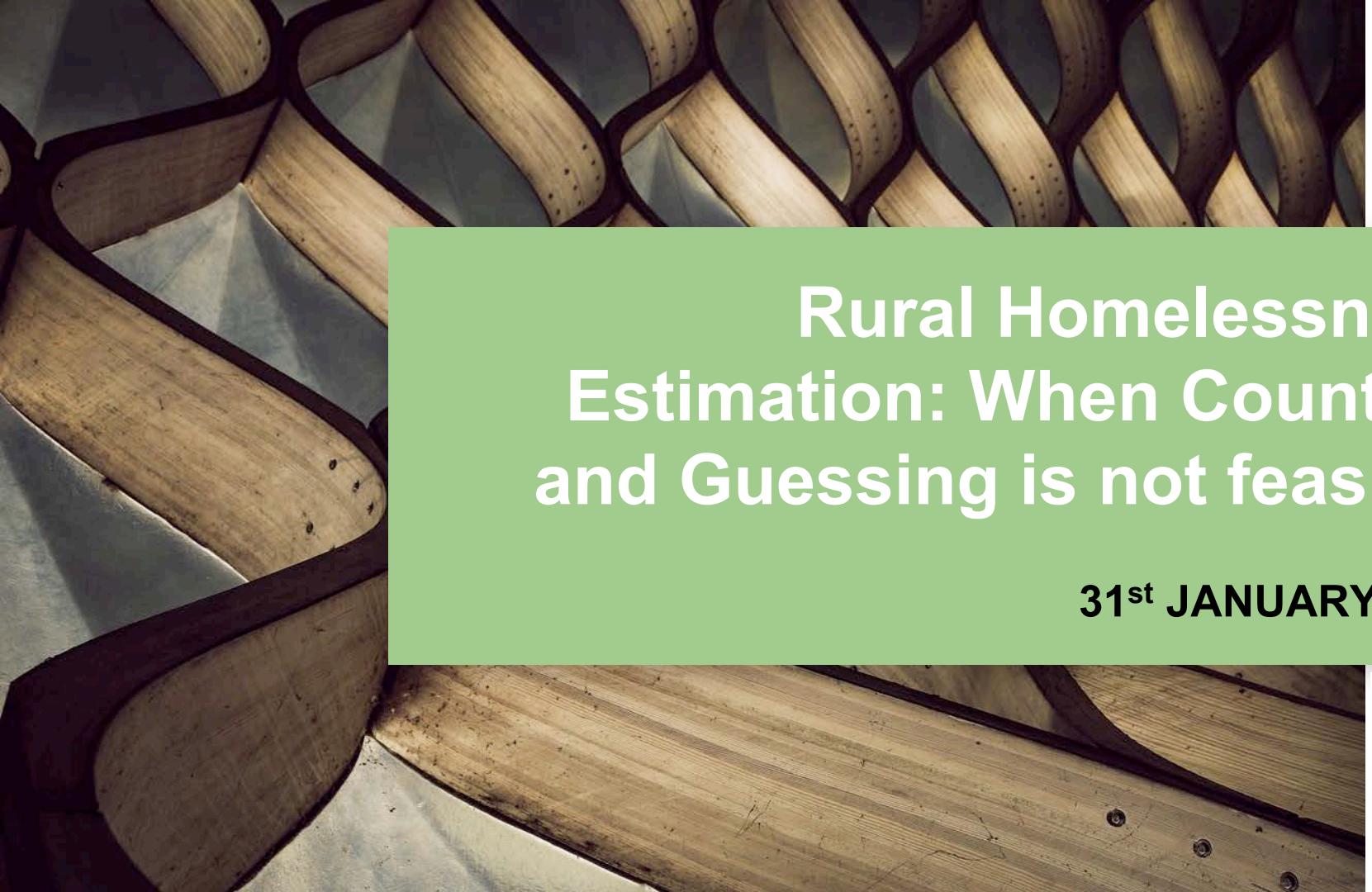
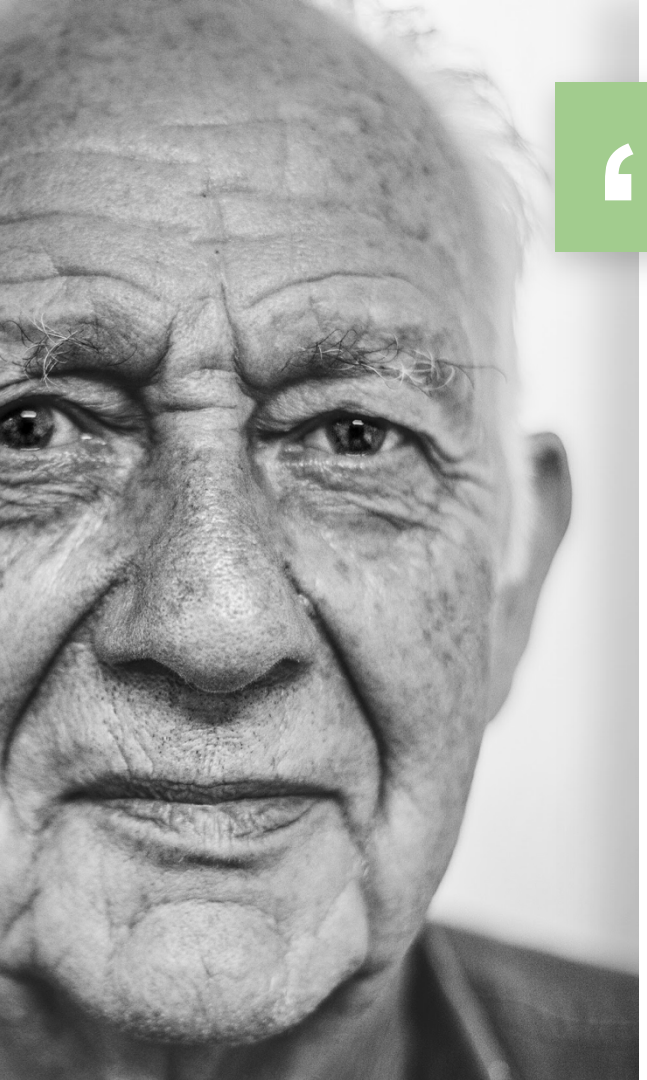


Rural Homelessness Estimation: When Counting and Guessing is not feasible

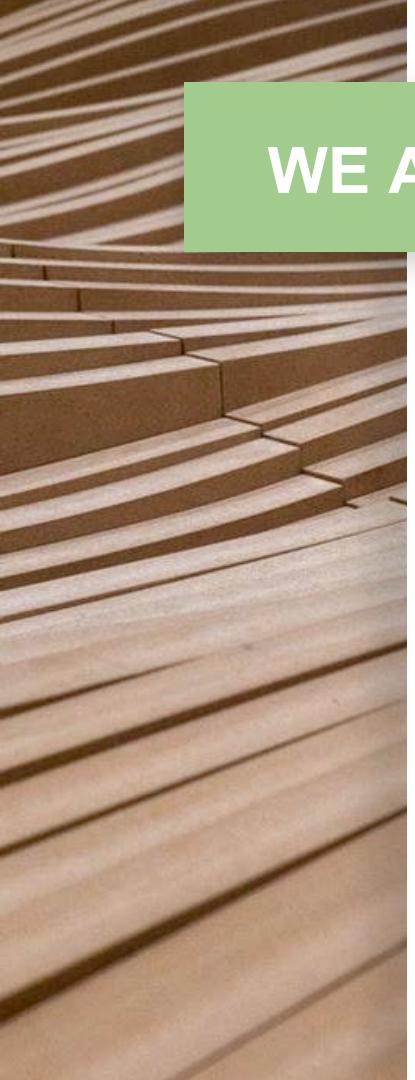
31st JANUARY 2019

What is ARDN?

Not-for-Profit Organization
Founded in 2009 by 21 Albertan PSIs



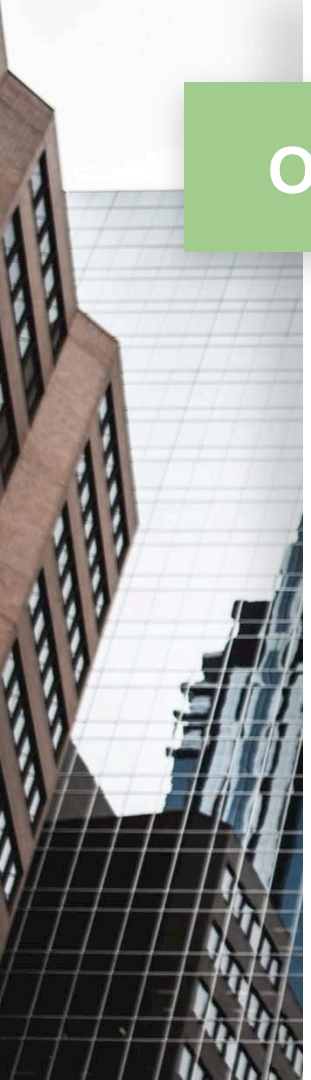
The ARDN uses the combined expertise of Alberta's post-secondary institutions to support rural development in Alberta and to help communities grow through research & learning.



WE ACT AS A PROJECT FACILITATOR BY:

- **Providing** innovative solutions
- **Supporting** new partnerships
- **Leveraging** existing resources

ARDN strives to be Alberta's **premiere rural development organization**



OUR MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

Athabasca University

Keyano College

University of Lethbridge

Lethbridge College

GPRC

Medicine Hat College

Portage College

University of Calgary

Northern Lakes College

Our Partners & Collaborators:

Alberta Real Estate Foundation

Canada — Funded in part by the Government of Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy

CMHC SCHL

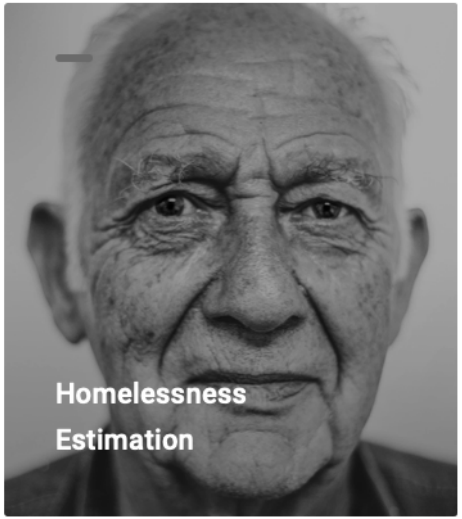
Alberta

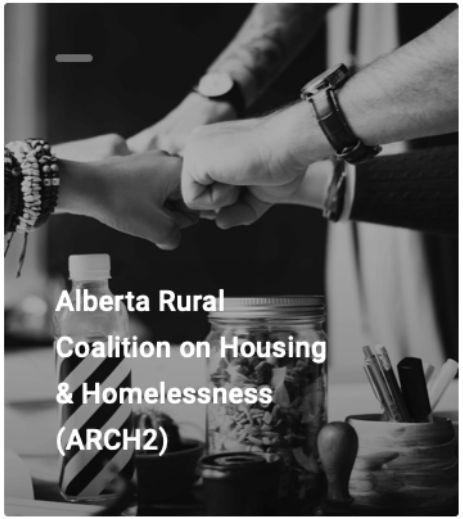
Energy Efficiency Alberta

Canadian Rural and Remote Housing and Homelessness Symposium

Sustainable Housing Initiative (SHI)

Homelessness Partnering Strategy


Homelessness Estimation


Alberta Rural Coalition on Housing & Homelessness (ARCH2)

Rural Community Opioid Outreach Program

CRRHH

CANADIAN
RURAL AND REMOTE
HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS
SYMPOSIUM

1st symposium was held in October 2018

- 250+ attendees
- Representation from all across Canada
  10 provinces and 3 territories

2nd symposium in 2nd quarter of 2020

SUSTAINABLE HOUSING INITIATIVE

The ARDN under its Sustainable Housing initiative helps communities develop affordable housing

- Pre-development Work
- Potential Funding
- Project Management

SUSTAINABLE HOUSING INITIATIVE

- **Toolkit to develop Affordable Housing**

HOMELESSNESS PARTNERING STRATEGY (HPS)

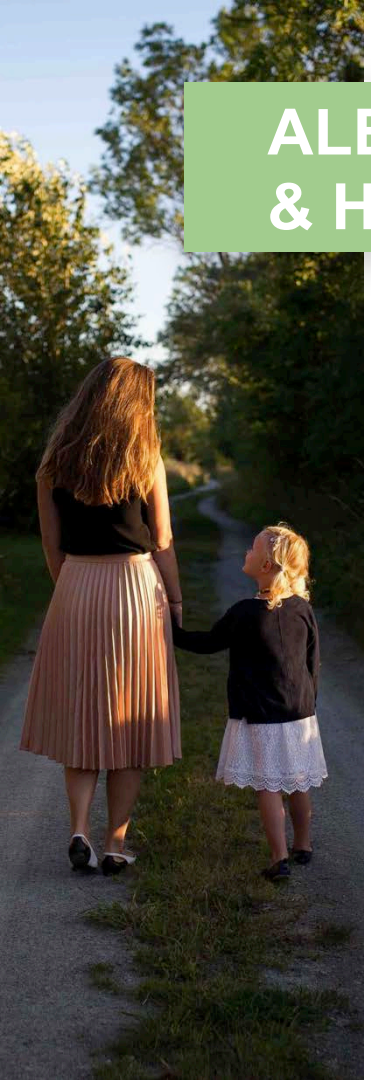
The ARDN is the rural and remote community entity for the federal governments Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS)

- We focus on funding homelessness projects that fall outside the 7 cities
- Through HPS, we have funded approximately 32 projects to date for a total investment of $4 Million
- New funding announced

OPIOID OUTREACH PROGRAM

ARDN has partnered with 13 organizations to raise awareness within their local communities about how opioids are affecting rural Alberta

- These projects focus on reducing stigma, direct people to where they can access life-saving resources
- Education sessions run from July 2018 to March 2019



ALBERTA RURAL COALITION ON HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS (ARCH^2)

MISSION

We speak with one united voice to increase information sharing, access to affordable housing and services to address rural homelessness

VISION

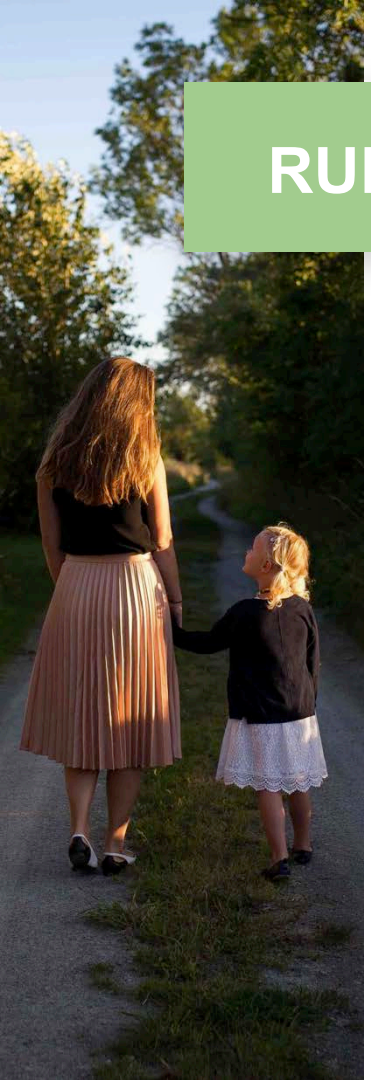
An affordable home for every rural Albertan

PRINCIPLES

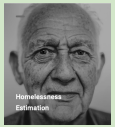
- Committed to improving the lives of rural Albertans
- Dedicated to speaking for those who cannot speak for themselves
- Providing rural solutions to solve rural issues

Step-by-Step Guide

Rural Homelessness Estimation

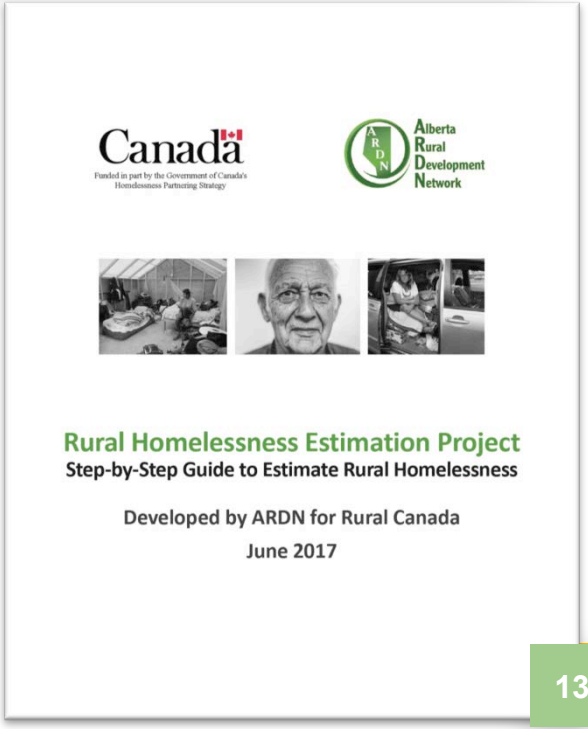


RURAL HOMELESSNESS ESTIMATION



Published in June 2017

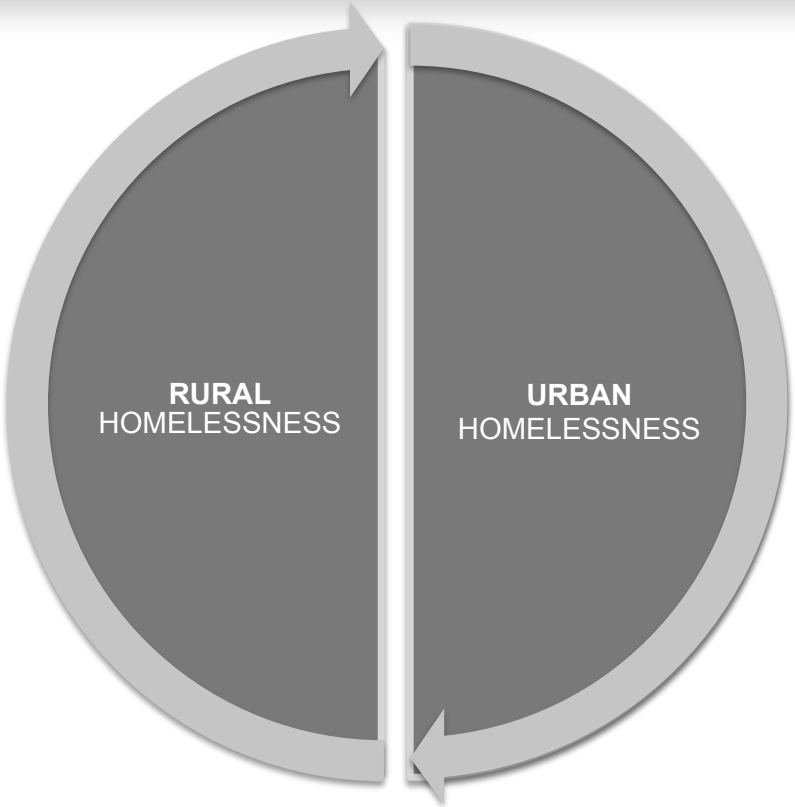
- Extremely limited data on rural homelessness
- “Living document” of best practices developed in consultation
- Free to download for anyone, in both English and French
- Developed for Rural Canada!



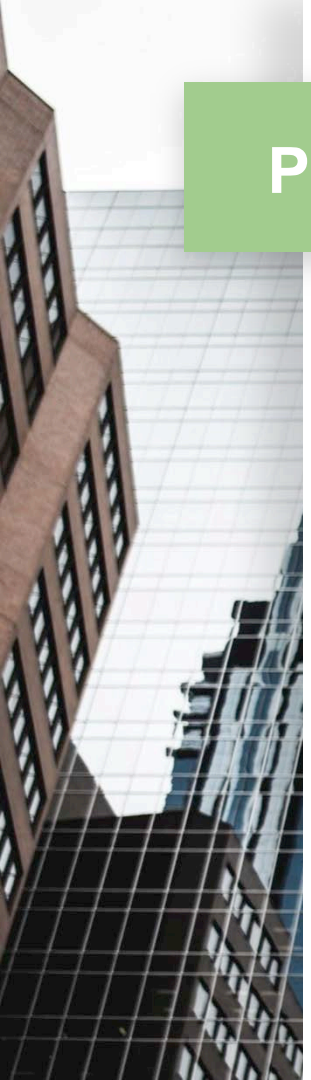
THE PROJECT

Develop cost-conscious, efficient, and reliable **practices to estimate the number of homeless** individuals in **rural Canada**

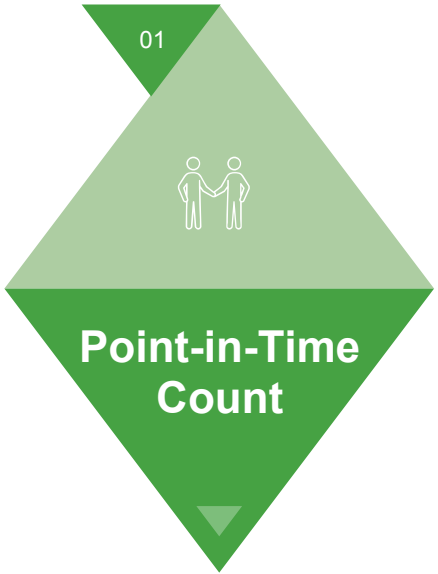
INTERDEPENDENCE OF THE RURAL AND URBAN



METHODS TO ESTIMATE HOMELESSNESS

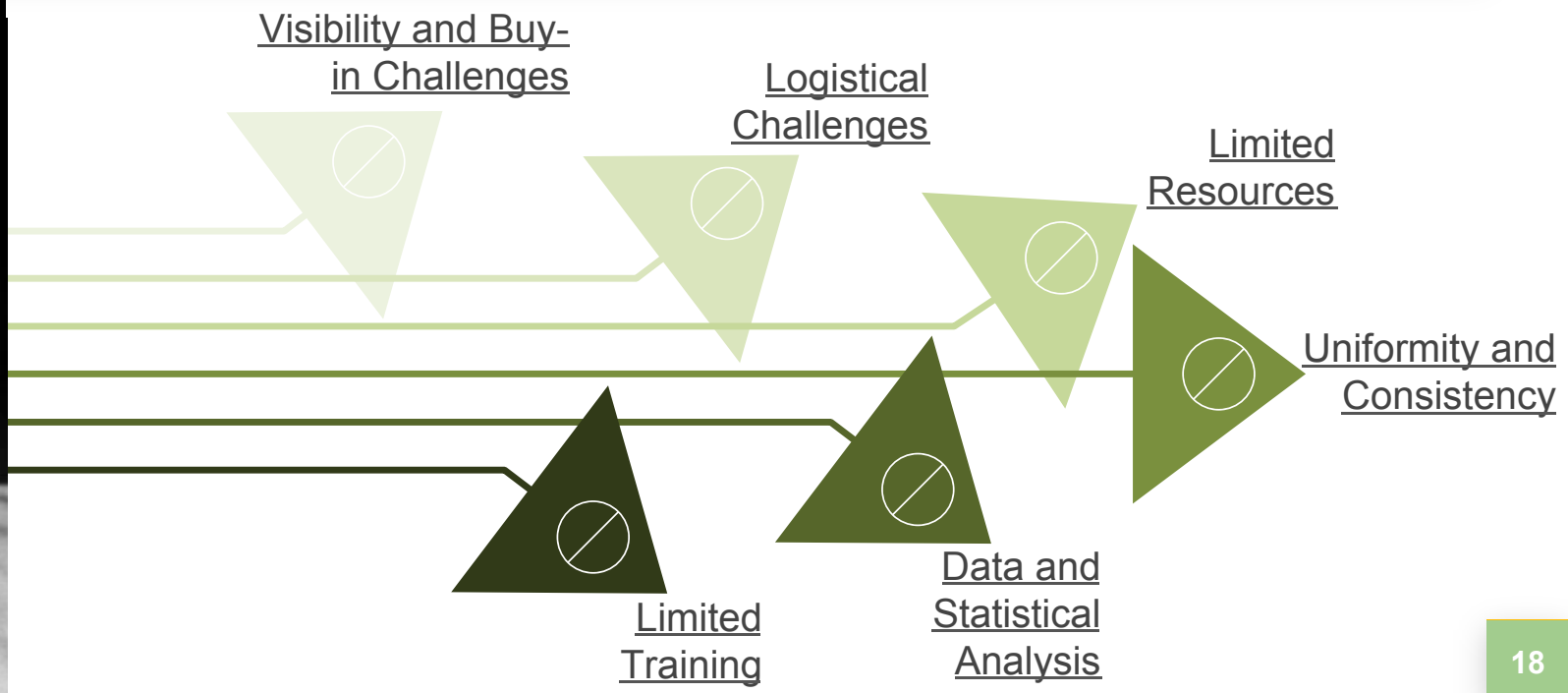


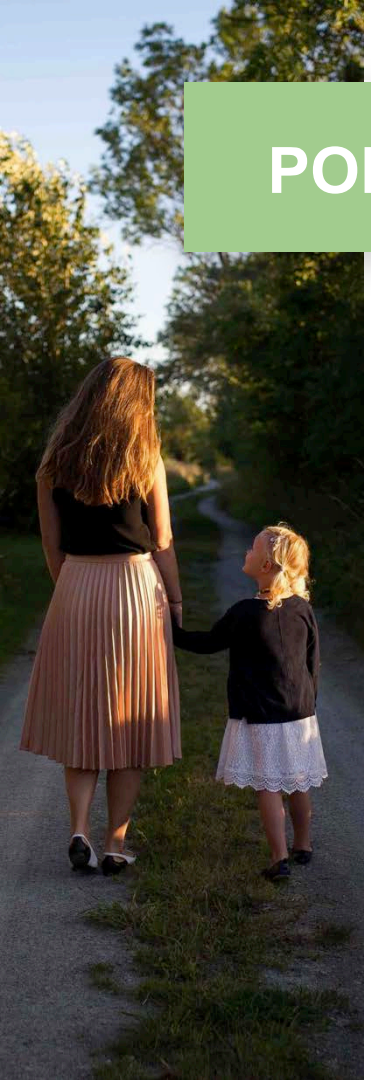
POINT-IN-TIME (PiT) COUNT



- Count Sheltered or Unsheltered homeless in a single night
- Volunteers on the streets conduct surveys
- Surveys provide the information and characteristics of the homeless
- This helps communities develop strategies and implement resources

LIMITATIONS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES



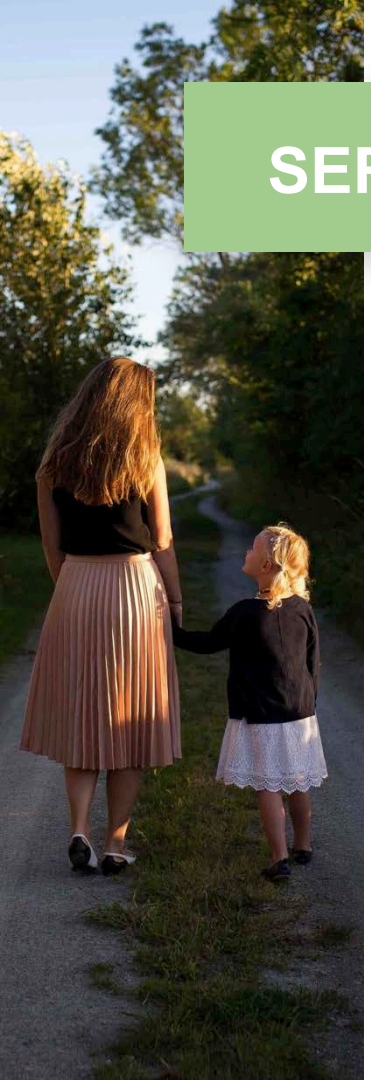


POPULATION ESTIMATION

02

Population Estimation

- Homeless population estimated based on data from service agencies
- Number of people who used the service in a pre defined time frame (e.g. one month)
- Used when there are limited resources or when population is scattered over a large area



SERVICE BASED ESTIMATIONS

The number of homeless using service agencies for support over a period of time

Additionally, if the community has enough resources then estimate the number of homeless in known locations as well

Service agencies complete a survey and develop unique identifiers for each of their clients over a period of time, report the data and an analysis reveals the number

UNIQUE IDENTIFIERS

John Smith, Male born on 15th November 1960 – JOSM660M

- First Two Letters of the First Name: **JO**
- First Two Letters of the Last Name: **SM**
- Sum of the Numbers in the Birth Day: **1+5 = 6**
- Last Two Numbers of the Year of Birth: **60**
- ‘M’ for Male, ‘F’ for Female, ‘T’ for Transgender, and ‘O’ for Other: **M**

ESTIMATION CONDUCTED AT A CONFERENCE
Unique Identifiers

labu2679F
TAKN987F
SHSM361F
ROBE989M
ABHO390F
ANCU481F
MASH889F
SAMA876F
KALU451F
LITH0976F
SHHO688F
MIKI883F
ZABA283M
dsds670o
JIHA167M
KIST753M

nobu2179M
NOVA1088M
ABGW351M
STSTA460F
EDPA388M
ESTH0615F
BEHI875M
TEMA411F
ESTH0615F
SHTH0676M
EMCO182M
eses760o
VISU287F
DASH663M
SCTR185M
jobl100m

11 STEPS TO ESTIMATE HOMELESSNESS

STEP 1
Establish a Task Force

STEP 2
Understand the Definition of Homelessness

STEP 3
Assign a Representative

STEP 4
Training

STEP 5
Marketing

STEP 6
Estimation

STEP 7
Data Entry and Analysis

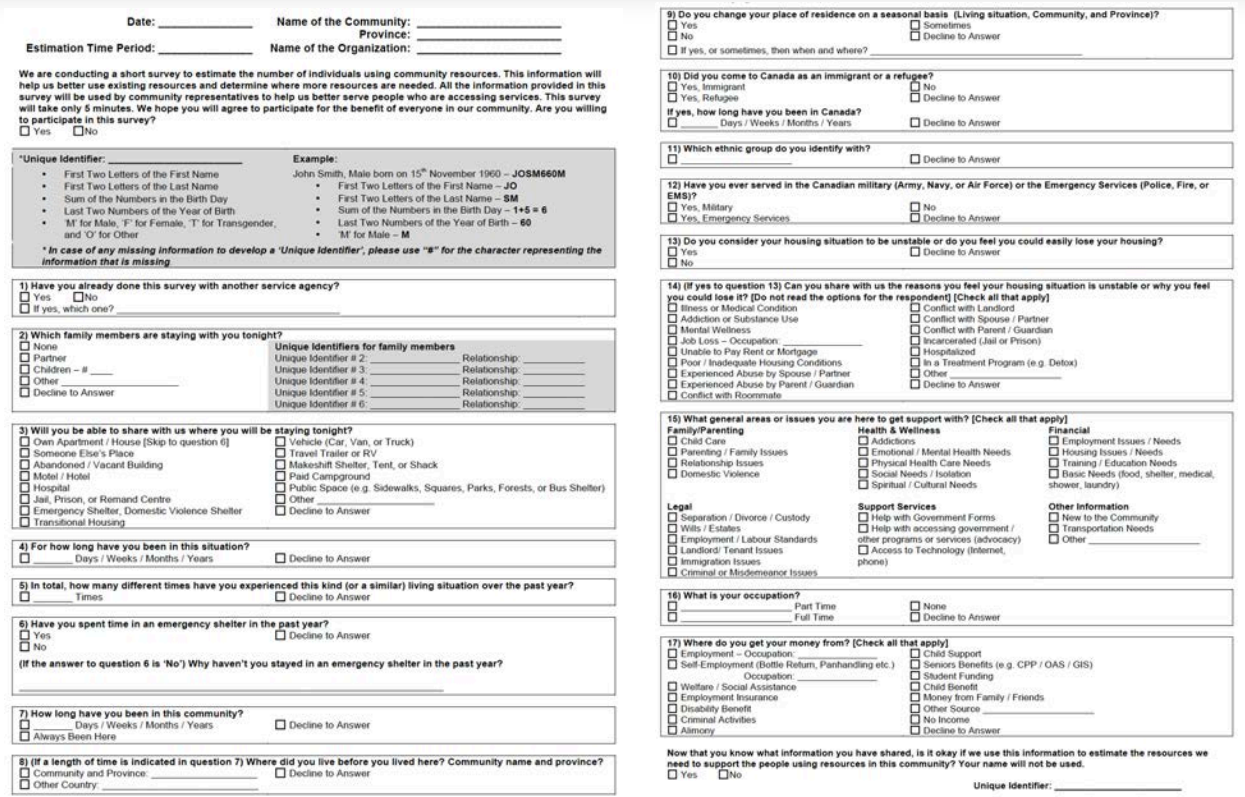
STEP 8
Feedback

STEP 9
Reporting

STEP 10
Access Resources

STEP 11
Repeat

ESTIMATION SURVEY
Being Revised for V2 of the Guide – April 2019



Date: _____ Name of the Community: _____
Province: _____
Estimation Time Period: _____ Name of the Organization: _____

We are conducting a short survey to estimate the number of individuals using community resources. This information will help us better use existing resources and determine where more resources are needed. All the information provided in this survey will be used by community representatives to help us better serve people who are accessing services. This survey will take only 5 minutes. We hope you will agree to participate for the benefit of everyone in our community. Are you willing to participate in this survey?
☐ Yes ☐ No

***Unique Identifier:** _____

- First Two Letters of the First Name
- First Two Letters of the Last Name
- Sum of the Numbers in the Birth Day
- Last Two Numbers of the Year of Birth
- 'M' for Male, 'F' for Female, 'T' for Transgender, and 'O' for Other

Example:
John Smith, Male born on 15th November 1960 – **JOSM660M**
- First Two Letters of the First Name – **JO**
- First Two Letters of the Last Name – **SM**
- Sum of the Numbers in the Birth Day – **1+5 = 6**
- Last Two Numbers of the Year of Birth – **60**
- 'M' for Male – **M**

**** In case of any missing information to develop a 'Unique Identifier', please use "#" for the character representing the information that is missing***

1) Have you already done this survey with another service agency?
☐ Yes ☐ No
☐ If yes, which one? _____

2) Which family members are staying with you tonight?
☐ None
☐ Partner
☐ Children – # ____
☐ Other _____
☐ Decline to Answer

Unique Identifiers for family members
Unique Identifier # 2: _____ Relationship: _____
Unique Identifier # 3: _____ Relationship: _____
Unique Identifier # 4: _____ Relationship: _____
Unique Identifier # 5: _____ Relationship: _____
Unique Identifier # 6: _____ Relationship: _____

3) Will you be able to share with us where you will be staying tonight?
☐ Own Apartment / House [Skip to question 6]
☐ Someone Else's Place
☐ Abandoned / Vacant Building
☐ Motel / Hotel
☐ Hospital
☐ Jail, Prison, or Remand Centre
☐ Emergency Shelter, Domestic Violence Shelter
☐ Transitional Housing
☐ Vehicle (Car, Van, or Truck)
☐ Travel Trailer or RV
☐ Makeshift Shelter, Tent, or Shack
☐ Paid Campground
☐ Public Space (e.g. Sidewalks, Squares, Parks, Forests, or Bus Shelter)
☐ Other _____
☐ Decline to Answer

4) For how long have you been in this situation?
☐ _____ Days / Weeks / Months / Years ☐ Decline to Answer

5) In total, how many different times have you experienced this kind (or a similar) living situation over the past year?
☐ _____ Times ☐ Decline to Answer

6) Have you spent time in an emergency shelter in the past year?
☐ Yes ☐ Decline to Answer
☐ No

(If the answer to question 6 is 'No') Why haven't you stayed in an emergency shelter in the past year?
_____

7) How long have you been in this community?
☐ _____ Days / Weeks / Months / Years ☐ Decline to Answer
☐ Always Been Here

8) (If a length of time is indicated in question 7) Where did you live before you lived here? Community name and province?
☐ Community and Province: _____ ☐ Decline to Answer
☐ Other Country: _____

9) Do you change your place of residence on a seasonal basis (Living situation, Community, and Province)?
☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes
☐ No ☐ Decline to Answer
☐ If yes, or sometimes, then when and where? _____

10) Did you come to Canada as an immigrant or a refugee?
☐ Yes, Immigrant ☐ No
☐ Yes, Refugee ☐ Decline to Answer
If yes, how long have you been in Canada?
☐ _____ Days / Weeks / Months / Years ☐ Decline to Answer

11) Which ethnic group do you identify with?
☐ _____ ☐ Decline to Answer

12) Have you ever served in the Canadian military (Army, Navy, or Air Force) or the Emergency Services (Police, Fire, or EMS)?
☐ Yes, Military ☐ No
☐ Yes, Emergency Services ☐ Decline to Answer

13) Do you consider your housing situation to be unstable or do you feel you could easily lose your housing?
☐ Yes ☐ Decline to Answer
☐ No

14) (If yes to question 13) Can you share with us the reasons you feel your housing situation is unstable or why you feel you could lose it? [Do not read the options for the respondent] [Check all that apply]
☐ Illness or Medical Condition
☐ Addiction or Substance Use
☐ Mental Wellness
☐ Job Loss – Occupation: _____
☐ Unable to Pay Rent or Mortgage
☐ Poor / Inadequate Housing Conditions
☐ Experienced Abuse by Spouse / Partner
☐ Experienced Abuse by Parent / Guardian
☐ Conflict with Roommate
☐ Conflict with Landlord
☐ Conflict with Spouse / Partner
☐ Conflict with Parent / Guardian
☐ Incarcerated (Jail or Prison)
☐ Hospitalized
☐ In a Treatment Program (e.g. Detox)
☐ Other _____
☐ Decline to Answer

15) What general areas or issues you are here to get support with? [Check all that apply]

Family/Parenting
☐ Child Care
☐ Parenting / Family Issues
☐ Relationship Issues
☐ Domestic Violence

Health & Wellness
☐ Addictions
☐ Emotional / Mental Health Needs
☐ Physical Health Care Needs
☐ Social Needs / Isolation
☐ Spiritual / Cultural Needs

Financial
☐ Employment Issues / Needs
☐ Housing Issues / Needs
☐ Training / Education Needs
☐ Basic Needs (food, shelter, medical, shower, laundry)

Legal
☐ Separation / Divorce / Custody
☐ Wills / Estates
☐ Employment / Labour Standards
☐ Landlord/ Tenant Issues
☐ Immigration Issues
☐ Criminal or Misdemeanor Issues

Support Services
☐ Help with Government Forms
☐ Help with accessing government / other programs or services (advocacy)
☐ Access to Technology (Internet, phone)

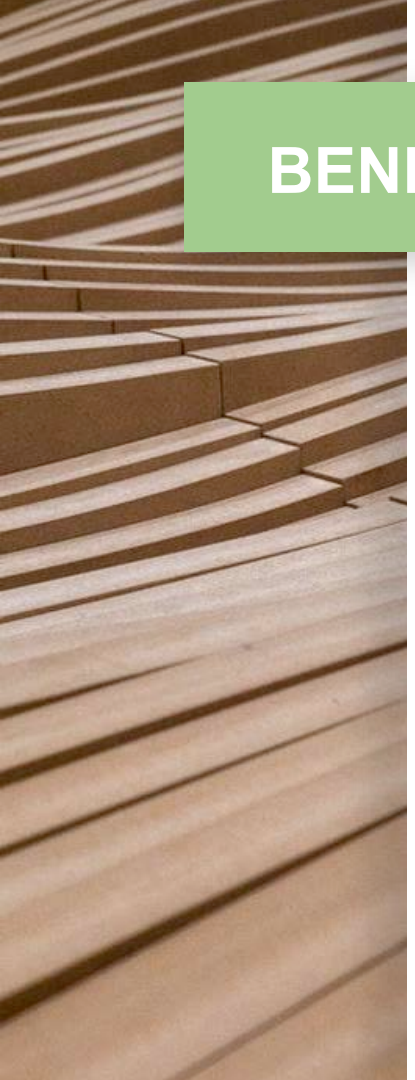
Other Information
☐ New to the Community
☐ Transportation Needs
☐ Other _____

16) What is your occupation?
☐ _____ Part Time ☐ None
☐ _____ Full Time ☐ Decline to Answer

17) Where do you get your money from? [Check all that apply]
☐ Employment – Occupation: _____
☐ Self-Employment (Bottle Return, Panhandling etc.) Occupation: _____
☐ Welfare / Social Assistance
☐ Employment Insurance
☐ Disability Benefit
☐ Criminal Activities
☐ Alimony
☐ Child Support
☐ Seniors Benefits (e.g. CPP / OAS / GIS)
☐ Student Funding
☐ Child Benefit
☐ Money from Family / Friends
☐ Other Source _____
☐ No Income
☐ Decline to Answer

Now that you know what information you have shared, is it okay if we use this information to estimate the resources we need to support the people using resources in this community? Your name will not be used.
☐ Yes ☐ No

Unique Identifier: _____



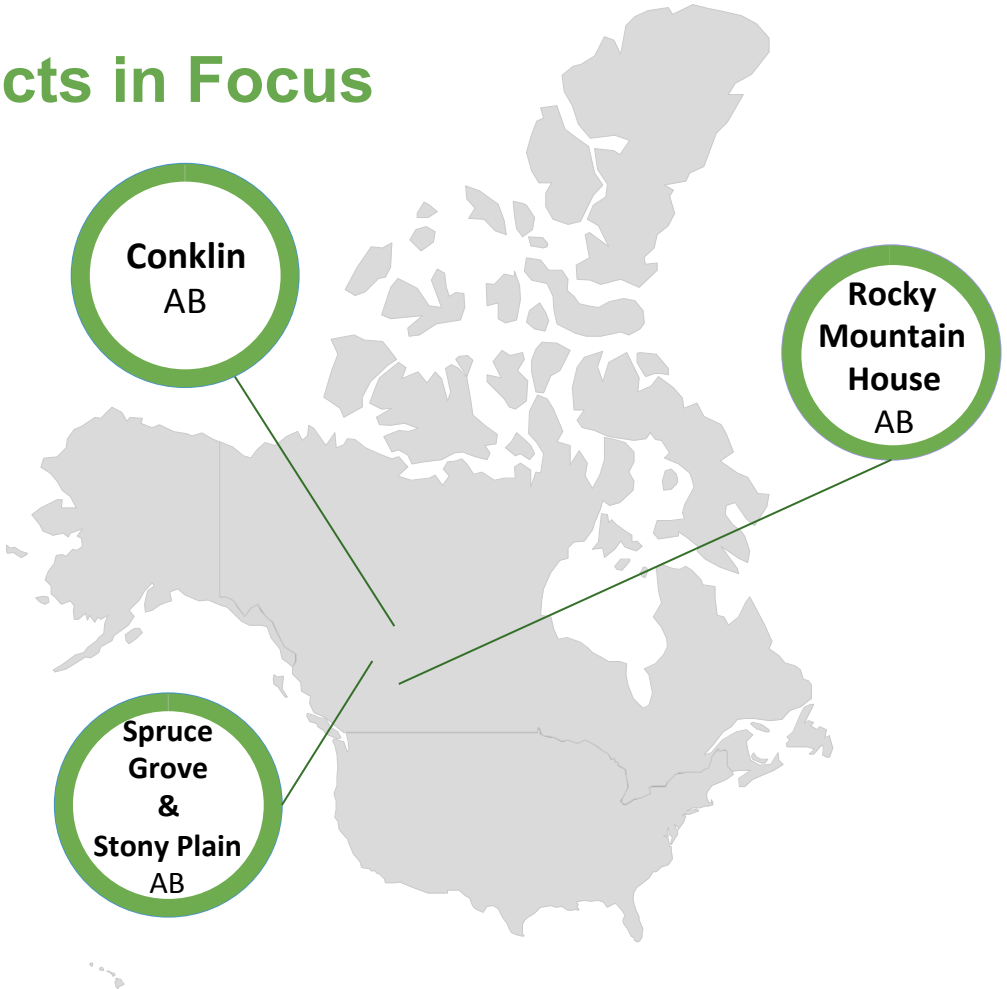
BENEFITS OF KNOWING THE NUMBERS

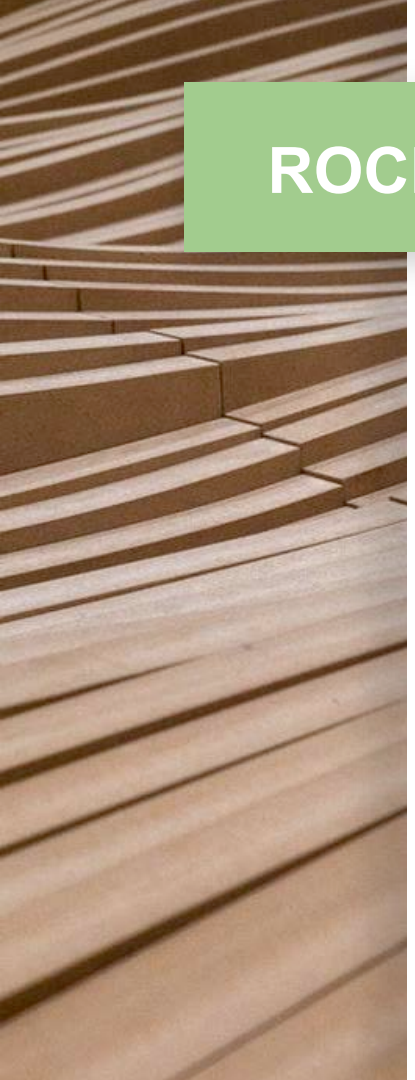
Track progress in reducing homelessness	Identify places where resources are most needed	Direct public attention to the homelessness issue
Improve service agencies' planning programs	Inform local, provincial, and federal policies	Establish standards for performance measurement
Provide data for community and service agencies	Secure funding to help the homeless	Target intervention for communities experiencing the most homelessness

Step-by-Step Guide

Practical Application

Projects in Focus





ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE, AB ~ Pop. 6,429

Pilot Project: Funded by ARDN

PiT

- 11 potential counts
  - **2 out of 11 in unstable situation**
  - 700 volunteer hours

Estimation

- 57 surveys conducted
- **44 out of 57 in unstable situation**
  - 39.13% due to Mental or Physical Health
  - 34.78% due to Family Conflict
  - 13.04% due to addictions
  - 8.70% due to Unsafe Housing and Job Loss

CONKLIN, AB ~ Pop. 185 to 375

Customized Project – Preliminary Results

- 54 surveys conducted
- **92 individuals in unstable situation**
  - Inadequate housing supply
  - Unemployment (40 unemployed)
  - 35% of vulnerable residents b/w the ages of 1 & 20

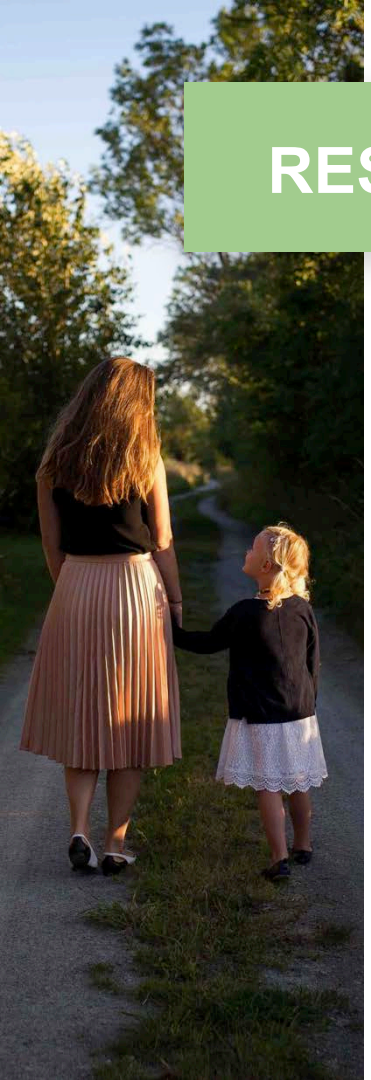
Inconsistencies in National Census, RMWB and primary data

ALBERTA RURAL HOMELESSNESS ESTIMATION PROJECT

In conjunction with Family and Community Support Services Association of Alberta (FCSSAA)

- 20 communities
  - 14 communities HPS funded
  - 5 self-funding
  - Plus Kainai First Nation
  - Online survey platform

  - **Spruce Grove & Stony Plain to present next**

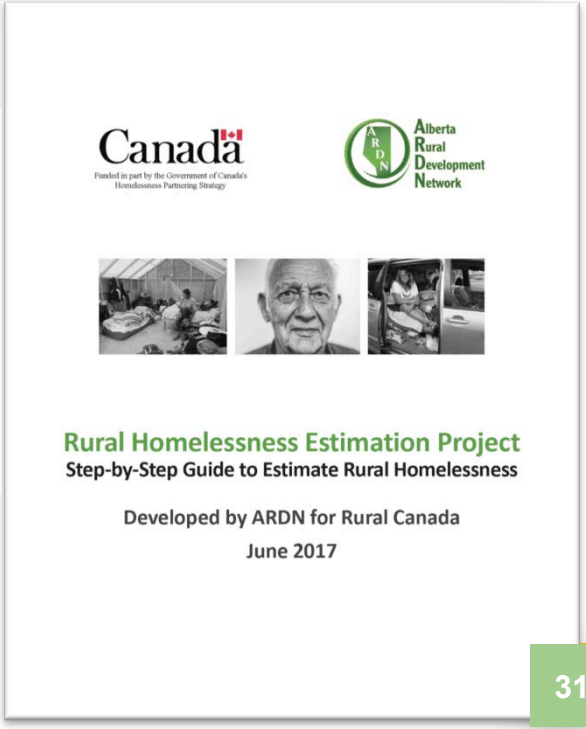


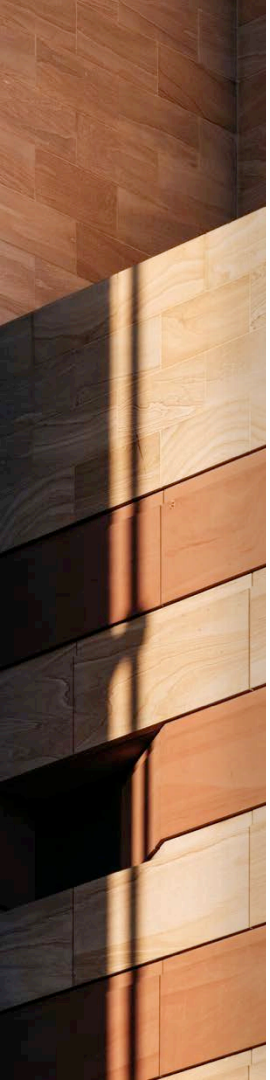
RESOURCES

Developed for Rural Canada!

- Download for Free from www.ardn.ca
- English & French

- **Customized Estimation Surveys**
- **Data Analysis & Research Support**
- **Recommend Solutions**
- **Provide Overall Support**





THANK YOU!

Zain Abedin

Manager, Community Development

ARDN & SHI

zaina@ardn.ca

@ZainAbedin