

Assets Defined

- Financial Assets:** Most common form of a community's or individual's wealth including: stocks, bonds, savings, trust funds, and other forms of monetized investments. Financial assets are the most liquid form of assets and can be readily used or exchanged to acquire other assets.
- Physical Assets:** The physical infrastructure within Indigenous communities, such as transportation, utilities, and technological systems are critical for economic activity. Although primarily important as a means to enhance the productivity of other assets, physical assets can generate income streams for a community and increase access to information and expand communication.
- Natural Assets:** Land, water and natural resources including oil, gas, minerals, soils, ecological services, plants and wildlife, agriculture, rangeland and forest resources are the assets that build the basis of economic development in Indigenous communities and demand a form of production and use of resources that is sustainable.
- Institutional Assets:** The institutions and organizations within a community can attract resources to the community, and recycle them there. Such institutions may include the creation of financial intermediaries, nonprofit organizations, and philanthropic institutions.
- Human Capital:** The skills, knowledge, education and experience of people within a community are important elements within a community. Nurturing the productivity, innovation, and creativity of people is foundational to community well-being.
- Cultural Assets:** These refer to the customs, traditions and indigenous knowledge that are specific to the community. Language is a cultural asset, as is tribal intellectual property. Cultural assets are often "intangible" elements that underpin a community. However, the material expressions of culture can generate income and other assets.
- Social Capital:** Social relations and networks (e.g. kinship systems) within a community can support the building and maintenance of assets, but does not in itself, generate income. Leadership development, community empowerment, and social justice are ways of increasing the social assets of a community.
- Political Assets:** The legal rights and claims that an Indigenous community may have can support the ownership and control of economic assets. Similarly, "political" assets, such as sovereign status, tax immunity, or decision-making power can create economic opportunities.