

COMMUNITIES IN ECONOMIC TRANSITION: SHARING INSIGHTS FROM FOREST-BASED COMMUNITIES IN B.C.

Stephen Ameyaw
Community Economic Development Centre, Simon Fraser University

This research study features two non-Aboriginal towns and two Aboriginal communities that are adapting to economic and social transitions. It contains dynamic, analytic stories from the local citizenry teams. It offers contextual and comparative data on the areas, and reveals aspirations, goals and strategies and future plans made possible by strong partnerships. The study highlights capacity-building initiatives and the role of universities in building social and economic capacities in rural areas. It shows how for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities the challenge of rural economic diversification requires participation of local jurisdictions within the context of wider agriculture, forestry, fishery, ecological zones and socio-cultural systems.

ABORIGINAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE NEW ECONOMY

Robert B. Anderson
Faculty of Administration, University of Regina

Scott MacAulay
University College of Cape Breton

Carl Beal
Saskatchewan Indian Federation College

Stephen Ameyaw
Simon Fraser University

Ross Smith
Simon Fraser University

This paper reports on the preliminary results of the first two stages of a six-stage research project being undertaken by the authors; in fact, it is the third stage. The six stages are: (1) the refinement of a historical perspective on the evolving place of Aboriginal people in the once colonial now global economy; (2) the development of a theoretical perspective synthesizing emerging theories on economic development and political economy in the new economy; (3) a critical symposium to present preliminary results of stages 1 and 2 to a group of practitioners and experts in Aboriginal economic development; (4) the refinement of the theoretical perspective and the formulation of testable hypotheses; (5) primary data gathering, analysis and publishing; and (6) preparation of an application for an Initiative in the New Economy Research Grant to implement the developed research agenda.

ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION IN SASKATCHEWAN'S NORTHERN FORESTS

Allyson M. Brady
Saskatchewan Environmental Society

Saskatchewan is in the midst of a major forestry expansion. In April 1999, the provincial government announced that it was going to double the forest industry within the next three years. One of the focal points of this announcement was the declaration of anticipated partnerships with Aboriginal and northern communities to create economic development in the north based on conventional forestry. As the Saskatchewan Environmental Society has demonstrated in our report, "Deforestation: Lack of Regeneration in Saskatchewan Forests", conventional forestry has sustainability problems associated with it, including a lack of forest regeneration following harvest.

The above, combined with the statistic that indicates that 80% of Aboriginal communities in Canada live in productive forest areas, but only 2% of the Aboriginal labour force is employed in the forest products industry, illustrates that we need to explore other opportunities for sustainable economic development for people living in forest communities. The SES will demonstrate that long-term community sustainability depends on a diversity of community-driven, low-consumptive economic development opportunities that are intrinsically linked to intact, healthy and vibrant forest ecosystems.

ABORIGINAL PARTICIPATION IN AN URBAN CED PLANNING EXERCISE IN DOWNTOWN SASKATOON

Louise Clarke

*Department of Industrial Relations and Organizational Behaviour/Centre for the Study of Co-operatives,
University of Saskatchewan*

Cynthia Fey

Department of Educational Foundations, University of Saskatchewan

The paper reports on Aboriginal representative and direct participation in a broad-based CED strategic planning process in the core neighbourhoods of Saskatoon where Aboriginal people represent about 27 to 44 per cent of the population. Quint Development Corporation, a community-based provider of CED services, is initiating and co-ordinating the planning process. To assist the process they have invited a wide range of groups, including Aboriginal people, to send a representative to sit on a planning advisory council. Community workshops on various themes, e.g., housing, racism, security and training, as well as a survey of households, are also planned. The purpose of the research is to explore — through direct observation and interviews — the extent to which Aboriginal people are willing and able to participate in the process both as representatives and directly. Conversely, what are the limitations for real voice(s) for Aboriginal participation in an urban CED planning process?

CIRCLES CLOSED: CO-OPERATIVE ENTERPRISE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Michael Gertler

Department of Sociology/Centre for the Study of Co-operatives, University of Saskatchewan

Sustainable communities require organizations that resolve economic, social and environmental problems simultaneously — organizations that deliver eco-social justice. Can co-operatives or related forms of collective or community-based enterprise meet such standards? Can they be usefully adapted to the requirements of Aboriginal community economic development? Building on field studies in Canada, Costa Rica, and elsewhere, this paper focuses on institutional, social, and organizational factors that affect the ability of co-operatives and related forms of enterprise to contribute to sustainable local development. The history of various organizations is examined to reveal pathways and their consequences. The examples highlight opportunities for further social innovation as well as the strengths of particular models and the conditions necessary for their success.

ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVES IN CANADA: CURRENT SITUATION AND POTENTIAL FOR GROWTH

Lou Hammond Ketilson

*Department of Management and Marketing/Acting Director
Centre for the Study of Co-operatives, University of Saskatchewan*

Of about 133 co-operatives in Canada in which the membership is predominantly Aboriginal, the largest number is in the northern Arctic, mostly among Inuit and Inuvialuit. The Aboriginal co-operatives serve a wide variety of needs: the provision of food and supplies in remote communities; marketing of

arts and crafts, wild rice, fish, and shellfish; housing in urban communities, a crucial need with considerable potential for future development.

This paper reviews the contexts within which Aboriginal co-operatives exist, considers the suitability of a co-operative model for what Aboriginal leaders say about the kind of economy they wish to encourage, and draws upon the findings of eleven case studies to make a series of conclusions and recommendations about the potential for growth for co-operatives owned by Aboriginal peoples for their own purposes.

BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL IN FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES TO SUPPORT ABORIGINAL ENTREPRENEURS

John McBride

Community Economic Development Centre, Simon Fraser University

Ray Gerow

Aboriginal Business Development Centre, Prince George, BC

Few administrators work to build the relationships within the community, and between communities, that are important to support Aboriginal entrepreneurs. According to research, much of the success of Aboriginal economic development and Aboriginal entrepreneurs in particular is dependent upon the relationships (social capital) between the community and outside agencies and institutions, and the relationships within the various parts of the community. Drawing on the Harvard Project research (Cornell and Kalt, 1995) and the WED/SFU study (Vodder, Miller, and McBride, 2001), this address identifies those relationships, describes an assessment tool developed, and reports actions taken by other First Nations to build these relationships to strengthen the social capital of the community.

AERI: BUILDING COMMUNITIES THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

Kenn Ross

Aboriginal Economic Renewal Initiative, Toronto

The Aboriginal Economic Renewal Initiative (AERI) started in 1998 as a unique partnership between the federal government, the province of Ontario, and the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal business communities. Such a partnership had never been done before and serves as one model for community economic development across Canada. AERI has hosted twenty events with over 1,000 participants.

The term *renewal* is at the core of the AERI identity. The work that is done is not just to introduce Aboriginal people and communities to economic possibilities, but to reaffirm the Aboriginal tradition of trading goods and services over great distances from a time well before European contact. Whereas today an Aboriginal entrepreneur might use the Internet, our forbears travelled Turtle Island's river systems and forest paths to the same effect.

If Aboriginal communities and individuals are to participate in the promise of the national economy, partnerships are essential. This paper identifies barriers and elaborates successful partnerships across Ontario between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal communities in IT, energy, forestry, tourism, among others.

BREAKING AWAY: THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE OF TWO NOVA SCOTIA M'KMAQ COMMUNITIES

Fred Wien

Maritime School of Social Work, Dalhousie University

One of the more interesting questions in the economic development field has to do with the factors that combine to make it possible for a community to break away from longstanding patterns of pov-

erty and dependence. In this paper, I will be examining the experience of two Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq communities that have recently seized opportunities for economic development. The economic development strategies of the two communities differ from each other in that one is geared primarily to joint ventures with large multinational corporations while the other is directed to service sector/retail development based on a favourable location. However, the underlying factors that have given rise to these development efforts may be similar.