

Research Report

Rural Entrepreneurship Framework for Local Economic and Communal Thriving (REFLECT)

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Non-technical abstract

The framework and subsequent assessment tool developed in this project is based on interview data with several rural policymakers, business advisors, support organisations as well as rural enterprises. REFLECT (Rural Entrepreneurship Framework for Local Economic and Communal Thriving) is a framework designed to assess resources and policy support for entrepreneurship in rural communities, aiming to improve rural enterprise policies through a holistic perspective. The online tool developed here (www.reflect.enterprises) enables key stakeholders to assess their understanding of their own rural context(s), understanding strengths and weaknesses. The online tool provides learning resources to allow for improved tackling of policy problems related to those areas.

Acknowledgements and funding

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Non-technical executive summary

From a public policy perspective, encouraging and supporting entrepreneurship is regarded as a particularly powerful tool because successful start-ups can help stimulate the economy, create jobs, and sustain communities. In this project, the research team builds on and develops the Rural Entrepreneurship Framework for Local Economic and Communal Thriving (REFLECT), previously developed by two of the authors. This framework focuses on material and social enablers of rural enterprise as well as enterprise foundations and ecosystem dynamics. The purpose of this specific piece of research is to link the framework to the rural context of the UK, with an initial focus on the North East of England, whilst developing an online assessment tool that can be used by policymakers, business advisors, funders, and other support organisations.

The research conducted 14 interviews with 18 individuals. Participants included business advisors, business owners, policy managers, and entrepreneurship scholars. The findings point to three major themes: public support, infrastructure & location, and communities. (1) In public support, findings show approaches to enterprise support tend to focus on standard economic measures which are not always suitable in rural contexts, borrowing logics from business support in more urban areas. (2) In infrastructure & location, findings show that support does not necessarily reflect issues of connectivity and unique features of rural locations. (3) In communities, findings highlight the differences between values, norms and cultural features of different areas which can make support fractured or inappropriate.

The project developed an online assessment tool (www.reflect.enterprises) that covers four key areas of Local Communities, Community Resources and Assets, External Policies, and External Support and Resources. This tool is available and relevant to business advisors, business owners, funders, policy managers, and anyone else in the business support system in rural areas. It is designed to provide bespoke resources and allow participants to assess specific elements and uncertainties surrounding support for entrepreneurship.

Introduction and background

Entrepreneurship and its interaction with contextual factors have emerged as a relevant area of interest for governments seeking to stimulate socioeconomic strategies and growth (Arshed et al., 2014). While extant research predominantly focuses on macro and micro perspectives, a significant gap remains in understanding the meso-level dynamics that support entrepreneurial outcomes (Zahra et al., 2014; Brown and Mawson, 2017). This knowledge gap presents a challenge for policymakers, particularly when they must formulate policies tailored to support entrepreneurs within diverse settings, especially in rural areas, where contextual variations can profoundly influence policy effectiveness.

This study employs the "Rural Entrepreneurship Framework for Local Economic and Communal Thriving" (REFLECT) developed by Muñoz and Kimmitt (2019). The framework identifies four key determinants (material enablers, social enablers, enterprise foundations, and ecosystem dynamics) for policymakers seeking to holistically analyse entrepreneurial dynamics in rural areas and formulate programmes tailored to strengthen rural enterprises. By adopting this framework, policymakers can obtain a holistic understanding of the rural entrepreneurship landscape and design policies that represent the unique characteristics that exist in rural contexts. The project tests the framework, developed in the context of rural Chile, and its applicability to rural contexts in the UK.

Given this, two questions have guided this study:

The first research question is: *What are the elements of the REFLECT framework that must be taken into consideration to be adapted to the context of rural businesses in the UK?* Entrepreneurship policies tend to apply a conventional logic to formulate new interventions. Conventional approaches often tend to focus on economic variables (i.e., new jobs, taxes, survival rates), which sometimes overlook other relevant factors that could influence entrepreneurial outcomes in rural locations such as social value. This is relevant because the relationship between business performance and spatial context is complex (Korsgaard et al., 2015). Thus, this question aims to explore how to consider more context-sensitive factors for policy formulation based on specific elements that shape rural places.

The second research question is considered from a practical perspective: *How can the REFLECT framework be useful for the reality of rural businesses in the North East of the UK?* Since rural enterprises are diverse and sensitive to their environment, it is key to acknowledge that a one-size-fits-all policy approach does not necessarily address the multiple features and assets that rural areas have. Therefore, this question seeks to explore if REFLECT is a useful framework for a different context, and if so, how it can inform more place-sensitive policies. The project objectives, therefore, were to:

1. Translate the existing REFLECT framework into the context of rural businesses in the North East of the UK.
2. Examine the REFLECT framework to establish appropriate rural business typologies in the North East of the UK.
3. Develop a tool that practically contributes to the policy formulation for rural businesses in the UK.

The target audience for this research extends to local governments, business advisors, scholars, and stakeholders involved in regional and rural development initiatives. The research offers practical insights to align economic development to support efforts with rural businesses' needs, and to support context-sensitive policies that acknowledge the natural, cultural, and physical assets of the area.

Policy making and rural entrepreneurship

Different governments have dedicated significant amounts of money from taxpayers seeking to spur the economy, under the justification of the potential economic outcomes that entrepreneurship might provide for their citizens and local economies (Acs et al., 2016). These intended outcomes include positively affecting the creation of new jobs, increasing innovation rates, inducing economic growth and more competitiveness (Autio and Rannikko, 2016), or tackling grand challenges related to societal issues (i.e., climate change, poverty, and education) (Naudé, 2013).

Research, particularly in mainstream entrepreneurship journals, shows that while interest in fostering entrepreneurship grows, how entrepreneurship policies are crafted remains a relatively unexplored area (Sharkansky, 2002). Policymaking has been critiqued for the level of complexity in the decision-making process involving agenda setting, formulation, implementation, adoption, and evaluation (ibid). Anderson (2014) emphasizes the role of the uncertain and complex political context in policy design. Meanwhile, entrepreneurship policies face criticism for being perceived as a 'black box' and for a low level of effectiveness (Arshed et al., 2014).

There can also be a tendency to attempt to replicate successful policy outliers, such as Silicon Valley, but which often overlook their unique context (Welter et al., 2016). Consequently, taxpayer funds are invested in interventions that may not flourish due to an unsuitable environment and it is therefore essential to learn how policies are shaped for diverse contexts, to avoid a 'one size fits all' approach (Arshed et al., 2014; Karlsson and Anderson, 2009).

The prevailing entrepreneurship literature often examines entrepreneurial ecosystems from a broad perspective, encompassing social, economic, and cultural factors (Spiegel, 2017) and generally has an emphasis on how to support high-growth, high technology, scale-up firms usually within urban areas. Therefore, current ecosystem approaches overlook the diversity of rural contexts to assume uniform economic outcomes regardless of the unique conditions of places (Muñoz & Kimmitt, 2019).

The rural entrepreneurship literature does offer some clues as to what a "good" rural ecosystem may look like for supporting entrepreneurship. Despite no universal definition, according to Islas-Moreno et al. (2021), rural entrepreneurship refers to individuals conducting business activities within rural spatial locations that have a sentimental link with that specific place. Networks and social capital is a key theme in the literature. Korsgaard et al. (2015) recognise rural entrepreneurship as having an extra value-added that is strongly related to the socio-spatial dimension. Rooks et al. (2016) similarly highlight the vital role of social capital and, following this line, Baù et al. (2019) focus on the role of community networks in creating more effective support. Moyes et al. (2015) emphasise

how social capital is constructed whilst McKitterick et al. (2016) highlight the role of public institutions as an important network tie.

Social capital, therefore, is regarded as important for rural entrepreneurship (Besser and Miller 2013). Moreover, 'countryside capital' is an additional resource element for businesses in rural contexts.

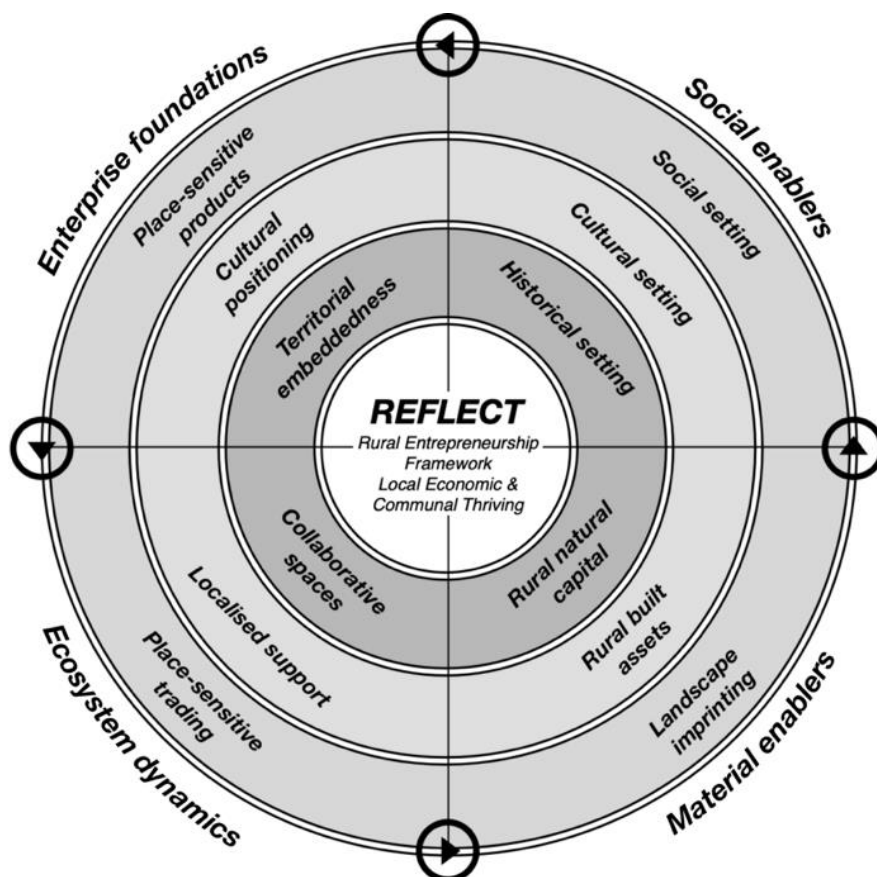
This is a way of thinking about rural resources as capital assets that can be invested in and used to generate benefits. The idea is that by re-conceptualizing rural resources as countryside capital, it's possible to raise the profile of sustainable development in rural areas

Understanding rural entrepreneurship requires considering different levels of analysis: micro, macro, and meso. The current literature has explored rural entrepreneurship mainly using a micro and macro perspective. The micro-level delves into the individual experiences of rural entrepreneurs, investigating their motivations, challenges, and strategies. The macro-level looks at the broader socioeconomic and policy landscape that shapes rural entrepreneurship. It examines the government's role in fostering entrepreneurial activities. However, these approaches are not able to capture and answer questions located at a meso-level, which explores how context, communities, networks, institutions, and infrastructure interact to support rural businesses within specific regions.

To bridge this gap, Muñoz and Kimmitt (2019) introduced the Rural Entrepreneurship Framework for Local Economic and Communal Thriving (REFLECT) based on research in rural Chile. This framework moves beyond micro and macro views and shifts focus to a location-sensitive lens. It identifies four key determinants and eleven dimensions at the meso level, providing a holistic perspective of rural enterprise **See Figure 1.**

1. **Material Enablers:** These encompass tangible aspects like rural resources, infrastructure, and the visual aesthetics of the environment. Natural surroundings and existing assets contribute to new business emergence. Features such as forests, rivers, and communal facilities like community centres play an important role.
2. **Social Enablers:** Social and cultural factors in a specific geographical area impact rural business. Emotional ties and cultural resources, such as social networks, influence enterprise behaviour. For instance, the prevailing attitudes concerning business achievements and the way success is acknowledged within a given rural community.
3. **Enterprise Foundations:** This dimension involves the emotional and historical connection people have with a place. It consists of three aspects: cultural orientation, integration, and product creation tied to the attributes of a specific location, such as local identity, traditions, and historical narratives that drive rural enterprises, with business concepts rooted in the area's collective experiences.
4. **Ecosystem Dynamics:** This focuses on interactions within rural areas and the roles played by various actors. Formal and informal collaborations between neighbouring places and specialised institutional support contribute to rural enterprise success. Both public and private institutions embedded within the community provide the necessary support.

Figure 1. Rural Entrepreneurship Framework for Local Economic and Communal Thriving (REFLECT), by Muñoz and Kimmitt, 2019.



This framework offers potential for policy insight on three levels. First, it places context at the core, viewing it as an essential and integrated component. In this sense, the spotlight is placed on the distinctiveness and complexity of a place, including, physical attributes, natural assets and distinctive characteristics of each community.

Second, the framework serves as a practical, diagnostic tool by providing a roadmap for observing and analysing how entrepreneurship generates value across diverse dimensions within rural areas. Therefore, this framework could be used to inform the creation of tailored support mechanisms and localised tools or programmes that reflect the conditions and realities of rural spaces.

Third, REFLECT can inform the choice of indicators for monitoring policy progress over time, acknowledging the unique perspectives in each location (Muñoz and Kimmitt, 2019), allowing the development of a more comprehensive evaluation approach.

Research design and methodology

Initially implemented in the context of rural Chile, an emerging economy in South America, the REFLECT framework was tested across 17 distinct rural locations within the country with a focus on the commune level. The country provided an ideal setting for understanding the complexities of rural enterprises within diverse geographical conditions.

Chile has also obtained wider recognition for its proactive approach to supporting start-up communities, with both public and private sectors actively participating in fostering entrepreneurial growth (GEM, 2023). One particular example is Start-Up Chile, the first public ecosystem accelerator founded in 2010, which exemplifies the commitment to encouraging the local entrepreneurial ecosystem and the development of entrepreneurial capital (González-Urbe and Leatherbee, 2017).

The study was conducted in the North East of England. According to the statistics provided by the Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs, between 2020 and 2021, there were 549,000 businesses registered in rural areas, representing 23 per cent of all the businesses registered in England. Businesses operating in rural areas provided employment to 3.6 million individuals, constituting 13 per cent of the total workforce employed by registered businesses. Rural regions have a higher ratio of registered businesses per capita compared to predominantly urban areas. In 2020, the number of registered business start-ups per 10,000 population was 52 in predominantly urban areas (excluding London), whereas it was slightly lower at 42 per 10,000 population in predominantly rural areas.

Based on the diversity of sectors and types of businesses in rural places, this study concentrated on exploring the North East region, including Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside, and Sunderland. The geographical scope of Northeast England spans 8,574 square kilometres.

In the North East, firms are much more likely to see new opportunities when it comes to expansion through tourism, and companies in rural towns consider themselves to be well placed to take advantage of these opportunities. However, infrastructure constraints in the North East are a crucial barrier which is coupled with under-investment and lack of access to financial resources (NICRE, 2024).

The research study brought together a diverse group of participants consisting of business advisors, business owners, policy managers, and entrepreneurship scholars, that had direct involvement and experience in working with rural enterprises in the North East region. They represent a wide range of organisations and sectors in the North East, including for profit and non-profit businesses, local authorities, development trusts and research organisations. The selected participants all had different missions, structures, governance, and capabilities. Yet, all of them share the same purpose of supporting rural enterprises in their location and community. Table 1 summarises the characteristics of the 16 interviewees who participated in the research.

Table 1

Interview Sample Description

Interviewee¹	Role	Organisation	Area
1. Isabella and Caroline	Business Development Manager and Researcher	Non-profit	Newcastle upon Tyne
2. Jack	Business Manager	Public	Newcastle upon Tyne
3. Olivia	Chief Executive Officer	Trust	Northumberland
4. Sophia	Business Advisor	Private	Durham
5. Eric	Business Manager	Public	Northumberland
6. Alice and Paul	Economic Development Managers	Private	Northumberland
7. William and Lucy	Skill Facilitators	Trust	Northumberland
8. George	Business Owner	Private	Newcastle upon Tyne
9. Emma	Business Engagement Manager	Public	Durham
10. Thomas	Professor	Public	Northumberland
11. James	Business Advisor	Private	Durham
12. Grace	CEO	Non-profit	Durham
13. Alan	Senior Policy Maker	Public	Newcastle upon Tyne
14. Georgia and Paul	Business Advisor	Private	Northumberland

Semi-structured interviews were conducted, lasting between 55 and 90 minutes each. They were mainly conducted online. Questions started with the background of the interviewee and then focused on the Material Enablers, Social Enablers, Enterprise Foundations, and Ecosystem dynamics from REFLECT. Based on this, interview recordings were transcribed using the software Rev. More than a hundred and seventy pages were analysed and then coded using NVivo 14.

To maintain consistency across interviews, a well-defined research protocol of nine questions was followed. This protocol focused on exploring the four key determinants from REFLECT, which were carefully selected to cover a wide range of factors influencing the success and challenges faced by rural enterprises.

Before starting the interview phase, a pilot session was conducted as a preliminary test run. The pilot session allowed us to assess the structure, identify potential areas of improvement, and test the research protocol. Additionally, a research brief was shared in advance allowing each interviewee to have the information about the REFLECT paper ex-ante. This step ensured that the subsequent interviews would be conducted efficiently, and with optimal data quality.

¹ Names have been changed to ensure privacy and confidentiality.

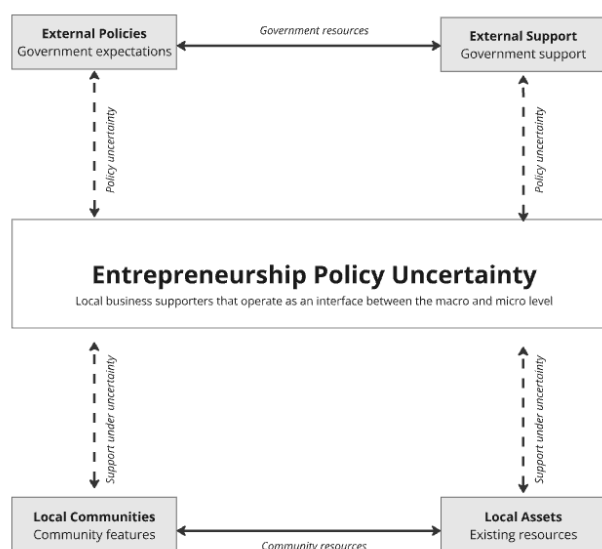
Tool Development

Entrepreneurship Policy Uncertainty

Uncertainty emerged as a defining challenge across all interviews, underpinning nearly every aspect of rural policy and entrepreneurship. While uncertainty is a constant in policymaking, it becomes particularly relevant in rural entrepreneurship, where rural areas' unique and varied conditions amplify its effects. Although uncertainty has been studied in entrepreneurship literature, scholars have focused on using macro and micro approaches. On the one hand, considering economic policy uncertainty and its effects on the economy from a macro perspective, such as on investment and employment (Baker et al., 2016). On the other side, entrepreneurship uncertainty has been studied from a micro perspective as a critical factor in the entrepreneurial process from the individual point of view (Townsend et al., 2018). However, despite the evident external factors that induce uncertainty in entrepreneurship (e.g., Brexit, Covid-19, Financial crisis), how uncertainty affects the meso level is still unclear. This is important because relevant institutions support entrepreneurs and their businesses at the meso level, including mentors, business advisors, incubators, investors, and local authorities.

Entrepreneurship Policy Uncertainty, referring to the unpredictability and ambiguity surrounding government policies and regulations influences the broader entrepreneurial landscape. This uncertainty affects critical areas such as funding, legal frameworks, access to services, and market conditions. In essence, those supporting actors who work at the meso level face a lack of clarity about how entrepreneurship policies will evolve and impact their operations. As a result, they may struggle to provide timely and effective support to entrepreneurs and businesses, potentially hindering their ability to adapt and succeed in a shifting environment (See Figure 1).

Figure 1. Entrepreneurship Policy Uncertainty Framework (Developed by the authors)



Four key categories have been defined where uncertainty significantly impacts decision-making (See Figure 4):

1. Local Communities: Rural communities are diverse, each with distinct needs and capacities. Some are better positioned to adapt to change, while others face barriers like digital skills gaps and limited collaboration. This diversity makes it difficult to apply uniform policies, as a one-size-fits-all approach often falls short.

2. Local Assets: Rural regions frequently have underutilised assets, from physical infrastructure to natural resources. The uncertainty lies in effectively activating these assets, particularly in areas with poor transport and digital connectivity, which further restricts economic potential.

3. External Policies: National and local policy frameworks often lack clarity or consistency in their objectives, creating uncertainty for rural businesses. These policies are typically designed with urban environments in mind, leaving rural enterprises struggling to interpret or benefit from them meaningfully.

4. External Support: Access to crucial resources—such as funding, mentoring, and business networks—is frequently limited in rural areas. Uncertainty arises when these resources are scarce and poorly aligned with the specific needs of rural entrepreneurs, further hindering business development.

These uncertainties present a complex and dynamic landscape for rural entrepreneurship, demanding a policy approach that is both flexible and highly sensitive to context. Our interviews clearly show that traditional policy frameworks, which tend to focus on urban-centric models, are inadequate for addressing these nuanced challenges.

Presentation of the tool

Building on research insights and the elements of the REFLECT framework, we have adapted an online assessment tool designed to help policymakers, business advisors, development agencies, businesses, funders, and other stakeholders navigate and address policy uncertainty in rural entrepreneurship. This tool synthesises findings from interview data and theoretical foundations to provide a structured yet accessible way of exploring the dynamics shaping rural enterprises.

The platform focuses on two interconnected levels: Local Communities with their assets and External Policies with their support. The assessment tool evaluates rural areas across the four key dimensions mentioned (Local Communities, Local Assets, External Policies, and External Support). Each dimension is assessed using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "Not at all" to "To a great extent," enabling respondents to provide insights into various aspects of rural business dynamics. Designed for ease of use, the tool takes approximately 15-20 minutes to complete 23 questions and generates a report with actionable insights to inform policy conversations and decisions.

By capturing local realities, the platform offers a structured way to integrate grassroots perspectives into broader policy discussions. Rather than replacing established policy design methods, it bridges the gap between local needs and external policy influences, helping to identify alignment and potential mismatches. It can support individual reflection as well as group discussions, enabling policymakers and stakeholders to work together in addressing rural entrepreneurship challenges.

While still in its minimum viable product (MVP) stage, the platform provides a practical foundation for structuring conversations focused on policy uncertainty. At this stage, it does not allow users to specify their role or type of user (e.g., policymaker, business owner, business supporter), or to differentiate perspectives based on different actors' varied assumptions and experiences. Despite these limitations, the tool provides a framework for sparking discussions and identifying critical areas of uncertainty.

The website, which includes a step-by-step tutorial video for using the tool, can be accessed at www.reflect.enterprises

The welcome screen for the platform and starting page for completing the survey are below, followed by short descriptions/screenshots of the questions under each of the four key dimensions.

Welcome

In these times of uncertainty, rural businesses in the UK seek tailored support from national and local authorities. REFLECT is a policy tool created to help business owners, advisors, policymakers, and researchers understand rural areas' specific strengths and needs.

After completing the assessment tool, a personalised report will be produced, enabling rural communities and authorities to engage in well-informed discussions about enterprise policies in rural areas.

[Take the Survey](#) →

This research has received funding from the National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise's call for research and innovation



About the Assessment Tool

The assessment tool evaluates rural areas across four key dimensions: Local Communities, Local Assets, External Policies, and External Support. Designed for ease of use, it takes about 15 minutes to complete and provides a detailed report with actionable insights.

Policymakers, business advisors, and rural enterprise stakeholders can utilise these insights to guide informed decisions. Watch our tutorial video for a step-by-step guide on using the tool effectively. At the end, you can save your progress and download the report.

[Start Survey](#) →



Survey: Section 1 – Local Communities

The first section of the tool aims to understand how the community connects and supports its members. The six questions in this section focus on different aspects of community resilience.

The first examines how businesses respond to diverse community needs, considering different resident profiles such as long-term residents, commuters, and newcomers. The second evaluates the role of digital skills in economic participation, recognising their growing importance in accessing opportunities and overcoming geographic barriers. The third explores the extent to which communities support younger generations, whether by encouraging local entrepreneurship or attracting new talent from outside rural areas to sustain economic activity. The fourth question looks at knowledge-sharing practices, considering how individuals and businesses engage in mentorship programmes, workshops, and peer learning to strengthen entrepreneurial networks. The fifth assesses peer support, examining how businesses collaborate to navigate challenges, particularly in regions where formal business support structures may be limited. Finally, the sixth explores collaboration with external stakeholders, including policymakers, business associations, and incubators, to enhance rural enterprise development and bridge the gap between community-driven efforts and policy initiatives.



Category 1

Local Communities

The first section aims to understand how the community connects and supports its members. Rural communities, which consist of established families, newcomers, and businesses, collaborate to provide peer support and foster strong connections.

These communities actively contribute to and support each other, creating a dynamic mix of long-time residents and new arrivals. They repurpose resources and infrastructure to meet current needs and address digital skills gaps, ensuring everyone can fully participate in the modern economy. By promoting a balanced, attractive lifestyle and creating a supportive, healthy environment, they aim to overcome barriers and build a thriving, interconnected community where everyone can succeed.

[Start Survey →](#)

Question 2

Digital skills

To what extent are digital skills levels important within communities?

Not at all	To a small extent	Neutral	To a large extent	To a great extent
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not important	Somewhat important	Neither important nor unimportant	Important	Very important

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Section 2 – Community Assets

The Community Resources and Assets section focuses on the infrastructure and material conditions that support rural businesses. The availability, accessibility, and adaptability of these resources shape the local entrepreneurial landscape, influencing opportunities for business development and expansion.

The first question examines connectivity, assessing how well transport links, logistics, and digital infrastructure support rural businesses, particularly in relation to supply chains and access to markets. The second question explores underutilised spaces, looking at whether vacant or shared facilities—such as business hubs, co-working spaces, or community buildings—are effectively repurposed to support enterprise activities. The third question investigates the adaptability of infrastructure, evaluating whether local facilities can accommodate changing business needs, shifts in consumer behaviour, and emerging economic opportunities. The fourth and fifth questions examine historical and cultural assets—first considering how these elements contribute to community identity and cohesion and then analysing whether they are strategically leveraged to attract businesses, promote tourism, or strengthen local branding. The final question focuses on community networks, assessing how well they enable collaboration, information-sharing, and coordination between businesses, policymakers, and support organisations to maximise the potential of local resources.

Category 2

Community Resources/Assets

This section seeks to understand the diverse resources within rural communities that contribute to their growth and prosperity. These include historical places, existing networks, buildings, and infrastructure that enhance connectivity and accessibility.

Historical sites and cultural landmarks attract tourism and foster community pride. Networks support collaboration and innovation, while buildings and infrastructure ensure accessibility and economic opportunities. Recognising and utilising these assets is essential for building a more resilient rural community.

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Question 1

Connectivity

To what extent is the ease of access to local resources and infrastructure aligned with the diverse needs of rural businesses, considering not only digital aspects but also physical transport, logistics, and overall accessibility?

Not at all	To a small extent	Neutral	To a large extent	To a great extent
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not Important	Somewhat Important	Neither Important nor Unimportant	Important	Very Important

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Section 3 – External Policies

The External Policies section explores how broader policy frameworks influence rural businesses, focusing on their alignment with local needs and their responsiveness to uncertainty.

The first question examines whether policymakers adjust policies when faced with challenges, refining initiatives or delaying implementation when necessary. The second addresses collaboration, evaluating the extent to which rural businesses and communities have a voice in policy design. The third considers the use of rural impact

assessments, exploring whether policies account for distinct challenges in non-urban areas. The fourth question assesses digital inclusion, investigating whether strategies exist to bridge skill gaps and ensure rural businesses can participate in the digital economy. The final question examines funding mechanisms, determining whether financial support is tailored to rural business models rather than applying frameworks designed for high-growth startups. Given that rural enterprises tend to prioritise stability and long-term viability, this section considers whether funding policies acknowledge these structural differences and provide accessible, flexible solutions.

Category 3

External Policies

This section discusses the external rural enterprise policies that affect communities, as defined by local and national authorities. These policies include regulations, programmes, and initiatives formulated to support rural businesses and promote community development.

Comprehending these policies is important to understanding their impact on rural communities and being aware of the available resources. By analysing these policies, communities can effectively utilise the available support systems and advocate for potential changes.

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Question 1

Long-term policy

To what extent have policymakers actively evaluated trade-offs, such as pausing or delaying certain policy elements, to mitigate the impact of uncertainty on the effectiveness of external policies?

Not at all	To a small extent	Neutral	To a large extent	To a great extent
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not Important	Somewhat Important	Neither Important nor Unimportant	Important	Very Important

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Section 4 – External Support and Resources

The External Support and Resources section examines how well policymakers and support organisations consider rural-specific needs when designing interventions. Like the External Policies section, this focuses on a top-down perspective, exploring whether existing frameworks are sensitive to the challenges rural businesses face.

The first question assesses how funding mechanisms address the realities of rural enterprises, particularly for sole traders and small businesses. The second looks at whether external programmes integrate environmental, physical, and human resources in ways that align with rural conditions. The third examines how physical hub spaces—such as co-working centres and incubators—are used within external support frameworks. The fourth considers whether rural businesses can easily access external advice, mentoring, and training that is both relevant and tailored to their needs. The fifth question explores digital skills, evaluating how support initiatives help rural entrepreneurs overcome digital barriers. The final question focuses on visibility, assessing whether businesses are aware of and engaged with external support, ensuring that available resources are effectively communicated and accessible.

Category 4

External Support / Resources

This section focuses on the essential resources rural businesses need, provided by external agents and institutions that work with rural enterprises. These resources include funding, mentoring, training, and networking opportunities.

External support is crucial for rural businesses to thrive. Funding ensures financial stability, mentoring and training offer guidance and skill development, and networking connects businesses with broader markets and collaborators.

Understanding these resources helps rural enterprises enhance their capabilities and achieve sustainable growth.

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Question 1

Funding focus

To what extent do current external support initiatives actively address the awareness gap among rural entrepreneurs about the available support, especially for sole traders with limited time and energy?

Not at all	To a small extent	Neutral	To a large extent	To a great extent
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not Important	Somewhat Important	Neither Important nor Unimportant	Important	Very Important

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Finish!

Survey Complete!

One last thing...

What is the name of the rural area being assessed?

For example: Hexham, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Rothbury or other.

[← Previous](#) [See Your Results →](#)

After completing the survey, participants reach the **results page**, where they can review their responses in a structured format. A spider diagram provides a visual representation of their perceptions across four key areas: Local Communities, Local Resources/Assets, External Policies, and External Support/Resources. This helps highlight areas where perspectives vary or where uncertainty may be higher.

Thank you for completing the assessment.

Your Results

You can now access your detailed report, featuring a personalised analysis based on your responses. Use this report to guide your policy discussions and decisions in your local area.

Explore our repository for additional resources and information related to rural enterprises in the UK.

[Download PDF](#)

Your Resources

All Resources →

A guide to rural community resilience

The Guide to Rural Community Resilience is designed to help rural communities prepare for emergencies with proactive, community-centered strategies. It provides guidance on creating local emergency plans, forming Community Emergency Volunteer

[External Policies](#) [External Support / Resources](#)

Covid-19 and rural economies

This briefing examines Covid-19's impact on rural economies, offering recommendations for the UK government. While UK-focused, its insights resonate with EU rural economies. Author(s): Jeremy Phillipson, Matthew Gorton, Roger Turner, Mark

[External Policies](#) [External Support / Resources](#)

Digital Opportunities for ACRE's Village Halls Advice and Information Service

Enhancing digital solutions for over 10,000 village halls across England is essential. ACRE's 2021/22 project explored this need through workshops and surveys, offering recommendations for standardized digital processes, CRM adoption, and

[External Policies](#) [External Support / Resources](#)

Opening the Gate programme

Helping young people and new entrants enter, and succeed in, the agricultural industry. Author(s): The Royal Countryside Fund

[External Support / Resources](#) [Grant](#) [To act](#)

Response to a proposed rural transport

A personalised PDF report is available for download, offering a more detailed breakdown of responses. It provides context for each section, helping participants reflect on their assessments, with explanation included about **interpreting the results** and **turning insights into actions** (see below). Additionally, the results are shared with the research team, allowing them to analyse broader patterns and insights.

Results

Reflect Framework Explained

1. Local Communities	1	2	3	4	5
Understanding community needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Digital Skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New Generations	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge sharing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Peer support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Collaborative efforts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Local Communities Explanation

A low score in this category implies that you are experiencing a high level of uncertainty in your understanding of Local Communities within the rural enterprise context(s) you work within. However, some of your scores on individual items are likely to vary meaning that you could be more certain on some questions than others. If you are experiencing high levels of uncertainty within the Local Communities category, you may wish to consult with members of your community around the individual elements within the Local Communities category. Please access our resources for further information.

2. Local Resources/Assets	1	2	3	4	5
Connectivity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Underutilised spaces	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adapting existing infrastructure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Historical assets 1/2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Historical assets 2/2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Networks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Local Resources/Assets Explanation

A low score in this category implies that you are experiencing a high level of uncertainty in your understanding of Local Resources/Assets within the rural enterprise context(s) you work within. However, some of your scores on individual items are likely to vary meaning that you could be more certain on some questions than others. If you are experiencing high levels of uncertainty within the Local Resources/Assets category, you may wish to conduct an analysis of the assets and available resources across the community. Please access our resources for further information.

3. External Policies	1	2	3	4	5
Long-term policy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collaborative Policy Design	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Impact Assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Digital inclusion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to funding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

External Policies Explanation

A low score in this category implies that you are experiencing a high level of uncertainty in your understanding of External Policies within the rural enterprise context(s) you work within. However, some of your scores on individual items are likely to vary meaning that you could be more certain on some questions than others. If you are experiencing high levels of uncertainty within the External Policies category, you may wish to establish a dialogue with key policy personnel and/or consult policy documents specific to rural enterprises in your area. Please access our resources for further information.

4. External Support / Resources	1	2	3	4	5
Funding focus	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Integration of multiple resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Utilisation of physical hub spaces	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to information support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Digital skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
External support visibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

External Support/Resources

A low score in this category implies that you are experiencing a high level of uncertainty in your understanding of External Support/Resources within the rural enterprise context(s) you work within. However, some of your scores on individual items are likely to vary meaning that you could be more certain on some questions than others. If you are experiencing high levels of uncertainty within the External Support/Resources category, you may wish to gather more information from companies about how they currently use and access different support available. Please access our resources for further information.

Next Steps

In the next section, explore practical recommendations for local community members and policymakers based on the findings.

Results

Turning Insights into Actions

Local Communities

To effectively support rural enterprises, it's crucial to understand the composition and dynamics of Local Communities. Research evidence shows that it is important to consider the diverse needs of the community. Assessing digital skills levels is a key step. Actionable strategies must be developed to involve communities in supporting young entrepreneurs and fostering inclusivity. Active participation in knowledge-sharing and peer support initiatives strengthens community bonds. Collaborative efforts between local communities and external entities are essential for overcoming challenges. By prioritizing these actions, stakeholders can lay the groundwork for the long-term prosperity and growth of rural communities.

For further insights into understanding Local Communities, please explore the reports, evidence, papers, and documents available in the resource section.

Local Resources/Assets

Rural communities are essential for sustainable development and require the use of local resources. Research evidence shows that ensuring efficient connectivity to local resources and infrastructure, both digitally and physically, is vital to meeting the diverse needs of rural businesses. Diversifying existing business hubs and underutilised spaces within communities can provide essential services and network support, stimulating business development. In this sense, it's essential to adapt existing infrastructure to accommodate changing business needs and emerging opportunities, fostering creativity and collaboration. Additionally, incorporating historical assets into marketing efforts can attract businesses while also strengthening community identity. Strengthening community networks facilitates communication and collaboration, maximising the potential of available resources.

For further insights into understanding Local Resources/Assets, please explore the reports, evidence, papers, and documents available in the resource section.

External Policies

In the relationship between policymakers and local communities, it becomes clear how important external policies are in supporting the development of rural enterprises. Research evidence shows how policymakers must evaluate the effectiveness of policies and adjust to ensure long-term success, especially in times of uncertainty. Collaboration with rural communities and businesses is vital to customise policies to meet the specific needs of rural areas. Open dialogue allows better policy formulation, as it ensures that interventions are aligned with local realities. Comprehensive rural impact assessments guide effective interventions, addressing digital skill gaps, bridging the rural-urban digital divide, and making it easier for rural entrepreneurs to access tailored funding sources that acknowledge their unique challenges and knowledge gaps. Through open dialogue, policymakers can gain a deeper understanding of the issues and promote business development more effectively.

For further insights into understanding External Policies, please explore the reports, evidence, papers, and documents available in the resource section.

External Support/Resources

External support programmes must address rural entrepreneurs' lack of understanding about available funding, crucial for individual business owners with limited resources. Research evidence shows that public programmes should integrate environmental assets, physical infrastructure, and human capital for holistic development. Optimising physical hub spaces fosters collaboration and the use of existing resources. Programmes should be tailored to meet unique rural challenges, avoiding the 'one-size fits all' approach and instead facilitating services specially designed for rural enterprises. Enhancing digital literacy equips business owners for success in the digital landscape. Additionally, fostering greater community involvement and engagement ensures that rural entrepreneurs are aware of and empowered by the existing support available.

If you want to learn more about External Support/Resources, please explore the reports, evidence, papers, and documents available in the resource section.

Participants also gain access to **curated resources**, including research papers, policy briefs, and reports relevant to rural enterprises. While this feature is still in development, the repository will expand over time, offering more targeted materials based on users' responses. The platform also allows participants to save progress and return later, ensuring flexibility in engaging with the tool. By making the results accessible in multiple formats, the survey aims to support ongoing discussions on rural entrepreneurship and policymaking.

The screenshot displays the 'Resources Archive' interface. At the top left, there is a 'Filter' section with a 'Select Category...' dropdown. To the right, a 'Resources by category' menu lists: Local Communities, Local resources / assets, External policies, and External support / resources. The main content area features a grid of resource cards, each with a thumbnail image, a title, a brief description, and a list of tags. The cards include:

- Rural entrepreneurship in place: an integrated framework** (Local Communities, Local Resources)
- Shared Rural Network (SRN) Transforming Mobile Coverage Countrywide** (Local Resources, Broadband/Mobile, Policy)
- Connected Nations Spring 2023 update: Interactive report** (Local Resources, To understand)
- Digital exclusion and the cost of living** (External Policies, Local Resources, Broadband)
- Communications Consumer Panel: The Struggle for Fairness** (Local Resources, Broadband/Mobile, Industry)
- The Royal Countryside Fund** (External Support / Resources, Grant, To act)
- Opening the Gate programme** (External Support / Resources, Grant, To act)
- New Entrants and Young Farmers Start-Up Grant Schemes: Evaluation** (External Policies, Government/Public Report)
- Labour and skills availability: impacts on rural enterprise** (Local Resources, Report, To understand)
- Understanding Rural Durham – Supporting Durham County Council's evidence base** (External Policies, External Support / Resources)
- A guide to rural community resilience** (External Policies, External Support / Resources)
- The cost-of-doing-business crisis: rural impacts and adaptation** (External Policies, Local Communities, Local Resources)

At the bottom of the page, there are navigation buttons for '1', '2', and 'Next'.

All Resources

Resources Archive

Resources by category

- Local Communities →
- Local resources / assets →
- External policies →
- External support / resources →

Filter

Select Category...



Rural community organisations: access to and use of banking services

Post-COVID, rural charities are facing significant banking challenges. A survey of over 1,200 charities with NCVJ found that 67% struggle with changing signatories, and 41% report unfair charges. Nearly half of

External Support / Resources Local Resources



Digital Opportunities for ACRE's Village Halls Advice and Information Service

Enhancing digital solutions for over 10,000 village halls across England is essential. ACRE's 2021/22 project explored this need through workshops and surveys, offering recommendations for standardized digital processes, CRM adoption, and

External Policies External Support / Resources



Response to a proposed rural transport strategy

Rural residents face significant mobility and service access challenges, worsened by the lack of a clear national rural transport policy. In response to the Department for Transport's call for evidence on

External Policies External Support / Resources



Spatial disparities in SME productivity in England

Boosting productivity is essential for UK growth, yet low-productivity SMEs and regional disparities remain. Theories point to factors like industrial dynamics, agglomeration, institutions, and firm resources. Empirical analysis requires understanding hierarchical

External Policies Government/Public Report



Covid-19 and rural economies

This briefing examines Covid-19's impact on rural economies, offering recommendations for the UK government. While UK-focused, its insights resonate with EU rural economies. Author(s): Jeremy Phillipson, Matthew Gorton, Roger Turner, Mark

External Policies External Support / Resources



Unleashing rural opportunity

Unleashing Rural Opportunity centers on four key priorities for enhancing rural prosperity, aligned with current policies to improve quality of life in rural areas. These priorities are: boosting the rural economy,

External Policies Government/Public Report



Delivering a new rural policy framework for Northern Ireland

A proposed rural policy for Northern Ireland emphasizes community empowerment through grassroots involvement, trust-building, and inclusive decision-making. The framework advocates for reduced bureaucracy, decentralized decision-making, and a flexible, partnership-driven approach that

External Policies Government/Public Report



The policy landscape for remote working and rural development in Northern Ireland: A comparative study

This report, commissioned by the Rural Community Network, assesses Northern Ireland's public policy landscape on remote working, focusing on its potential for rural and social development. Drawing on practices from the

External Policies Policy Programme To act



A review of rural development funding processes and delivery

This report evaluates Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) in Northern Ireland, including various LEADER program phases, and offers recommendations for future rural policies. Key findings emphasize empowering communities, reducing bureaucratic barriers, fostering

External Policies Intervention Research Report

REFLECT UX Testing Workshop: Insights and Next Steps

The UX Testing Workshop for the REFLECT platform took place on 30 October 2024 at Durham University Business School, bringing together seven participants, including policymakers, business advisors, community leaders, and researchers working on rural enterprise development. The session aimed to **evaluate usability, relevance, and the platform's capacity** to support rural policy discussions while gathering insights into potential refinements.



Participants engaged with the platform's four core sections—Local Communities, Local Resources/Assets, External Policies, and External Support/Resources—and assessed their effectiveness in capturing the realities of rural enterprise development.

The survey structure was well-received, with its logical flow helping users navigate complex policy themes. However, some participants suggested that better refinements be made to align questions with the perspectives of different stakeholders. Policymakers, for instance, felt some sections needed more explicit links to implementation strategies, while business advisors highlighted the importance of more practical applications for rural entrepreneurs.

The spider diagram received mixed reactions. Many found it useful for identifying areas of uncertainty, but some felt it needed clearer interpretation to prevent the assumption that uncertainty always implies a lack of knowledge. Several participants pointed out that uncertainty often stems from structural challenges—such as limited infrastructure, policy inconsistencies, or funding constraints—rather than individual misunderstandings.

They suggested adjusting the framing could better capture these systemic issues, making the tool more relevant for users and improving engagement with the results.

Participants described navigation as intuitive, with the clean interface making it easy to engage with the survey. However, several users requested more flexibility, such as the ability to revisit answers (even though this feature already exists), save progress more efficiently, and add open-ended response options. Some also suggested greater customisation, allowing users to filter questions based on their role—for instance, whether they are policymakers, business advisors, or entrepreneurs.

Digital connectivity emerged as a key topic. While digital skills development was included in the survey, participants felt that broader infrastructure challenges—such as broadband accessibility—needed greater emphasis, as they directly impact rural businesses' ability to engage in digital markets.

From a policy engagement perspective, there were differing views on how effectively the platform translates responses into actionable insights. Some participants saw strong potential for policy consultation, while others pointed out that the platform currently lacks direct mechanisms for integrating findings into formal policy processes. Suggestions included incorporating regional comparisons or AI-driven analytics to enhance decision-making.

Key Takeaways

The UX Testing Workshop was conducted to evaluate the basic features of the MVP, ensuring the platform's core functionalities were intuitive, relevant, and aligned with user needs. The research team sought to test whether the platform effectively structured rural policy discussions and how well its design supported policymakers, business advisors, and community stakeholders in identifying policy uncertainties.

Participants confirmed the platform's potential but highlighted that it works best as part of a facilitated process, rather than as a standalone tool. Many saw value in using the survey within structured discussions or policy workshops rather than completing it in isolation. A second workshop will explore how facilitation enhances engagement and refines the platform's role in collaborative decision-making.

One key finding was that Entrepreneurship Policy Uncertainty at the meso level plays a major role in shaping rural enterprise development in the UK. Participants highlighted that uncertainty is not just about lacking information but often stems from broader structural and policy challenges. Meso-level uncertainty arises from inconsistent policies, gaps in support systems, and institutional barriers, all of which affect how rural businesses access resources, plan ahead, and respond to changes in the policy landscape.

A policymaker suggested integrating AI-driven analytics to enhance usability, particularly by offering regional comparisons and data-driven insights to support decision-making. This would strengthen the platform's capacity to provide policymakers with actionable intelligence.

Finally, the workshop allowed the research team to assess whether the platform's core structure, survey design, and visualisation tools function as intended. The feedback gathered will directly inform future iterations of the platform, ensuring it evolves into a practical, user-friendly tool that captures rural business challenges while supporting policymaking.

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Annexes

Interview Protocol – REFLECT in the Northeast July/August 2023

Script prior to interview:

We would like to thank you once again for being willing to participate in the interview aspect of our study. As we have mentioned to you before, this research project is supported by the National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise. This research seeks to **1)** refine the REFLECT framework to the UK context, **2)** establish suitable typologies of rural enterprise contexts through the revised frameworks, and finally, **3)** develop an online assessment toolkit that allows business advisors, rural enterprises, and policymakers to assess environments and access support resources. Therefore, since you're an active member of the rural enterprise sector, your opinion is highly valuable to translate the framework to the UK context.

[review aspects of consent form]

To make sure our notes correctly represent what you say, we would also like to record the session. Of course, the recording is confidential and will not be shared around.

Are you still ok with me recording (or not) our conversation today?

-- Yes -- No

If yes: Thank you! Please let us know if at any point you want us to turn off the recorder or keep something you said off the record.

If not: Thank you for letting us know. We will only take notes of our conversation.

Before we begin the interview, do you have any questions?

[Discuss questions]

If any questions (or other questions) arise at any point in this study, you can feel free to ask them at any time. We would be more than happy to answer your questions.

[Start recording the video conference]

QUESTIONS

SECTION 1. BACKGROUND

We would like to start with your background which provides an overview of your role and its relevance to rural enterprise.

Background

1. Briefly describe your role and how it relates to rural business/enterprise.
2. How would you describe your rural area or areas that you are most familiar with?

SECTION 2. FRAMEWORK

The following section seeks to talk about the 4 distinct elements of the framework: Material Enablers, Social Enablers, Enterprise Foundation, and Ecosystem Dynamics.

[Show slide to introduce the framework]

Material enablers

1. What specific natural features and/or built assets do you believe have played a significant role in supporting rural enterprise in your community?

This could be, for example, the attractiveness of the countryside, the rivers, forests but could also be community centres, churches and/or pubs.

2. From your perspective, how do you think natural and built assets are considered as part of the support system for new businesses in rural areas in the Northeast?

Social enablers

1. How do you perceive the influence of social and cultural factors on rural enterprise in your community?

This could be, for example, perceived attitudes towards enterprise success, whether and how business success is celebrated but also social fabric and networks, and whether the community perceives themselves as a beneficiary of this.

2. What are the most significant resources acquired through rural social networks that support and promote enterprise in your area? What resources are lacking?

Enterprise foundations

1. How do you think the unique aspects of your area can be utilised to encourage and support rural enterprise activity?

These could be historical, cultural, political, community organisational aspects.

2. How do you perceive the emotional and subjective attachment people have to rural areas and its influence on enterprise activities? Is it present in the rural contexts you work in/with?

Ecosystem dynamics

1. How do you think the interactions between different actors, such as government agencies, private businesses, and community organisations, can be further improved to support rural enterprise?
2. How has the collaboration with neighbouring places contributed to the growth and development of rural businesses in your area? Could you share examples of successful collaborations?
3. Are there any initiatives or programmes that you believe would be beneficial to implement in your area to enhance the ecosystem dynamics and support rural enterprises?

SECTION 3. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

In the next section we will delve deeper into the practical aspects and implications of implementing the REFLECT framework in the Northeast of the UK. We would like to explore potential challenges and their solutions, and how policymakers and local authorities can play a supportive role. For instance, potential policy implications of adopting the REFLECT framework across the UK and considerations for policymakers, enterprises, and business advisors interested in its implementation in rural areas.

Challenges and policy implications

1. What potential challenges might arise in implementing the REFLECT framework in the Northeast, and how can they be addressed?
2. How can policymakers and local authorities support rural enterprises?

SECTION 4. CO-DESIGN SESSION

Introduce the co-design exercise.

In the upcoming co-design section, our goal is to adapt and refine the existing REFLECT framework to shape a more robust and tailored approach to rural enterprise policy development.

Introduce Miro (Digital Whiteboard)

Usually, this exercise is done on sticky notes or papers, and so since we're meeting remotely, we can do it on a digital whiteboard called Miro.

It's quite easy to use. Let me share my screen and play you 1-min overview to go over the basics.

Here's the link to the Miro board we're going to be all using for this exercise:

Link:

https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVM3yjvc4=/?share_link_id=313516544411

Password: reflect

Framework Co-Design

1. How do you think the REFLECT framework proposed in the paper can be adapted to the specific context of the UK's rural areas?
2. Are there any crucial factors related to rural enterprise that you believe are currently missing from the REFLECT framework?
3. What aspects of the REFLECT framework do you find particularly relevant and effective for understanding rural enterprise in the UK?
4. Are there any specific enablers, elements, or barriers of the REFLECT framework that you believe need to be revised or updated to better suit the specific context of rural areas in the UK?
5. Based on your expertise, are there any dimensions within the REFLECT framework that you think should be emphasised or given more weight?



SECTION 5. CLOSING QUESTIONS

Participant's questions or comments
Before we concluded, is there anything else you'd like to add or any questions you have regarding the research or interview process?

WRAP UP

Thank you for your time and for sharing your valuable insights with us today. Your perspectives on rural enterprise have been incredibly valuable for our research.

We will keep you informed about its progress and the final research products that we will deliver in the coming months.

Other Research Reports are available on the NICRE website www.nicre.co.uk/publications The views expressed in this review represent those of the author and are not necessarily those of NICRE or its funders.

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