



# Understanding Resilience

## Within Us, Between Us and Beyond Us

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# Outline of the presentation

- What is resilience?
  - Status quo resilience
  - Transformational resilience
- Asset approaches and resilience
  - Understanding resilience
  - Salutogenesis
  - Asset approaches to community development
- Promoting resilience
  - Economic activity
  - Infrastructure
  - Governance
- Beginning the conversation



# Sources



# What is resilience?

- An ability to withstand stress and challenge?
- Preparedness, planning and mitigation?
- Resilience is at risk of being understood either as a personal capacity or as technological solutions to predictable events.
- For individuals, families and communities it needs to take account of wider economic and social conditions and determinants



# Two types of resilience

- **‘Status quo resilience’**
  - *Bouncing back or rebounding*
  
- **‘Transformational resilience’**
  - *Bouncing forward or successful adaptation*



# Understanding resilience

Resilience can be found:

- Within us
- Between us
- Beyond us

[Video](#)



# Social capital: bonds within us between us and beyond us

- **Bonding capital** - links with similar people, similar outlooks and values, Strong ties, good for “getting by” or “bouncing back”
- **Bridging capital** - links with people with different outlooks and values, weak ties, good for “Getting on” and bouncing forward: adapting to changed circumstance and crises.
- **Linking capital** - links with those who make decisions that effect that community



# Asset approaches and resilience

There is a wide base of activity that can be described as asset-based.

Broadly, asset-based working draws on three related strands of theory, evidence and practice:

- The evidence on Transformational resilience
- Salutogenic theory and the idea of positive health and wellbeing
- The practice of Asset Based Community Development and related approaches



# Salutogenic Theory

- Literally means ‘What makes us healthy?’ from the Latin ‘salus’ - health; and Greek ‘genesis’ - the origin.
- Developed by American Israeli medical sociologist Aaron Antonovsky from the 1970s
- Working with women who were holocaust survivors
- Health is not a “state” as defined by the World Health Organization (1946) it is a continuum and a resource for life.
- Proposed ‘Sense of Coherence’ (SOC) in 1992



# A Sense of Coherence

- **Comprehensibility**

An individual's cognitive ability to understand and find meaning in a situation

- **Meaningfulness**

Having reasons motivation, hope and a positive outlook about moving forward

- **Manageability**

Having the skills, ability, support, help and resources to meet life's challenges and feeling that these things under your control



# Asset Based Community Development...

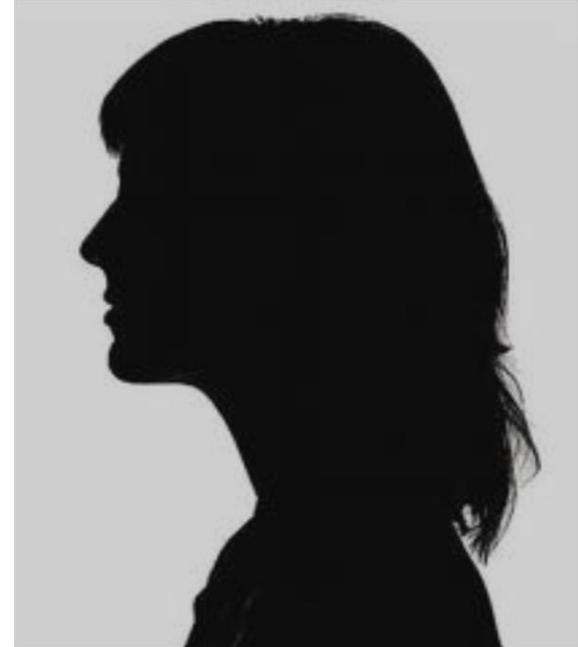
- Developed by John McKnight & John Kretzman – Northwestern University, Chicago (1993)
- A method of community and network building that starts by locating the assets, skills and capacities of individuals, local associations and organisations, rather than focusing on their needs and deficits.
- The aim is to help people to improve their resilience, independence and wellbeing by focusing on what can be done by working together.



# Community asset mapping

The actual and potential assets of:

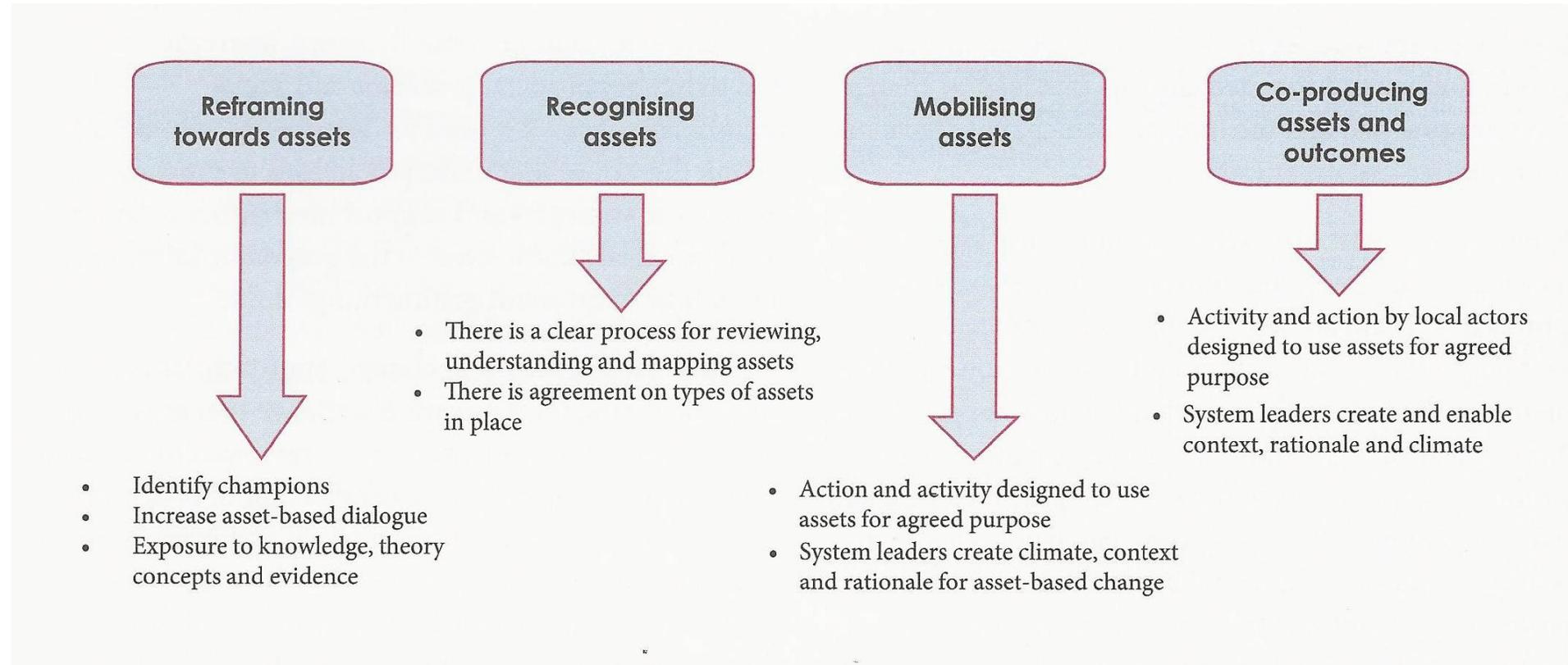
- Individuals
- Associations
- Organisations





# How do we know resilience is being built?

## A Theory of Change



# Connections between the theory, evidence and approaches to building resilient communities

Resilience	Asset-Based Community Development	Social Capital	Salutogenic Theory
Within us	Individual	Bonding	Comprehensibility
Between us	Associations	Bridging	Meaningfulness
Beyond us	Organisations	Linking	Manageability

?

## Applying a Theory of Change to evaluating the effectiveness of these approaches

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Within us: Recognising our assets

Between us: Mobilising these for a purpose

Beyond us: Co-producing outcomes



# Promoting resilience – economic activity

- Not ‘what makes the economy resilient?’ but ‘how does the economy support the resilience of communities and individuals?’
- Make work pay psychosocially as well as materially
- Employment as a source of personal meaning and growth -  
What is within us
- Work as source of social solidarity –What is between us



# Promoting resilience – infrastructure

- A mindset shift is required from “*What makes infrastructure resilient?*” to “*How does infrastructure support resilient communities?*”
- Infrastructure should allow people and communities to meet their everyday needs - *status quo resilience...*
- ...but also to promote capacity to bind and connect - *transformational resilience*
- Increase *bridging capital*



# Promoting resilience – governance

Governance should:

- Establish networks of citizen activity before crisis emerges
- Be participative and promote devolved decision making
- Develop *linking capital* between decision makers and communities effected

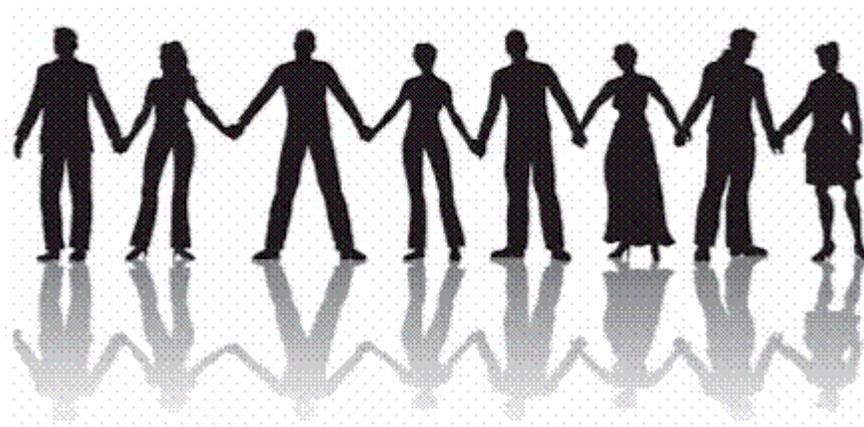


# Beginning the conversation

- Resilience is at risk of being understood either as a personal capacity or as technological solutions to predictable or unpredictable events
- Recent understanding locates community support for transformation as crucial for adaptation in times of challenge
  - What do you do already?
  - What is missing?
  - What support do you need?



“The asset approach is a set of values and principles and a way of thinking about the world.”



It takes everyone to build a healthy, strong and safe community.



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