and leave room for additions as you evolve and extend your knowledge of where you are heading.

Finally bear in mind that when you are mixing community and professional members they will have different skills, confidence levels and types of knowledge. You will want to consider mentoring and training support at an early stage to avoid losing community members in particular who may have a great deal to contribute to the alliance.

STEP 4. Map your gaps and generate ideas

It is tempting to get carried away with your own vision or ideas of needs. However, in a community context, it is vital to ensure that everyone can get involved in the gap analysis and ideas generation phase so that the final result will be richer and more likely to be supported. Gap analysis is used to think about where you are against where you would like to be. It needs an open mind, free of preconceptions or agendas. It can be done in a positive way, starting with exploring strengths, asking questions with a more active tone. For example "how would you like to change things?", "what can we build on?", rather than "what is wrong with...".

There are tools that will help with ideas generation and identifying possibilities in ways that a broad range of people can become involved in. Mind maps for example. But even a simple exercise with post it notes on a wall can be effective. Bear in mind that this isn't a one off exercise, it is a process that will develop as you go along and you can start with some simple questions. Also bear in mind that this is a powerful way to build links and social capital. You can use it to recruit and communicate new ideas as well as to build consensus.

Some tools are free, some have monthly fees, we have rounded up a small selection of different kinds for you to explore.

- SWOT templates at www.canva.com, www.smartsheets.com

- Design thinking mind maps www.venngage.com

- Various decision making templates www.creately.com/templates/

LYIT Design Department (Cróna O'Donogue and Tena Patten) have also developed a simple process for thinking through your ideas, which is called UNIQUE. Please find the UNIQUE ideas exercise explanation and template at www.restart.how/results

When you have generated key issues and ideas, it is important to feedback to people who have been involved to give them a chance to comment further, to show you have listened and how you are going to follow through.

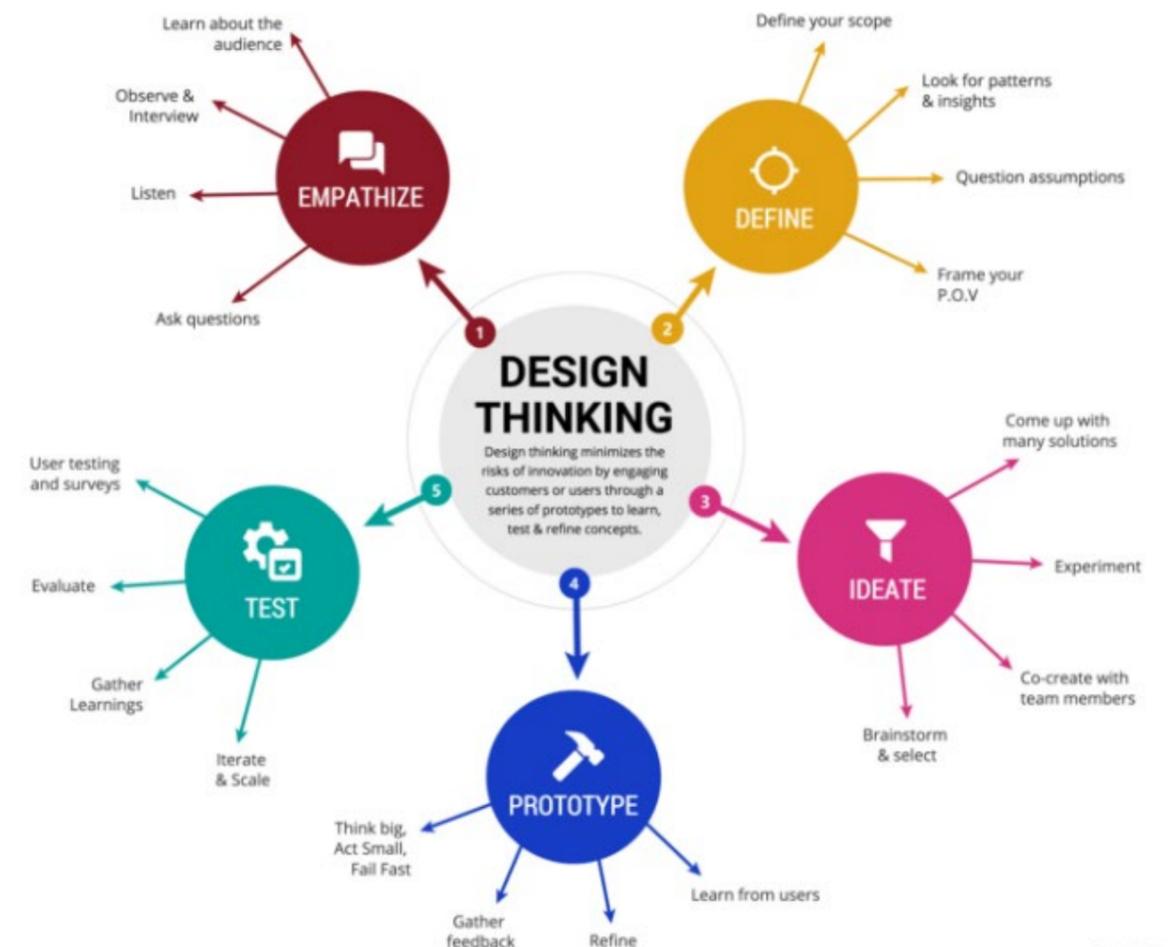
Things to consider:

Why are you doing this?

Is the problem being tackled by anyone else?

What value can you bring – what might you do that is different to them?

Is your challenge realistically achievable?





STEP 5: Define Your Goals and Write your first action plan

VISION

A vision statement is the Alliance's road map, indicating the place you want to travel to. Having a destination in mind will prevent you from heading in the wrong direction and will help you explain your ambitions to people you want to support you. It will also help you to see how well new opportunities fit with your goals.

When developing a vision statement the kind of questions to ask your group are:

1. What is our long-term "dream"?
2. What problem are we solving by implementing our plan?
3. Who and what are we inspiring to change?

An example of a Community Alliance vision would be:

"Every community in Romania has the courage, confidence and capacity to take an active role in its own future."
[PACT Foundation Romania](#)

MISSION

In addition to the Vision statement organisations sometimes create a mission statement. The vision is the first step in defining the destination. A mission statement is similar, but tends to be more concrete and detailed on the ways you intend to get there.

OBJECTIVES

With some clarity on the vision and mission of the alliance, the objectives divide the general goals into more specific tasks which can be measured and can be achieved in the precise period of time (usually a few months). The objectives refer to specific measurable steps the Alliance is taking towards achieving the mission.

A few examples of Community Alliance objectives would be:

1. Recruit 10 stakeholders from our target groups in months 1 and 2
2. Train 5 alliance members to increase their awareness of the local area and improve key leadership skills in months 2 and 3
3. Develop an Action Plan of collaborative actions by every alliance member in months 4 and 5

With clarity about your vision and objectives you are ready to start writing your action plan. This is a document that will change and evolve as you do and needs to be revisited regularly. It doesn't need to be complicated. If you are considering major projects you will be developing project and business plans at a later stage.

What is your Community Alliance Action Plan?

The Action Plan is a document detailing what actions will be undertaken by each Community Alliance in order to fulfil the project objectives. It contains a description of the action, the implementation calendar, the responsible person for every action, the cost and the source of financing.

No.	Action Title	Local problem addressed by the action	Description of the action	Estimated budget	Financing resources	Responsible Authority/Partners	Implementation Calendar



STEP 6: Identify the Resources you need for a sustainable alliance

Even an informal alliance will need resources to make any serious inroads on your mission. This might be volunteer time or professionals donating time that is paid for by an outside funder. Both have a value. An effective, inclusive, community regeneration project will involve people who do not have money to donate by paying for their own travel or other expenses. This is a cost to be budgeted for if the alliance is to be sustainable. As human resources are vital to the success of a regeneration alliance, budgeting fully for group and individual training and mentoring is critical. As is time for networking.

In the early stages there may be an organisation prepared to act as host, providing premises, equipment and possibly staff time. However in the long term all these resources should be considered for true sustainable development. In particular a lack of physical space to come together can quickly dissipate energy.

Taking time to make sure you have a hard headed approach to what you need in the short and long term can only strengthen your position. It will ensure that unrealistic hopes are not raised, and that resilience is built in.

STEP 7: Create Your Structure

Once you have worked through your ideas and opportunities and considered your goals and motivation, you will have a better understanding of the structure that fits your goals. These could be either formal or informal arrangements.

If your action plan has indicated a need for a formal structure, for example if you want to employ a member of staff, or anticipate trading activities in the future, there will be regional support organisations that can advise you on the best legal format to adopt. For example:

Northern Ireland:

NICVA, the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action
<https://www.nicva.org/services/governance-and-charity-advice>
Social Enterprise <https://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/faq/>

Romania:

EXplain SRL <https://infiintari.com/>
The Trade Register Office of the Suceava Tribunal
<https://www.onrc.ro/index.php/ro/contact>

Portugal:

IET - Tâmega Business Institute: <https://iet.pt/>
Penafiel Business Association: <http://www.aepenafiel.pt/>

Ireland:

Irish Social Enterprise Network <https://www.socent.ie/>
Social Entrepreneurs Ireland <https://socialentrepreneurs.ie/>

If you do not need a formal structure it is a good idea to have an informal agreement that sets out the ethos of the alliance. A Team Charter for example can create a sense of belonging and commitment and allow people to understand how they should act within the alliance. Working with a diverse mix of people with strong emotional investments in different priorities can be a challenging process. Disagreements will happen, a well applied charter can take some of the heat out of challenging scenarios.

TOOLS & TEMPLATES

Restart + Alliance Charter

SAMPLE CHARTER

As a member of the Restart + Alliance I make a commitment to attending the meetings, disseminating information and supporting the aims of the Alliance.
I am aware that the Alliance is committed to:
(Insert Alliance visions/goals)

I affirm that:

I will act at all times respectfully towards other alliance members and uphold the principles of diversity and equality.

I will act collaboratively in the spirit of positive and constructive debate.

I will inform Alliance members of any potential conflict of interest and withdraw from discussions if appropriate.

I will support the principle of open and honest communication with the community to enable the widest access and participation in the work of the Alliance.

In addition to committing my time and human resources, I will draw on other resources as appropriate and signpost members to useful connections and resources.

Name:

Date:

Company/Organisation

(Please state if you are an individual member)

Email address/preferred form of communication

Communication Tools

Deciding on a name and visual brand identity for your alliance may seem like a luxury, but it will make it much easier for you to establish your presence and engage your ideal audience. There are many professionals in the community with expertise in this area and who may consider supporting your alliance goals through pro bono contributions.

As methods of communication have expanded in the past ten years, so has the potential for miscommunication and reputational damage to arise out of the most well meaning of comments. We would suggest adopting some core values around both internal and external communications

Clarity
Consideration
Conciseness
Courtesy
Concreteness
Correctness

Effective internal communications are those that are:

1. built on a shared vision
 2. aligned to your alliance strategy
 3. inclusive
 4. responsive to feedback
 5. using a set of agreed communication channels (e.g. email, WhatsApp) that are accessible to everyone
- are reviewed, assessed and updated for effectiveness

Tools for Internal Communications

Dropbox - Dropbox helps teams bring everyone's work together in one focused place. It enables users to access and share files, coordinate projects with co-workers, and communicate right alongside everyone's work. The platform is available on desktop, mobile and tablets which makes retrieving and sharing files widely accessible.

Monday.com - The monday.com platform is a visual collaboration tool that helps





SWOT Analysis

Administration Tools

Internal Factors

Strengths

- What advantages does your community have?
- What do you do better than others?
- What do people see as your strengths?
- What is unique about your community?

Weaknesses

- What could you improve?
- What should you avoid?
- What is limiting your community?
- What do people see as your weaknesses/challenges?

External Factors

Opportunities

- What good opportunities can you spot?
- Who could you collaborate with?
- How can you utilise your stakeholders' interests?
- How can you improve the community by looking outside it?

Threats

- What obstacles are you facing?
- Do you have funding?
- Are changing policies and legislation impacting your community?
- What are other groups/communities already doing?
- Is the community changing?

SAMPLE AGENDA

Agenda for meeting

[Organisation name]

[Location]

[Date]

	Time	Item	Presenter
1.	[time]	Welcome and introduction	[presenter name]
2.	[time]	Minutes from last meeting	[presenter name]
3.	[time]	Project activity updates since last meeting	[presenter name]
4.	[time]	(e.g. fundraising)	[presenter name]
5.	[time]	(e.g. Communications - events/consultations/networking)	[presenter name]
6.	[time]	(e.g. knowledge sharing)	[presenter name]
7.	[time]	(e.g. training needs review)	[presenter name]
8.	[time]	(e.g. action plan review)	[presenter name]
9.	[time]	Any other business (AOB)	[presenter name]
10.	[time]	Date, time and location of next meeting	[presenter name]
11.	[time]	Close of meeting and thanks	[presenter name]



Meeting minutes

[Organisation name]

[Location]

[Date]

Present [insert names and organisations of people present at meeting]	Apologies [insert names and organisations of people who sent their apologies for not being able to attend the meeting]
--	---

Item	Comment	Action and date
1. Welcome and introductions [presenter's name]	[Presenter's name] welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced those who are new to the group	None
2. Meetings from last meeting [presenter's name]	Everyone present approved the minutes and no changes were made	None
3. Project/activities updates since last meeting [presenter's name]	[Presenter's name] updated everyone present about items discussed at last meeting. [insert main points from updates]	Write actions agreed, person to complete them and the date by which they are to be completed
4. [Item 4] [presenter's name]	Insert points of discussion	Write actions agreed, person to complete them and the date by which they are to be completed
5. [Item 5] [presenter's name]	Insert points of discussion	Write actions agreed, person to complete them and the date by which they are to be completed
6. [Item 6] [presenter's name]	Insert points of discussion	Write actions agreed, person to complete them and the date by which they are to be completed
7. [Item 7] [presenter's name]	Insert points of discussion	Write actions agreed, person to complete them and the date by which they are to be completed
8. AOB	Insert any other business (topics, events, etc.) presented which was not part of the written agenda	Write actions agreed, person to complete them and the date by which they are to be completed
9. Date, time and location of next meeting	Insert the agreed upon date, time and location of the next meeting	
10. Close of meeting and thanks [presenter's name]	[Presenter's name] closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending	None



RESTART+ COMMUNITY ALLIANCE PILOTS ACROSS EUROPE

We have established four pilot alliances in Ireland, Northern Ireland, Portugal and Romania. In the first months of our alliances we have gathered some feedback that reflects the differing experiences and context of our partners.

Ireland

In Ireland LYIT defined their community region as County Donegal, but while carrying out their mapping exercise they identified the need to consider the impact of the extensive border with Northern Ireland and the adjoining districts. With this in mind they extended an invitation to a local authority representative of their nearest local authority in Northern Ireland, Derry City and Strabane District Council.

LYIT also found that Donegal has a strong regional stakeholder network that regularly works together. This network was the starting point for recruitment to ensure strong and varied community representation.

In addition to the needs identified in Romania, the Ireland regional alliance looks forward to addressing the need:

- ✓ To work together to develop creative solutions to provide community led services, particularly in rurally isolated areas.
- ✓ To consult and converse with communities on an ongoing basis to meet the needs as they evolve and change, thus maintaining a sense of community ownership.
- ✓ To use creative structures to bring groups and community leaders together to share knowledge and coordinate plans for complementary activities and collective impact.
- ✓ To overcome challenges of red tape and bureaucracy which is hampering development and in turn is leading to community and voluntary fatigue.

Northern Ireland

The research in Northern Ireland BDEL also found strong stakeholder networks, reflecting an awareness of the importance of working collaboratively. These held considerable community regeneration training resources in areas such as social enterprise and community asset transfers. However in mapping needs and gaps in these networks they found that external factors were limiting their success. Political uncertainty and a lack of political leadership was taking a toll on community organisations at all levels, and the ability to capitalise on the resources available was therefore being eroded. In particular members found that key capacity building work, such as mentoring and 1-1 training could not be resourced.

Positive examples of empowering legislation, such as The Social Value Act, and community asset transfer were available, but political stagnation meant this was not enacted and difficult to roll out in Northern Ireland, leaving it behind other regions and even more urgently in need of strategic alliances to draw down resources. The experience of Restart + Alliance members suggested fed back that the work of community regeneration could be massively boosted by securing a knowledgeable political champion able to open doors to new resources. In common with other regions Northern Ireland has a considerable interest in regeneration through the use of cultural assets and heritage tourism is widely recognised as a key opportunity.

Romania

In Romania ARD Nord Est found the benefits of a Regional Alliance to be:

- ✓ The possibility to access projects/financial funds which are not available to individual organisations
- ✓ Raising awareness of the values of the community
- ✓ Establishing good practice in working sustainably and without consideration for the environment
- ✓ Harnessing and developing community pride in their region
- ✓ Improving the capacity to implement ideas through collective working.

Their major needs were:

- ✓ Trained human resources
- ✓ Access to community development information
- ✓ Project management knowhow
- ✓ Communicating community identity through branding
- ✓ Tourism development

Portugal

In Portugal the pilot restart communities alliance is experimenting with a broad approach to recruitment. They have included:

- ✓ Non-profit business associations located in the region of Tâmega
- ✓ Non-profit association of scientific and technical nature
- ✓ Rural development associations
- ✓ A center for skills and incubation of companies
- ✓ The Lousada Group of schools, high-school of technology and management
- ✓ Colleges and universities from the region, football and tennis associations
- ✓ Centers for professional training of traditional industries – textile, footwear and furniture industries

The testimonials from the Lousada regional alliance highlights the importance of working together in such a way:

"It's crucial to create a local group with critical and sustained opinions about our community",

João Pedro Begonha, Penafiel Business Association.

"Such experiences are extremely enriching in terms of empowering young people to be future community leaders and to develop innovative projects in our region",

Artur Pinto, Municipality of Lousada.

"It's important to work with the resources that the communities have available. It is important to know what we have in our territory and what we can do from our knowledge of it",

Rosário Machado, The Romanesque Route.



www.restart.how

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