NORTH ATLANTIC FORUM
RESEARCH SUMMARY

A Case Study of Community-Led versus State-Led Solar Projects in NunatuKavut

This document summarizes a presentation delivered by Regina Foley and Olive Williams from NunatuKavut Community Council at the 2024 North Atlantic Forum Conference held in Letterfrack, Ireland in June 2024.

KEY MESSAGES OF RESEARCH

This research explored the observed impacts of a state-led versus a community-led solar project in NunatuKavut, Newfoundland and Labrador (NL). NunatuKavut means Our Ancient Land in Inuttitut. It refers to the territory of the Inuit of NunatuKavut who reside primarily in southern and central Labrador. Despite the fact that the large majority of NL's locally generated energy comes from hydropower, many of the province's rural communities are off-grid and rely on diesel generators. However, renewable energy development in rural communities presents the potential for injustice in the implementation and management of projects.

- ❑ The community-led project in St. Lewis, NL has seen well-rounded and measurable success.
- ❑ Successes of the community-led project include jobs created within the community, the displacement of 4,500 litres of diesel, and revenue reinvested into the community from excess power generated. It was concluded that meaningful community engagement contributed significantly to the success of the community-led project
- ❑ A solar project in St. Lewis that was led by the federal government has not seen the same measurable success as the community-led project.
- ❑ The state-led project lacked meaningful community consultation, a means to record production levels, local job opportunities, and revenue production for the community. The results of these issues have the potential to restrict or cancel future community-led projects.

IMPACTS FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES

The concept of community-led renewable energy projects is highly applicable to rural communities outside of Newfoundland. Solar installations are a commonly explored solution for diesel reliance in off-grid and rural communities, but the extent to which they actually benefit those communities is largely dependent upon who leads them.

- ❑ Community leadership of renewable energy projects could promote energy autonomy in rural communities
- ❑ Local leadership allows for insight into each community's unique circumstances such as local needs, availability of resources, and the dynamics of stakeholder relationships

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information on this research can be found on the North Atlantic Forum website

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