

Analyzing the factors underlying sustainable competitiveness of the State of Tennessee and its counties

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Purpose

- **What?** Operationalize the concept of **sustainable competitiveness** for Tennessee counties and identify its potential drivers
- **How?**
 1. Use TACIR data, as well as additional county-level measures, to learn what drivers are associated with sustainable competitiveness in a **quantitative model**, and
 2. Conduct an **original survey** of county and large city policymakers to complement the quantitative analysis with decision makers' judgment of the value of drivers for their jurisdiction.

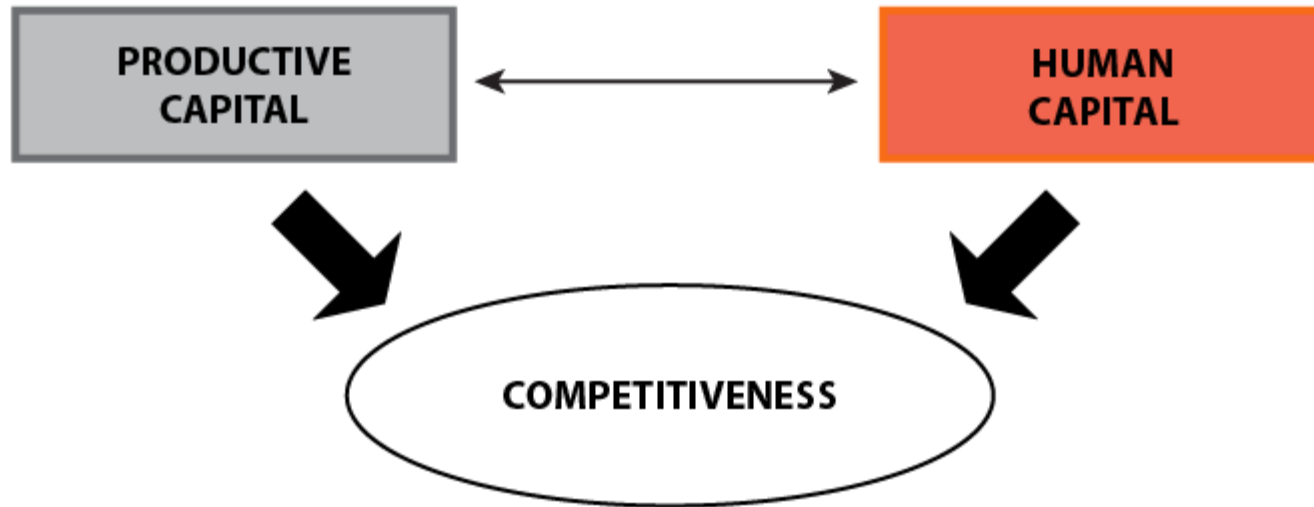
Research themes

- What is “sustainable competitiveness”?
Is competitiveness and its sustainability critical for economic development?
- Is it possible to find areas of cooperation among counties whereby they remain competitive?
- If cooperation is a desired outcome, to what extent is it achievable? Is it an optimal (sustainable!) outcome?
How can policy support this outcome?
- Are there differences in the relative importance placed on drivers of sustainable competitiveness across policymakers?

Big picture

- **NOT** trying to develop list of “winners” and “losers”
- **NOT** a one-size-fits-all solution – ex. rural/urban drivers may differ
- Identifying strengths and patterns that group counties together
- Looking for insights that move **AWAY** from the “zero sum game”, **TOWARD** productive strategic collaboration/cooperation

Traditional model of competitiveness



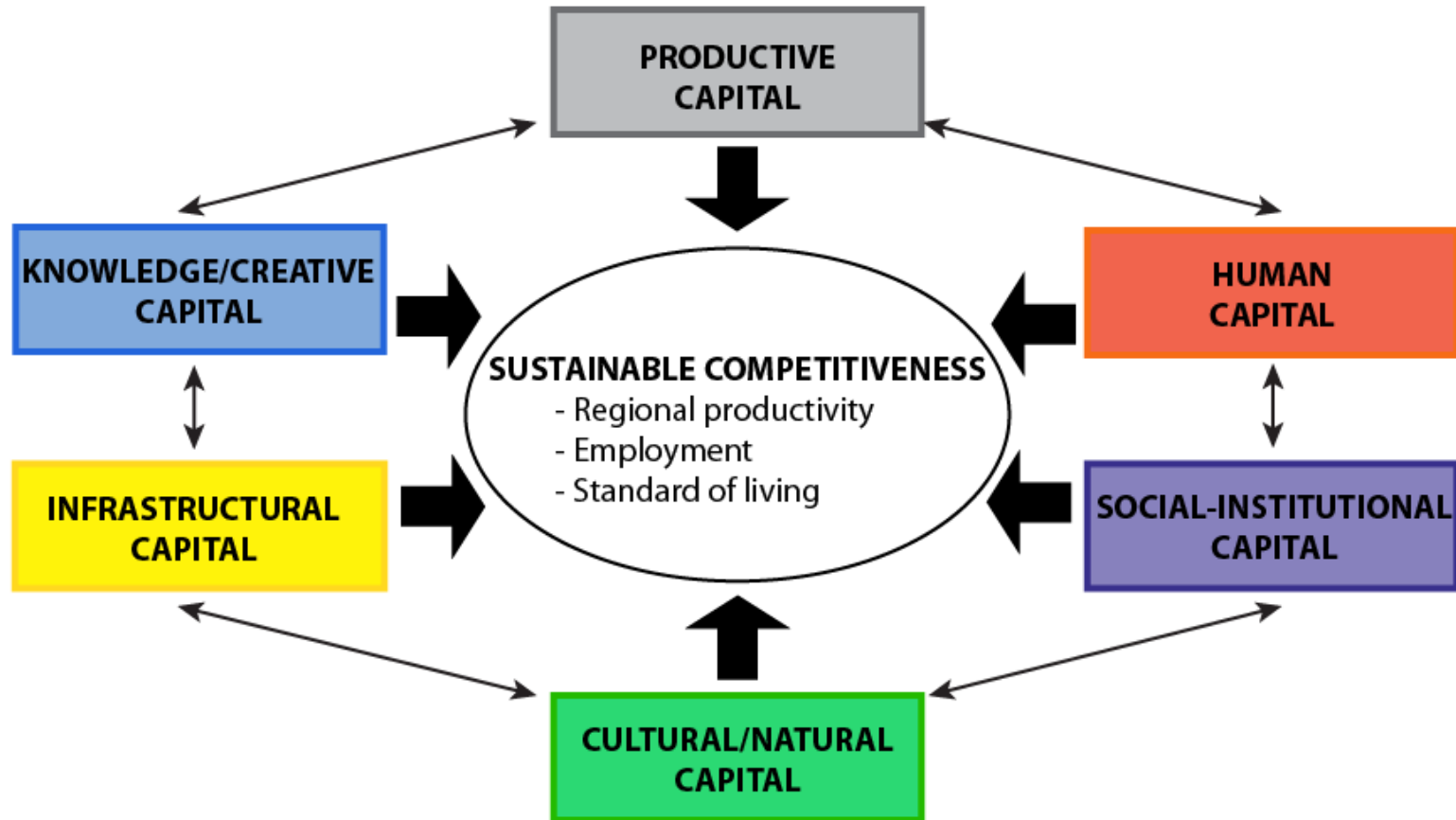
- Short-term focus (unsustainable)
- My gain is your loss

What is sustainable competitiveness?

“Development that satisfies the [economic, social, and environmental] needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs”

Blanke et al. 2011, World Economic Forum

Drivers of sustainable competitiveness



- Long-term view (sustainable development)
- Cooperation can lead to better outcomes

Driver:

PRODUCTIVE CAPITAL

- Physical capital to benefit production (buildings, equipment, etc.)
- Financial capital (banks and financial institutions; public fiscal status)
- Labor force

Driver:

**HUMAN
CAPITAL**

- Skill base of labor force
- Ability of the skill base to adjust to dynamic environment through investment

Driver:

**INFRASTRUCTURAL
CAPITAL**

- Roads, bridges
- Railroads
- Developed waterways
- Public buildings of all types

Driver:

SOCIAL-INSTITUTIONAL CAPITAL

- Social networks
- Nonprofit sector/civil society organizations
- Policymaking institutions, ex. zoning board, city council
- Housing stock
- Healthcare facilities

Driver:

**KNOWLEDGE/CREATIVE
CAPITAL**

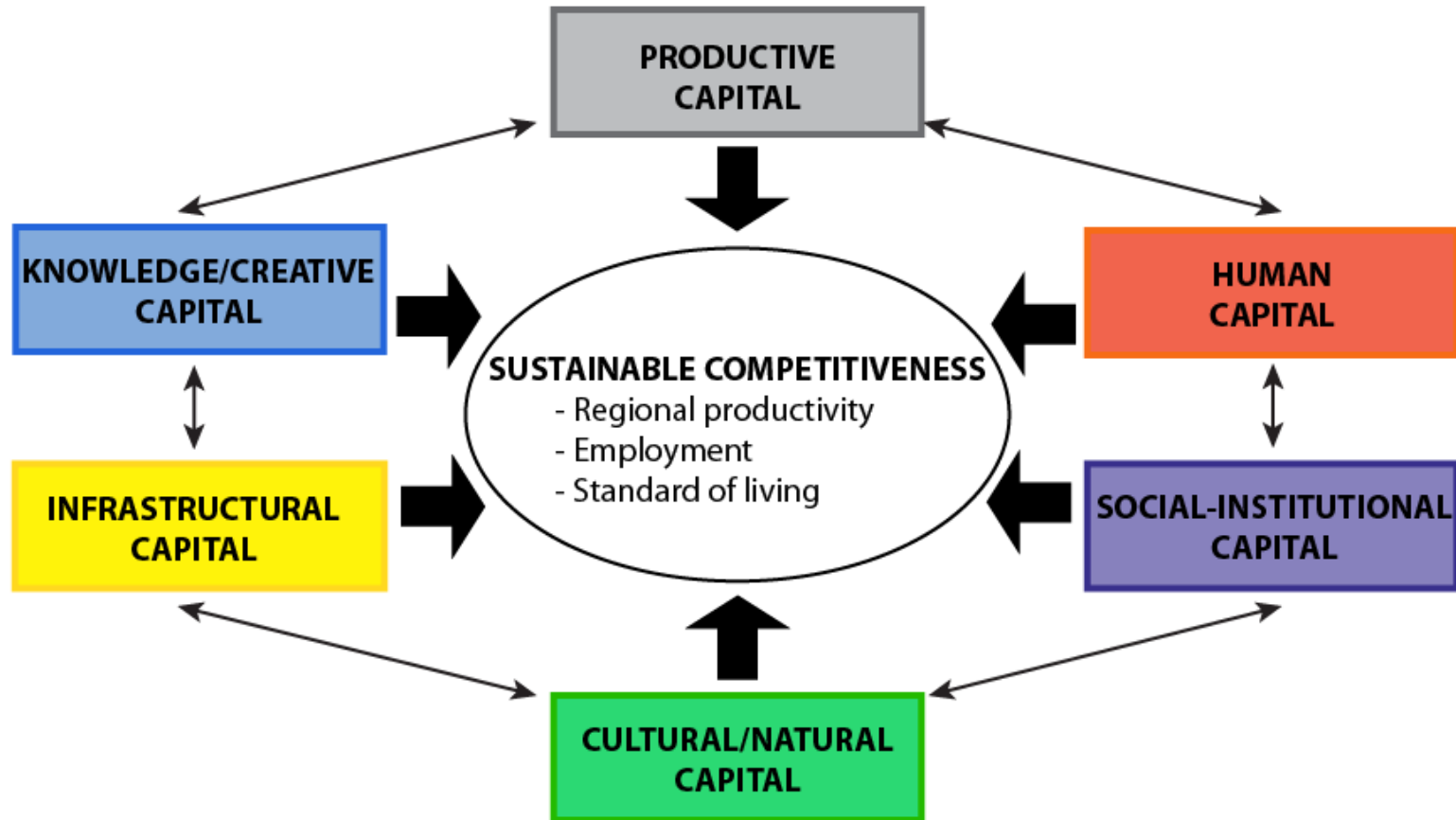
- Educational institutions (all levels and types)
- Stock of entrepreneurial ability

Driver:

**CULTURAL/NATURAL
CAPITAL**

- Arts institutions, ex. museums, concert halls
- Parks and recreational facilities
- Natural resources/ecological assets,
ex. watersheds

Drivers of sustainable competitiveness



Method

- 1. Quantitative model** - What factors – public and private - can be measured which drive sustainable competitiveness?
Can we use the drivers to group counties that have similar strengths and opportunities?
 - Use **time-series cross-section dataset** to assess relative importance of the drivers for positive, sustained outcomes (e.g., employment growth, investments, net migration, knowledge formation, etc.)
 - **Factor analysis** to group counties based on potential drivers of sustainable competitiveness

Method

2. **Focus Groups followed by a survey** –

How do local officials (elected and administrative) weigh the drivers in terms of importance for their jurisdiction?

Do they perceive opportunities for cooperation regarding the drivers?

– **Focus groups** planned for spring

– **Survey** to be developed, fielded summer/early fall

What is the benefit of this work?

- Develop a framework of sustainable competitiveness through strategic cooperation with insight into drivers of sustainable competitiveness for TN counties
- Leverage TACIR's existing, substantial data assets in the new conceptual framework
- Add additional variables of interest from other sources, ex. social capital index
- Identify productive areas of strategic cooperation based on quantitative and qualitative/survey assessment and analyses

Deliverables

- Articles on conceptual framework for TN County News, TN Town and City
- Top-line results of focus groups for TACIR
- Online survey instrument and administration plan
- Top-line survey results brief for TACIR
- Final project report
- Conference presentation(s)

Version: 11/27/2012

		2012			2013								2014						
		FALL			SPRING			SUMMER			FALL			SPRING					
CATEGORY	TASK	Oct-12	Nov-12	Dec-12	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13	Apr-13	May-13	Jun-13	Jul-13	Aug-13	Sep-13	Oct-13	Nov-13	Dec-13	Jan-14	Feb-14	Mar-14
preparation	Attend TCSA conference to learn and meet people																		
concept research	Literature research to develop the initial "sustainable competitiveness" concept																		
dissemination	Present project to TACIR Commission at Nov. meeting																		
concept research	Operationalize dependent variable(s)																		
quantitative	Work with TACIR to get access to quantitative data to use in quantitative modeling																		
quantitative	Obtain other data of interest to integrate with TACIR existing data																		
quantitative	Merge and clean dataset																		
quantitative	Model estimation and troubleshooting/refining approach																		
dissemination	Prepare short articles for TML and TCSA publications (solicit for focus groups?)																		
focus groups	Develop focus group plan and script																		
focus groups	Seek IRB approval for focus group plan																		
focus groups	Organize and execute two focus groups with city and county/elected, administrative participants																		
dissemination	Abstract submission for fall academic conference presentation of quant results																		
analysis	Synthesize focus group results																		
analysis	Develop top-line focus group insights brief for TACIR																		
survey	Draft survey instrument, (w/focus group, modeling, and literature insights)																		
survey	Seek letters of support and "champions" among stakeholders to aid response rate																		
survey	Seek IRB approval for survey plan and draft instrument																		
survey	Get key informants to review survey instrument and plan and provide feedback																		
survey	Implement survey instrument in online form																		
survey	Pilot test survey instrument																		
survey	Survey in field with reminder waves																		
analysis	Analyze survey results																		
dissemination	Present preliminary results (quant, focus) at October TCSA meeting																		
analysis	Develop top-line survey analysis results brief for TACIR																		
analysis	Integrate with quantitative results																		
analysis	Develop final report to TACIR																		

	DELIVERABLE FROM PROPOSAL
	PUBLIC DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS



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