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RDI
RURAL DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Empowering Manitoba: Community Broadband Initiatives, Digital Adoption, and Priorities for Digital Transformation in all corners of the Province

Northern Dialogues Conference 2024, May 21st-24th, Yukon University, Whitehorse, Yukon

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Internet Society Manitoba Chapter

ConnectedMB

Project Information

PROJECT GOAL: *Inventory and mobilize knowledge about digital connectivity, adoption, and capacity-building initiatives in underserved areas of Manitoba.*

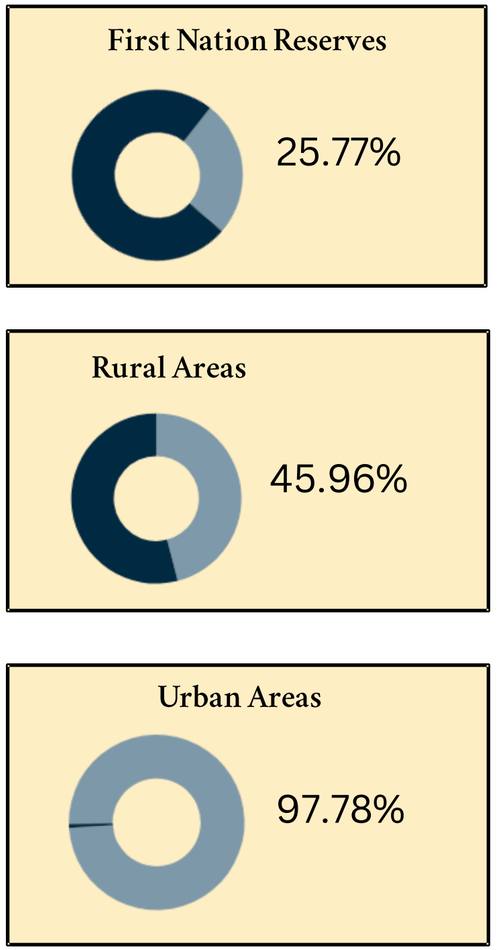
- Collaborating with ISOC Manitoba to document the broadband ecosystem in rural Manitoba.
- We want to help communities be able to share their story, while learning from the successes and challenges.
- Uncover the capacity needed to undertake broadband initiatives.

The Rural vs Urban Divide

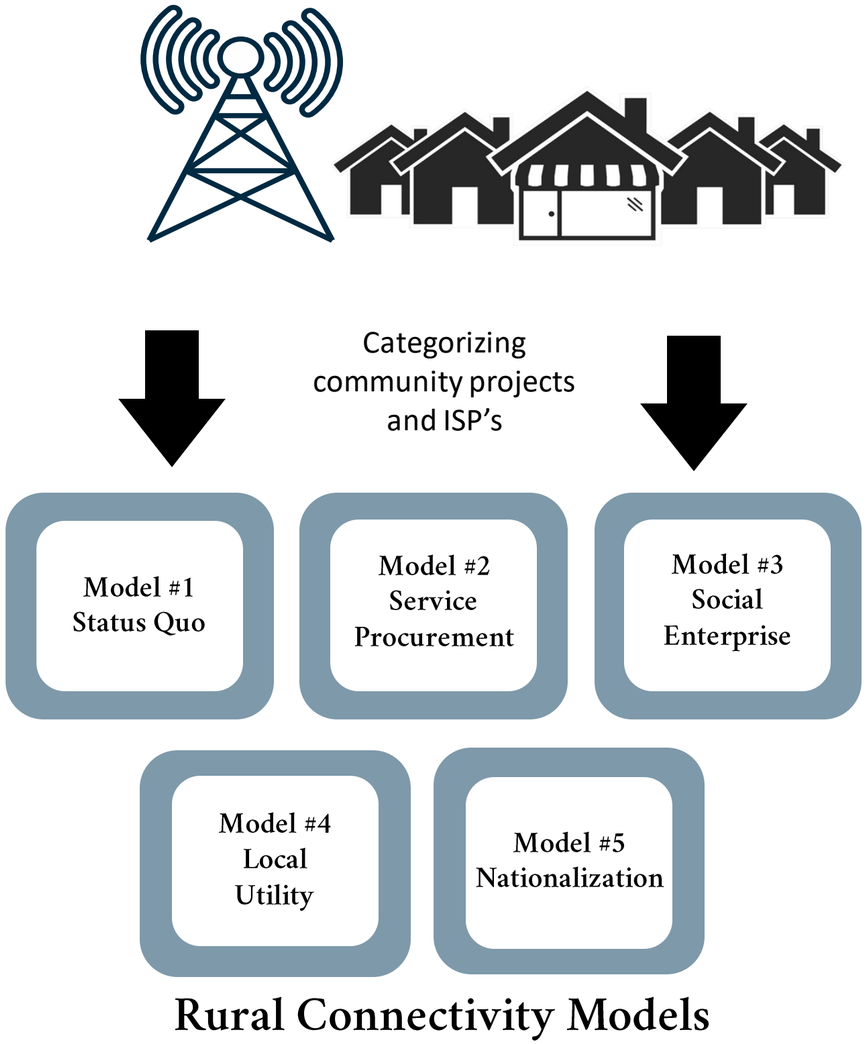
- The Federal Government recognizes internet connectivity as a basic service. According to CRTC, broadband speeds of **50 Mbps download/10 Mbps upload** is the targeted baseline for all Canadians.

- In a comparison of broadband technology and infrastructure, rural areas are lacking in services and service quality.

Percentage of households in Manitoba meeting the minimum targets (50Mbps/10Mbps) in 2022



Methodology



Rural Connectivity Models

- The project will be incorporating the Rural Connectivity Models to help categorize broadband initiatives and delve deeper into community projects and ISP's .
- The project started with 10 broadband initiatives, as of May 6th we have currently documented at least 50 ISP's that have existed or currently exist.

Poster on Model Adaptation

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By Kalin Contois and Dr. Wayne Kelly

Purpose

The reason for the creation of models is to help categorize the possible methods for achieving community connectivity. Despite the wealth of knowledge that looks at rural broadband there is little research that investigates the options for communities when undertaking broadband projects.

This poster will be summarizing application of the Rural Connectivity Models in Manitoba. In this application we hope to expand the knowledge of community broadband practices, while also learning about the how the models can be utilized as a tool for research.

Methods

In this project we have discovered ISP's through existing researcher knowledge and scanning the internet with key terms. Then they are categorized via the Rural Connectivity Models and ISP service area, this will help the team focus on community led projects.

Supported by:
Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation
Indigenous Connectivity Institute
Brandon University Student Travel and Conference Fund

Achieving Connectivity: Applying the Rural Connectivity Models to the Manitoban Broadband Ecosystem

Rural Connectivity Models

MODEL #1 STATUS QUO
Project initiated, service delivery, and ownership belongs to Private Sector

MODEL #2 SERVICE PROCUREMENT
Local government initiated project in collaboration with Private Sector bidders

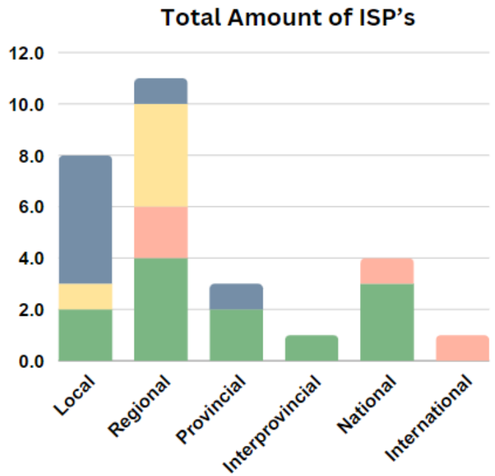
MODEL #3 SOCIAL ENTERPRISE
Private Sector leads project and can work with local government to create positive social impacts.

MODEL #4 PUBLIC UTILITY
Local Government and community are initiators and owners of network

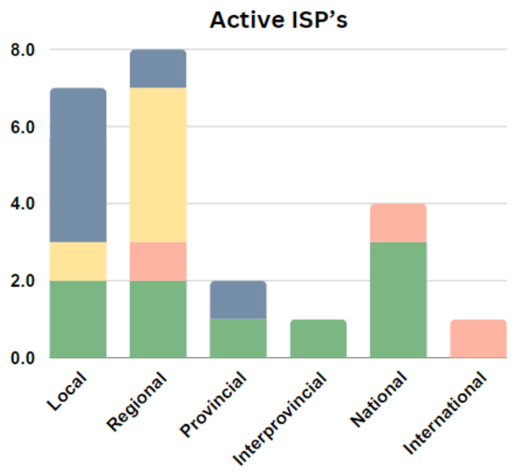
MODEL #5 NATIONALIZATION
Federal Government leads project and controls network ownership

Note: not all recorded ISP's have available data to display on these graphs

Preliminary Findings



- Out of 49, only 28 ISP's had information that allowed for categorization.
- Regional and Interprovincial ISP's dominate the Manitoba Market with an estimated 200+ communities served by them.



- ISP's that are identified as Model 1 (Status Quo) are more likely to be acquired by other companies.
- Two of the largest regional providers have been acquired within the last four years.

Insights

The project scope has significantly expanded since initially identifying 10 to 49 ISPs, with ongoing discovery of existing or defunct ISPs.

To categorize ISPs accurately, researchers require specific data not always available from secondary sources.

Acquisitions are a major contributor to the market capture led by the Private Market

Next Steps

Conduct Focus groups with chosen communities to produce podcast. This will create data that will help with accurately categorizing within the models.

Focus Groups

ConnectedMB Podcast

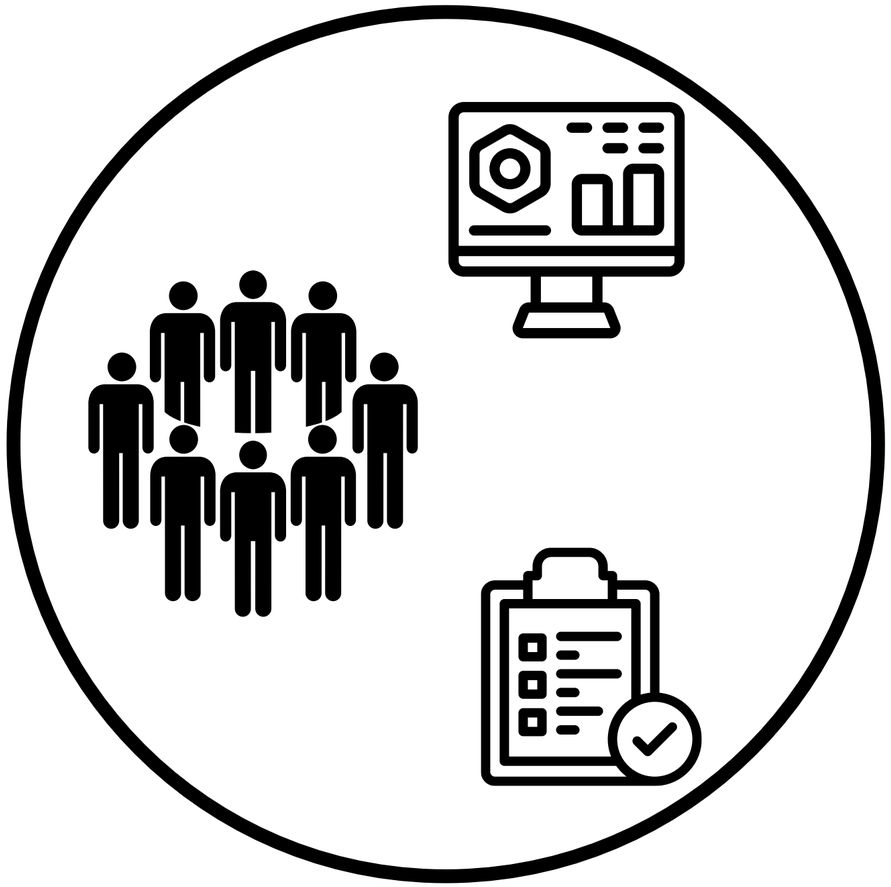
For more information, please see...

The Project Overview

The Internet Society, MB Chapter

The Selkirk College Online Repository

ConnectedMB Podcast



- To strengthen the holistic aspect of community research, we are producing a podcast series based on this project and research.
- The team will conduct a series of focus groups sampled from community led initiatives.

Podcast Production

A. Guided by the Rural Connectivity Models, we are focused on producing podcast episodes that represent community led projects.

B. The community-based episodes are produced from conducted focus groups and will be analyzed by the research team in later episodes. We also will have discussions with broadband researchers and industry experts to learn more about the broadband ecosystem.

C. Each episode will be co-produced and owned by the participants, which will be uploaded to various podcast platforms and the project website.

ConnectedMB Podcast Production

- We have recorded the first two episodes for the ConnectedMB series.
- The series on Manitoba community connectivity will be at least 10 episodes combining community stories and research team analysis and reflections.

http://connectedmb.ca

Any Questions or Comments?

Thank You/ Merci/ Ekosani/ Maarsii

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