



The Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation

Rural Policy Changes in Canada

Lesley Harris Centre "Synergy Session"

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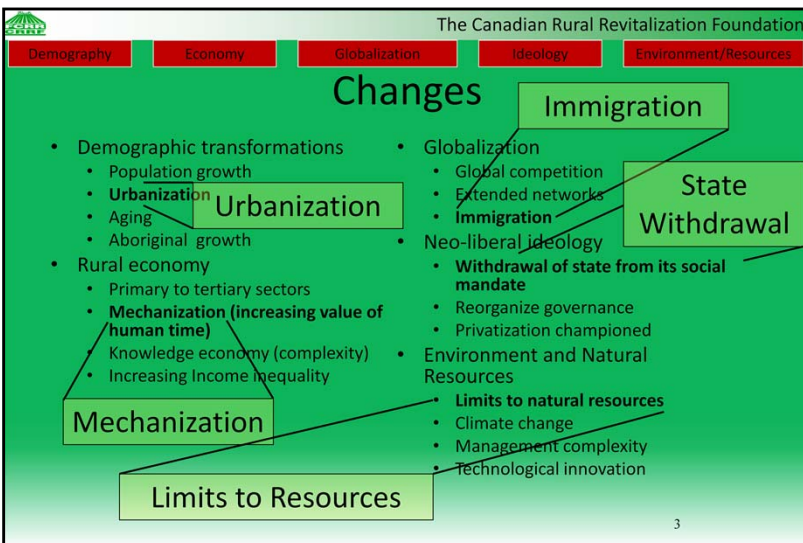
- I would like to begin with a few comments on the challenges and opportunities that are related to this type of exchange
- We tend to all champion such exchange, but the major challenges are in the details
 - Policy-makers: Driven by political currents, short cycles, and complex demands
 - Community and policy-makers: Driven by concrete, short-term challenges, messy with complexity, and prone to social conflict without much warning.
 - Researchers: Driven by careers and institutional arrangements that encourage long-term, critical, and abstract foci of attention – often with a language and jargon that is difficult and pretentious-sounding to the outsider.
- There are considerable benefits to be gained by such exchanges, however – especially where the constraints we face are recognized and respected.
- There are some encouraging signs of improvement along these lines.
 - All three national funding agencies are moving in the direction of funding academic-community engagement – although the greatest obstacles turn out to be our institutional and professional partners.
 - For example, academics continue to use the traditional indicators of excellence (peer reviewed publications and funding) which mean that those who become involved in community engagement (knowledge mobilization) must put their careers on hold or remain in jeopardy. There is a place here for university administrators and faculty alike to do the work required for identifying high quality community engagement and its indicators as a way around this impasse.
 - Policy-makers require quick answers (or at least the development of more appropriate questions) to unanticipated issues. The best context for this to happen is where you have a large pool of people thinking about and researching related topics – over a long period of time. This is difficult to do in-house – especially under conditions of budget restraint and resistance to core funding – but it might be done by working with educational institutions to develop those pools into which you might dip when the crises arise.
- [There are other models around that are worth considering.
 - For example, when the Liberal Cabinet Minister John Godfrey was faced with the challenge of deciding what to do with the gas tax for communities that was initiated several years ago – he prepared himself by commissioning 3 academics to develop position papers (one from the point of view of small communities, another from the point of view of urban communities, and a third to read them both and provide a critique). He followed this up with a lengthy meeting of about 15 researchers from across the country who were convened to read and discuss the papers with himself, his deputies, office, and staff.
 - I have also been involved in workshops, forums, and working groups of a similar nature in BC, AB, ON, and NL – not to mention Japan and Scotland. There are many models to consider.]



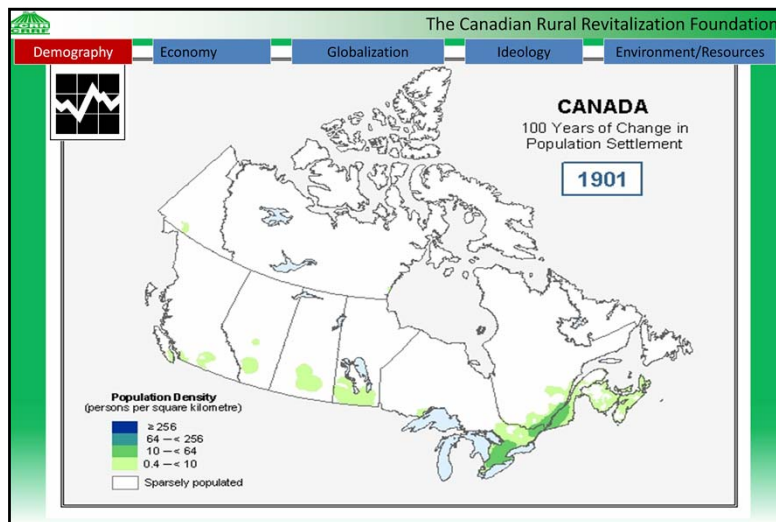
Understanding Rural Canada

- What are the major changes affecting Canada (especially rural areas)?
- How do we:
 - Create/develop effective policy?
 - Enhance rural communities?
 - Develop a research agenda?

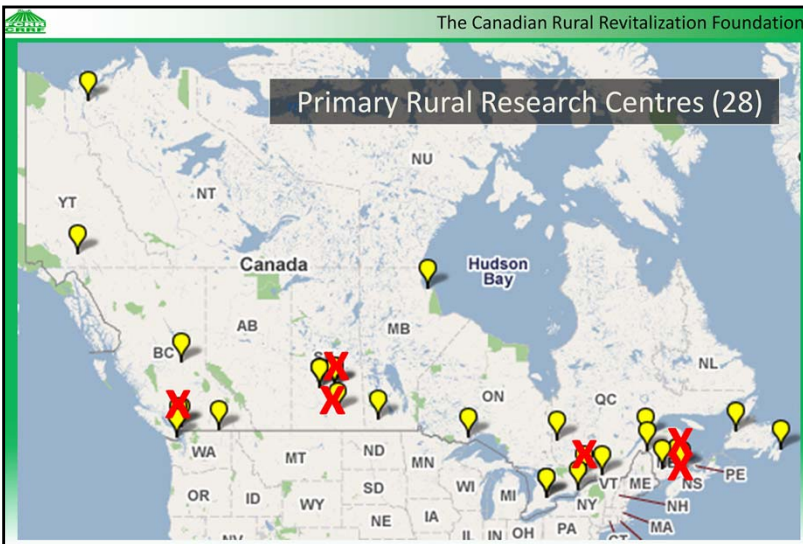
- Two general questions to guide my presentation
 - What are the major changes affecting Canada – and particularly the more rural areas?
 - How do we create/develop effective policy in the light of these changes?
- I will speak to the first of these by identifying some of the key changes that need to be considered as we develop research and policy for the future,
- Then open it up for discussion of the second from the points of views of:
 - Policy-makers and related administration
 - Rural community leaders and citizens
 - Researchers
- My experience is mostly at the national level (with some international contributions) so I will rely on you to draw out the relevance for Newfoundland and Labrador.
- I am very aware how important are the local and regional conditions – for creating challenges and opportunities that are often overlooked by the general patterns.
 - In fact, this is one of the guiding principles for community development – and one that should be kept in mind when considering general policies: How can we craft those policies so they are more sensitive to local conditions and capacities?



- What are the major changes affecting Canada in general and rural places in particular?
- This is not an exhaustive list – since the changes are complex
- It is just my attempt to focus attention on a manageable number – for this presentation, and for the immediate future.
- To this end, I have identified 5 that have particularly important for communities – rural and urban



- Demographic changes
 - Population growth
 - Urbanization trumps rural population growth**
 - Aging
 - Aboriginal growth
- >Focus on Urbanization
- About 80% of population is in urban areas – and growing
- Details of the dynamics are not simple, however.
 - Urban adjacent areas (commuting & amenities) are growing – often with conflicts between the traditional residents and the newcomers
 - More distant areas are declining, aging, lacking labour force and other types of capacity.
- [slide from Ray Bollman]*

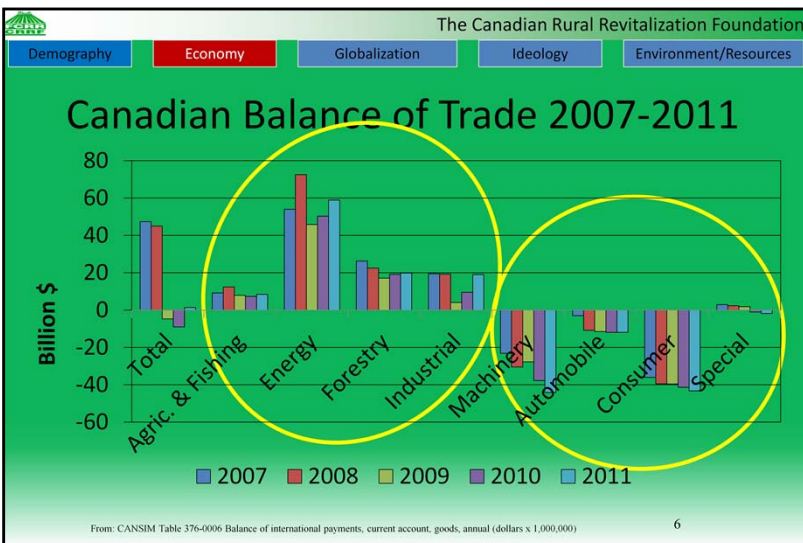


•Primary NRE centres – yellow

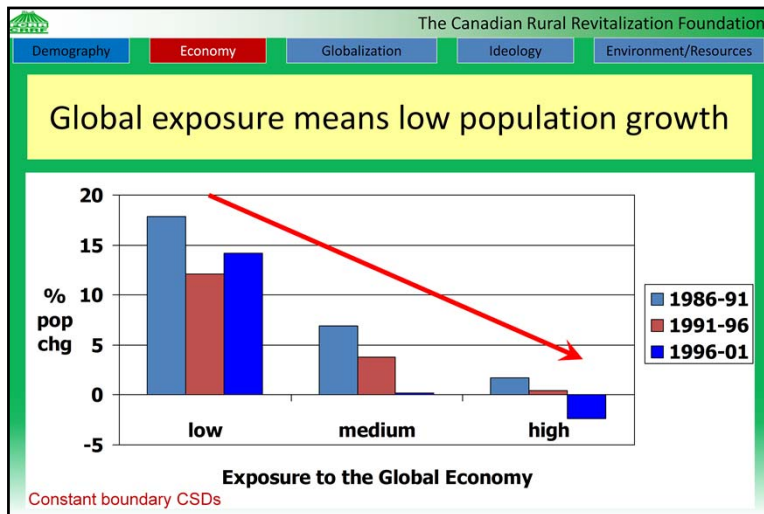
- Aurora Research Institute: Aurora College
- Brandon U. - Rural Development Institute
- Canadian Plains Research Center
- Canadian Rural Health Research Society
- Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development, UNB
- Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research
- Centre for Rural Studies and Enrichment, Muenster, Saskatchewan
- Centre for Sustainable Community Development at SFU
- Chaire de recherche du Canada en développement des collectivités (UQO)
- Chaire de recherche du Canada en développement régional et territorial (UQAR)
- Chaire Desjardins en développement des petites collectivités (UQAT)
- Churchill Northern Studies Centre
- Coastal Communities Projects
- MUN - Sir Wilfred Grenfell College - Center for Environmental Excellence for Education, Technology, Research and Development
- New Emerging Team for Health in Rural and Northern British Columbia (NETHRN)
- New Rural Economy Project
- Northern Research Institute (NRI): Programs and Links
- NRE2 Partner and Co-investigator (Chouinard)
- Prairie Region Health Promotion Research Centre, University of Saskatchewan
- Regional Innovation Chair in Rural Economic Development (Penfold)
- Rural and Small Town Programme
- Rural Planning and Development - Guelph
- The Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development
- The Monieson Centre - Queen's School of Business
- U. of Northern BC - Community and Development Institute
- Université de Moncton (Chouinard)
- University of Saskatchewan – Canada Rural Economy Research Lab
- University of Saskatchewan-Centre for Rural Studies and Enrichment
- University Research Chair in Rural Gender Studies

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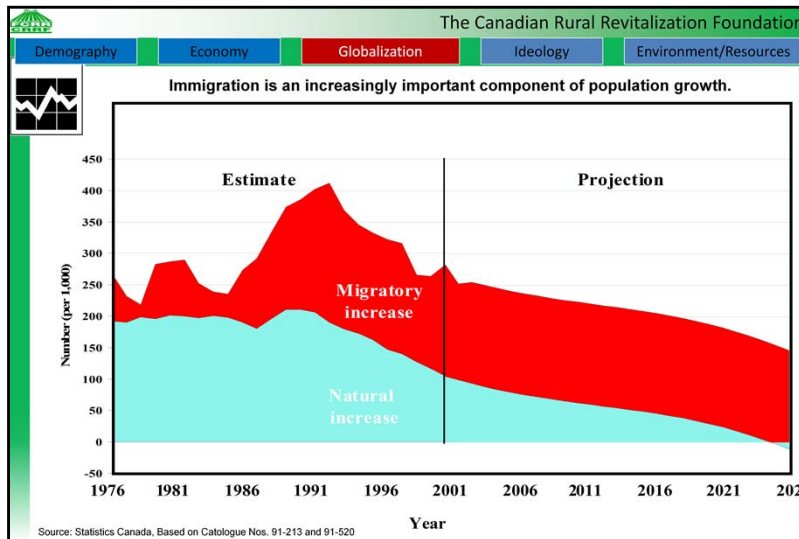
- Rural and Small Town Programme
- Truro (amalgamated)
- C-RERL
- Rural Secretariat – Canada
- NETHRN - BC



- The second set of factors driving our rural futures is that relating to specific elements of the economy.
- In Canada, **Commodity trade trumps manufacturing**
- In this graph of the Canadian balance of trade in goods and services – we see how the balance is positive (>) for rural-focused industries like agriculture, fishing, mining, forestry, and some industry but negative (>) for machinery, auto, and consumer items
 - It is not obvious to the general public that our ability to purchase our ipods, computers, cars, and clothes is so dependent on selling our fishing products, petroleum, and forestry resources.
 - Hence the people and communities required to service these industries become seen as a net drain on our economy.
 - Revising this ignorance of interdependency will require more proactive approaches.



- **Commodities trump communities**
- Our success and dependence on commodity trade has decimated our rural communities, however
- Graph showing the relationship between integration into the global economy and population change for small rural locations
- The linkages of commodity trade have been very beneficial for our balance of payments (80% of trade surplus contributed by primary products) but they have undermined the population of rural communities



- The third set of changes I have identified as being related to globalization

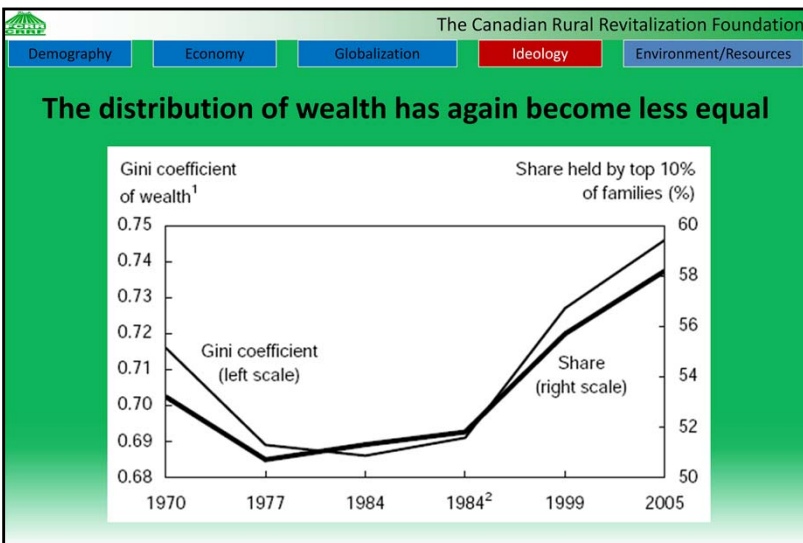
- Global competition
- Extended networks
- Immigration

- Immigration trumps natural increase**

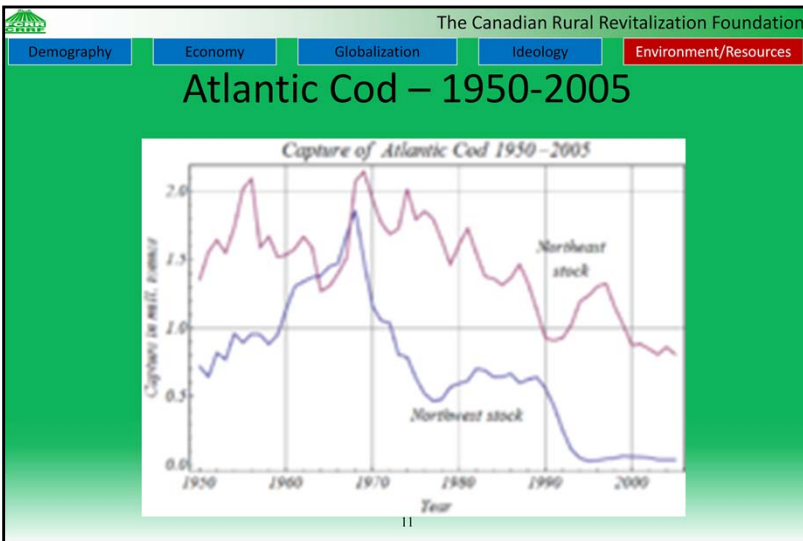
- Immigration is an increasingly important component of population growth.
- In 1976, natural increase (births minus deaths) represented over 80% of the demographic growth in Canada. Today, the situation is almost reversed as immigration represents close to 70% of the growth.
- If current trends continue, in less than 25 years, immigration will be the only growth factor, as natural increase will be negative.
- [graph from Ray Bollman]*



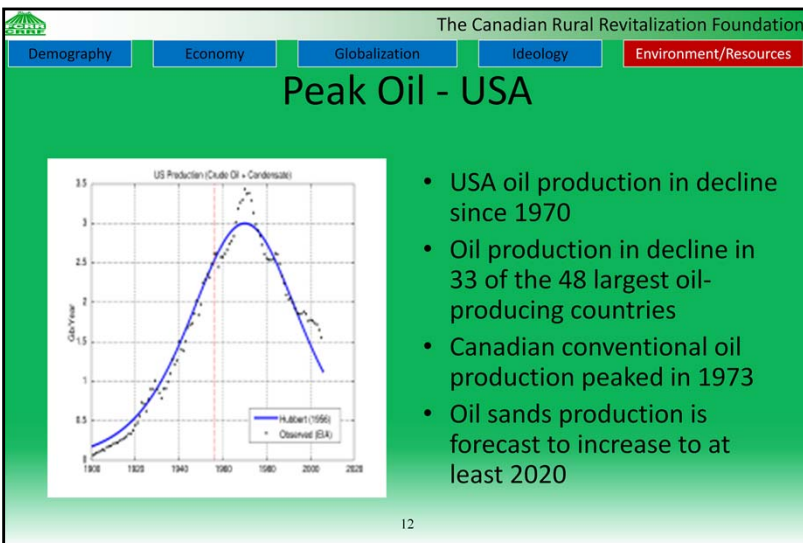
- The fourth long term trend has been the growth in the importance of neo-liberal ideology. Advocates argue that:
 - Gov't control over the economy is inefficient or otherwise undesirable
 - Control of the economy should be given to the private sector (with the definition of the economy enlarged to include almost all aspects of our lives)
 - This includes the privatization of most state enterprises
 - Trade liberalization (often ideological more than in practice)
 - Deregulation
 - Discipline fiscal policy*
 - Priority given to individual property rights over collective or common property rights
- From this perspective: **Consumers trump Citizens**
- Distribution of benefits and services depends more on ability to pay rather than on citizenship rights, and
- From the point of view of rural areas: Service delivery depends on density over entitlements
- Keynsian economics to Friedman economics (Fordist to post-Fordist)*
- Economic liberalism*



- This neo-liberal ideology has supported policies and programs that have facilitated another important outcome that affects both rural and urban regions: growing inequality of wealth
- I wish to highlight this since it is (like climate change or resource depletion) one of the most important, yet largely invisible drivers of major social change
- The greater the inequality in a society, the greater is the likelihood of social conflict and crisis.
- Its manifestations take different forms at different times and places
 - In some circumstances it means the rise of right wing groups and ideologies
 - The modern-day manifestations are war, terrorism, and various forms of social exclusion directed against religious, cultural, or immigrant groups
- But in all circumstances repression without addressing the inequalities upon which the conflicts are based – simply exacerbates the situation.
- For the past 25 years, Canada has been on the path to greater inequality – supported by neo-liberal policies.
- We must do the work of identifying the reasons for this trend – and address it at its base, not try to deny or cover up the symptoms.
 - Our record at doing so is not that great.
- [Graph notes:
 - 1 Excluding the value of registered pension plans (RPPs).
 - 2 1984 data re-weighted for consistency with the Survey of Financial Security.
- Sources: Statistics Canada, Assets and Debts Survey, 1984;
- Survey of Financial Security, 1999 and 2005
- From: **Revisiting wealth inequality**
- René Morissette and Xuelin Zhang
- December 2006 **PERSPECTIVES 5 Statistics Canada** — Catalogue no. 75-001-XIE]



- The final change I will highlight is the new recognition and effects of the limits to natural resources
- This is manifested in the concerns for
 - Climate change
 - Management complexity
 - Technological innovation
- We are finding that **Nature trumps resource exploitation**
- In some cases these limits emerge as a result of the mis-managment of our natural resources
 - As is most dramatically illustrated on Canada by the case of Atlantic cod



- In other cases, it is a recognition of finite resources – as with oil
- USA oil production in decline since 1970
- Oil production in decline in 33 of the 48 largest oil-producing countries
- Canadian conventional oil production peaked in 1973
- Oil sands production is forecast to increase to at least 2020
- NL is in the midst of a boom so the limits are not so visible
 - But booms create special crises
 - They end
- New technologies (like fracking) carry their own challenges – delay, not solve them



How do we create effective rural policy and programs for a Canada where...

- Cities are dominant
- Trade is externally dominated
- Immigration is increasing in importance
- The state is withdrawing from its social mandate
- Natural resources are stressed?

- Given these multiple and complex changes, a critical question emerges for us
- How do we create effective policy and programs for a Canada where ...
 - Cities are dominant
 - The economy is global
 - Immigration increasing in importance
 - But weaker in rural
 - State is withdrawing
 - Resources are stressed?
- **My approach to these issues and questions includes the following elements**
 - Future complex and uncertain
 - So we need to
 - Develop multiple capacities (at all levels)
 - Networks and information are critical
 - Create conditions for flexible alliances
 - I have tried to make these more concrete by formulating 7 strategies for rural places and policy-makers to consider when positioning communities (large and small) for the future.
 - *[These emerge in general from my 30+ years of research on rural issues and specifically from the 11-year New Rural Economy project which I directed (<http://nre.concordia.ca>)]*
- Before I turn to some suggested answers to this question, I will pause to allow you time for questions, clarifications, or comments.



Strategies?

- Policy-makers
- Rural communities
- Researchers

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strategy 1. Look to urban demand



<http://www.warnerhockeyschool.com/>



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- I have formulated my answers with respect to 7 strategic responses
 - Based on research and experience over the last 30+ years
 - Should form the basis for research questions (for those of you in academic circles) and
 - Policy considerations (for those of you in policy and program activities).
- Strategy 1: Look to urban demand.
 - If urban regions and sensibilities hold the balance of power – and will continue to do so, it simply makes sense for people in rural areas to pay attention to the demands arising from those regions.
 - >In Warner, AB, when they were faced with the rising costs of their arena, they organized a hockey school for girls and marketed it to families all over North America. It has been so successful that they have expanded it to include a residential school that runs all year round. [(<http://www.warnerhockeyschool.com/>) Note innovative use of existing infrastructure.]
 - >In Mattawa, Ontario a local businessman noticed the many cores thrown out by the local plywood mill so he used them to manufacture bowling pins that are sold throughout the world.
 - In Sainte Paule, QC when they were in danger of losing their school for lack of children, they went to the nearby city of Matane and convinced sufficient parents to bus their children to the rural school since it was quieter, has nicer facilities, and a better student-teacher ratio.
- These examples illustrate the elements of a strategy that generalizes to most other communities:
 - Community objectives can often be met by
 - Identifying the assets in an imaginative way
 - Looking outside for a demand
 - Figuring out how to meet that demand with those assets
- This focus on urban demands and interests, blends well with the second strategic direction I am proposing: **Identify niche markets.**



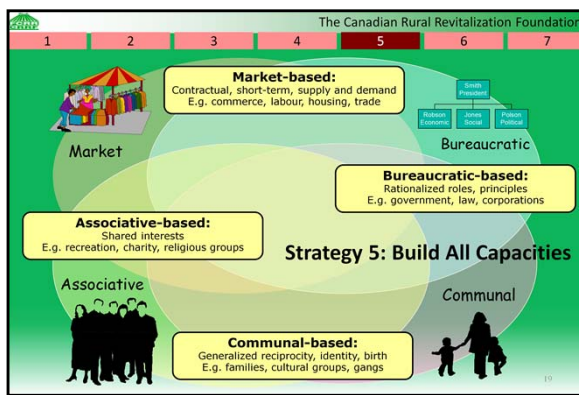
- Too often we focus our attention on the export of major commodities as solution to community decline: grain, forests, fish, minerals, petroleum.
 - We know now that this will simply exacerbate the population decline and external dependency which has created so many of the problems in the first place
- Instead, look for new goods and services to market – in the process seek to diversify the regional economy.
- Research has demonstrated that rural manufacturing has maintained its relative position in comparison to urban manufacturing.
 - It is built primarily on medium and small scale manufacturing enterprises.
 - In the process this increases the opportunities to diversify the regional economy.
- It means focusing on **competitive** advantage rather than on **comparative** advantage – in development jargon.
 - As in the case of Warner, Mattawa, and Ste-Paule it means identifying local assets (economic, social, institutional, environmental, cultural) and looking for new markets for them – both inside and outside the region.
 - I can add to these examples with many others:
 - > Saint-Cyprien established a Centre for handicapped children (<http://www3.sympatico.ca/remi.rioux/lacledeschamps/>)
 - > An entrepreneur in Taschereau, QC produces fibreglass trailers for motorcycles
 - > A casualty of the Nortel collapse from North Gower, ON and his wife design and perfect the technology for a couples-focused sex toy that has developed into a million dollar international business.
 - > In Springhill, NS a group organizes correspondence and liaison for 3rd world child support. As a result, millions of dollars are channeled through the local bank (Christian Child Care International - <http://www.ccare.ca/>)
- In all of these cases some key elements to make it possible were the local knowledge, community networks, and social connections with people outside the community (bridging social capital)
 - This provides an important role for regional and provincial governments – as brokers for information about those external opportunities
 - It also hints at another opportunity emerging with my next suggestion: **Integrate strangers**



- Migration and Immigration are a basic feature of Canadian society and will continue to be so into the future
- This means the introduction of people with different values, interests, and skills.
- The initial response is often uncertainty, suspicion, and stress
- > Cap-St-Ignace faced the problem of anxiety about newcomers with a brilliant initiative.
 - It identified 'Godparents' for newcomers and tasked them with making contact and conveying an invitation to a community dinner
 - At that event they introduced the newcomers to the community and established a basis for support and future support activities.
 - By learning about newcomers, they proactively act to reduce anxiety
 - By contacting newcomers, fast track capacity building
- > Seguin, ON significantly improved its capacity by integrating seasonal residents into its administrative structures rather than excluding them.
 - The same principle applied to those communities facing an influx of city-dwellers and retirees as they move into rural places in search of a more relaxed style of life.
 - This often conflicts with the local concerns for jobs and economic development, visions of rural life, and traditions of local governance.
 - By integrating them into the local decision-making they not only informed them of the challenges of running a small town, but they gained access to the networks and resources that the newcomers brought with them.
- > The communities around Winkler, MB have created conditions where the rate of immigration rivals Toronto
 - In seeking labour for their local industries they turned to their historical roots in the Mennonite migrations of the past
 - Contacting their religious and cultural cousins in Central and South America, negotiating special arrangements with the Manitoba and Federal governments, and setting up numerous local groups to facilitate information sharing, institutional support, language training, and personal integration into Canadian society of the numerous people who responded to their invitation
- These newcomers bring skills, motivation, and perhaps most overlooked – networks that can provide new assets for community and regional development.



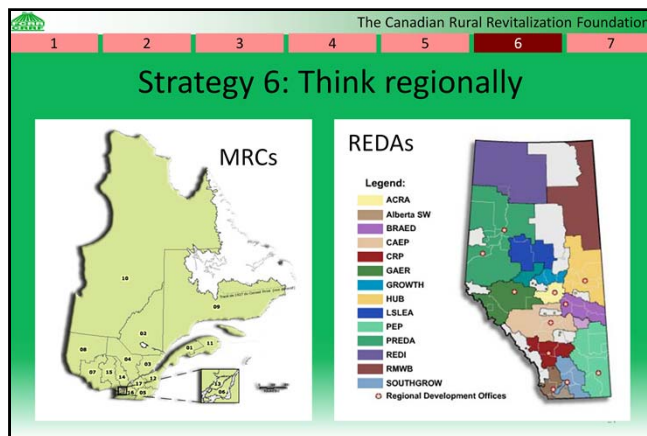
- The importance of social networks is also reflected in this next strategic suggestion from our research
- During this period of economic decline, the call for more spending on community and urban infrastructure is loud and clear.
 - This most often focuses on the building of physical infrastructure (Canada's Acton Plan).
- However, our research indicates that the building of social infrastructure is as important as the roads, bridges, communication towers, and aqueducts of the physical infrastructure advocates
- This is especially the case in smaller communities and in those which experience the boom-bust economies of natural resource extraction.
- The community of Inuvik in the NWT has made this an explicit policy for their economic development.
 - They have decided that the best way to manage their boom-bust economy is to make their community such a wonderful place to live that people will devote considerable energy to find ways to stay there – even during the bust periods.
 - It also has that advantage that these highly motivated residents are proactive in mitigating some of the negative aspects of the boom times – providing a long-term perspective in their planning.
 - For example, they committed considerable energy and funds to build community, health, and education facilities in their community.
 - >When they got a new arena they decided to convert the old one to a community greenhouse – that has now been a source of local produce and knowledge – plus a social centre for many of the community members.
- This social infrastructure in turn becomes an important resource for many other conditions.
 - >In Barriere, BC when wildfire threatened the town, it was the local Quad Squad (a group of ATV and snowmobile enthusiasts <http://www.quadsquad.ca/>) that provided critical communication, evacuation, and security services for the community.
 - Regional-area churches provided shelter, food, and rehabilitation services both during and after the disaster.
- If you haven't already done so, I suggest you check out the innovative project conducted in Cape Breton by the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) The Community Employment Innovation Project (CEIP) used EI funds to employ local people in activities that the communities identified as important for their economic and social sustainability. This partnership with the social economy institutions demonstrated that the goals of EI were met – but there was the added advantage of increased social capital built within the communities: social capital that was used for objectives well beyond the economic ones.



- Strategy 5: Build all types of capacity
- Our research has also made clear how important the range of different types of networks are to the revitalization of communities
- They play an important role in the institutional linkages between rural and urban as well
- Identified some important lessons:
 - Social relations come in many forms (>market, >bureaucratic, >associative, >communal)
 - These forms link people and groups in different ways and to different institutions
 - To access the resources and services of these institutions, it is necessary to develop the capacity to function well in these different types of social relations
 - The new economy favours market and bureaucratic over associative and communal
 - Most rural communities are traditionally stronger in associative and communal than market and bureaucratic
 - But we did find that associative and communal networks can and are used to build market and bureaucratic under certain conditions
- By recognizing these different types of strengths and the complementarities among them, numerous options are opened for business, policy, and local action
 - *[Public utilities or transportation companies might contribute their organizational skills or networks to facilitate access to markets for local entrepreneurs or municipalities]*
 - *[Municipal, provincial, or federal governments may invest in communal relations to compensate for policies that undermine associative ones (e.g. greater mobility)]*
 - *[Businesses may better recognize the economic benefits of investment in associative or communal relations (directly or indirectly through the sharing of facilities or expertise)]*
 - *[Bureaucracies might compensate voluntary organizations to meet the accountability demands that undermine the associative relations]*
- Primary thing to note: All forms are necessary in a complex, changing environment - The more agile a group or community is in being able to use all systems, the greater will be their capacity - especially under conditions of change. Each of them forms a basis for people working together.
- This is why a focus on economic policies alone so often fail or are inadequate to sustain communities for the long term – education, health, social services, and recreation are all important elements of economic capacity and sustainability.



- Increasing local capacity to meet the new conditions often means building networks across communities (bridging capital).
 - There is often not sufficient critical mass within a single community – must look to the region.
 - When Tweed, ON was interested in hosting our national CRRF conference, they realized they could not do it alone, so were forced to overlook years of animosity with three other local towns in order to make it work.
 - This success inspired them to establish a regional ‘brand’ (Comfort Country) which now attracts people to the region as a travel destination.
- [Subsequently – I was pleased to discover – the Comfort Country initiative has become an inspiration for people in Walliston and Hastings counties]
- > This type of regional view works well for larger centres as well – as demonstrated by the Edmonton-Northern Alberta Hub initiative in which the city partners with many of the small towns and regions surrounding it.
- Regional collaboration is not easy, however.
 - The perceptions of the world and individuals’ place in it are often very different, and
 - Such collaboration is made more difficult by large power differentials (e.g. the city of St. John’s and its outlying regions – or perhaps Halifax and its outlying communities).
- Therefore I would like to dwell on these aspects to give you an idea how they might play a part – and might be overcome.



- Typically we find that across-community consultations are not conducted and then the points of interdependence become sites of conflict, or
- Urban regions develop their own plans – with perhaps some subsequent “consultation” with outlying areas.
- These both become (often correctly) perceived by the outlying communities as tokenism and insincere attempts to coopt the smaller communities under the guise of consultation.
- It is clear that regional collaboration is a major challenge, but without addressing it at the beginning of the process it will inevitably fail.
 - What is even more discouraging in the cases we have examined – is that many opportunities for mutual benefit (urban and rural) are lost as the result of fear to address these challenges or assuming that independent decisions can be made without long term negative consequences.
- Regional collaboration requires well-designed and long-term structures to make it effective.
- I have watched with considerable interest, the variations in approaches to regional development that are reflected by our provincial governments
- In many respects, most have articulated the principles of governance that are commendable (bottom-up, collaborative approaches), but with very different programs and with very different results
- Perhaps the greatest contrast in my mind is between AB and QC
- Both of these governments champion a bottoms up approach and encourage local municipalities to engage in an expanded mandate over local decision-making – moving beyond the maintenance of roads and water to include economic development and environmental stewardship
- But the institutional contexts of the 2 provinces are considerably different
 - >Under the Levesque government, Quebec established a number of regional boards (MRCs) (sometimes against substantial opposition) composed of mayors and municipal representatives with a mandate for regional development and resources to support it. The emphasis was on regional development – cross sectors and inclusive of social development.
 - I am not familiar enough with the Regions in NS to know how they compare to these MRCs
 - >In Alberta, the approach was more laissez-faire – where regional collaboration was encouraged, some resources were allocated to regional groups if they requested and justified it, but there was little consistent pressure for such collaboration (Regional Economic Development Alliances). The focus was clearly on economic development.
- The results have been dramatically different at the local level.
- In Quebec there are many examples of regional initiatives – tailored to local conditions and themselves providing a basis for second-order activities in small places
 - Over the 20 or so years of their operation within this new regime, local municipalities have learned how to use the regional structures to voice their concerns, debate, negotiate, compromise, and collaborate with other municipalities, and in turn, to negotiate with the provincial government on behalf of their region and village or town
 - In turn, the provincial government has discovered the value in subsidiarity – now allocating responsibility to the regional boards for a wide range of economic and social policy and programs, and (most importantly) showing confidence in the decisions and accountability of the MRCs – making the governance of the province both more efficient and effective
 - This system of consultation has even become more elaborated with the recent emergence of regional round tables – with more issue-focused objectives
- In Alberta the situation on the ground is very different
 - A few regions have taken initiative, formed their own corporate bodies, and moved ahead, largely on their own steam
 - Most municipalities, on the other hand, were unable to get beyond their protectionist traditions to reach agreements with their neighbours around the complex challenges they faced – either denying that conflicts of interests existed or refusing to discuss them in any but the most limited terms
 - In the end, the provincial government simply made the decisions for the municipalities, pointing to the failure of regional collaboration, lack of accountability, and the pressure of time as a justification for top-down management
- What are the lessons here?



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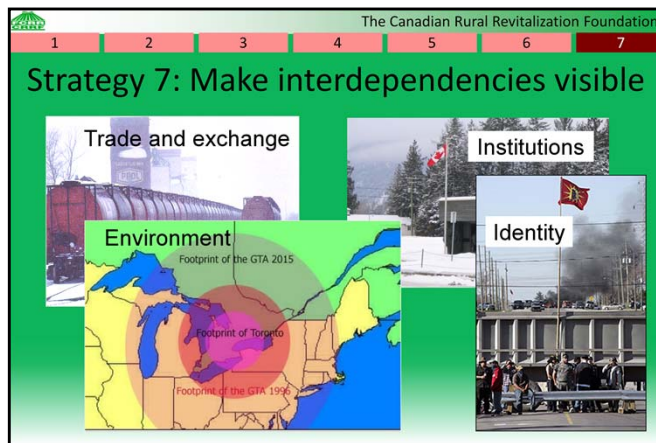
Collaboration lessons

- Strong regional institutions
- Multiple venues of interaction
- Clear rules of accountability and representation
- Common language and understanding
- Patience and tolerance

"Budget for Breakage"

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- First: Bottom-up development needs an institutional context of strong regional governance to make it work
- Second: The inevitable conflicts of interest that emerge require multiple venues for expression, negotiation, and the compromise that are necessary for action
- Third: Relations of accountability and representation are necessary ingredients for establishing an adequate level of trust for the system to work
- Fourth: This requires the development of a common language and understanding for collaboration.
- Finally: all of this requires a spirit of patience and tolerance by people and institutions that are not favourably disposed to either of these
 - It took Quebec 20 years of stressful and sometimes acrimonious work to get to the point they are today
 - When I spoke to the Carcross/Tagish elders about their plans for the reorganization of their people in the Yukon, they reminded me that it took 7 generations to get into the mess we are today – so they felt that 7 generations was not an unreasonable time frame to think about getting out of it
 - From an institutional point of view this means >'budgeting for breakage'



- It should be clear that rural and urban places remain interdependent – and will continue to be so in the future.
- But the nature of this interdependence is not always visible.
 - Thus creating conditions for inappropriate policy and misunderstanding.
- I find it useful to think of this interdependence with respect to 4 broad features of social organization
- These are 4 ways in which changes in rural or urban settings have impacts on the other (the meaning of interdependence)
- > The first is via **trade and exchange**
 - Of goods, services, finances, and people
 - Sometimes it is direct as with farmers markets and commuting (labour markets) but often it is indirect via other nations or complex downstream transformations
 - This is to be expected in our commodity dependent economy
- > The second broad way in which we are interdependent is through the **institutions** we share
 - This includes national, provincial, regional, and some municipal institutions (formal and informal) that organize activities for both urban and rural people
 - From Health, Education, and Welfare to Scouts, Religions, and Families – where policies developed in and for one context are applied to another context
- > The third area is the **environment**
 - Over the past 50 years we have learned a great deal about the interdependence of all regions with respect to the environment – including the total earth.
 - It can also be seen dramatically on a regional scale
 - The environmental footprint for Toronto is 280 times its formal size (about 1/3 the size of Ontario)
 - For Halifax in 2005 [*with a footprint of 7.83, the estimated land area required to support*] it was about 5 times its municipal land area (2811040 ha or about ½ the land area of Nova Scotia at 5528400 ha)
 - The footprint is largely on rural areas (food, water, pollution processing, waste management)
- > The final area is with respect to identity.
 - I am using identity to refer to the ways in which we see ourselves:
 - Who we think we are,
 - What our friends and families are like,
 - The places we grew up, work, visited, and wish to visit,
 - And the things we value about ourselves, our networks, neighbourhoods, cities, regions, and country.



- In order to make more appropriate policies, programs, and actions, therefore – it is necessary to increase this visibility so that we can get our choices and organizations working appropriately.
 - Rural areas would be well advised to identify and articulate the ways in which they contribute to urban regions and the national economy, but it is an uphill challenge since
 - People in urban regions are more preoccupied with their own challenges.
- My suggestion is that we should start with our common interests.
- Work from those things that both rural and urban people are already concerned about
 - > **Food**
 - Teach urban people about food production – as they are doing at the Prairie Swine Centre in SK
 - > Farm visits and vacations
 - > Direct marketing (St-Damas)
 - > We also share a concern about **water**
 - This means teaching about the link between rural development and the water running out of the taps in Halifax
 - It can be done in our schools by visits, science programs, and mass media (Canadian Gov't – teacher kits)
 - > It can also be done by urban street art as shown in this example (sewerfish: <http://www.canadiandesignresource.ca/officialgallery/index.php?paged=2&s=symbols>)
 - It reinforces the connection between sewers and fish – urban and rural
 - > We also share a concern about the **environment**
 - > We can teach our children how air, water, soils are shared issues (air pollution and acid rain; agricultural stress and chemical use)
 - We can establish centres of learning such as they have done in Springhill around geothermal energy
 - > We can invest in research and production of environmentally friendly goods and services – especially those that are distributed
 - > We can support green communities (www.gca.ca)
- All of these require strong communities – as producers or stewards of the assets they represent.
 - And we don't have to convince urban people that they are important.
 - New York city realized that if it didn't keep the rural communities in its watershed in good shape, then the water supply would be jeopardized by people having to make compromises on environmental stewardship.
 - So they worked out an agreement with those communities in which the water supply would be protected in exchange for community development funds and services.
- How are similar interdependencies reflected in the relationship between Halifax and its surrounding communities?
 - How can the benefits of those places be better represented in the governance structures of the city?
- These are important questions to consider – not only for the smaller communities, but for the long terms sustainability of Halifax.



The Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation

7 Strategies for the new rural conditions

1. Look to urban demand
2. Identify global niche markets
3. Integrate strangers
4. Build social infrastructure
5. Build all capacities
6. Consider regional opportunities
7. Make interdependencies visible

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- I would now like to hear from you.
- To what extent do the general trends resonate with your situation in Nova Scotia?
- Where would additional evidence, elaboration, or examples help to clarify the issues for you?
- Are there priorities that are overlooked – or more important here?
- Do the trends or strategies suggest action that might be taken by you in your roles as educators or policy-makers?
- With who in this room would you like to explore these options?
- As is so often the case – even the questions are not clear.
- We have an opportunity here to get the questions right:
 - A noble objective of researchers and
 - A critical step in the formulation of appropriate policy.



Rural Policy Changes in Canada

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