

Rural-Urban Relations: Building Alliances (8 suggestions)

1. Look to urban interests

Include an examination of urban interests in your scan of opportunities

EXAMPLE: Ste-Paule in Gaspé was faced with a school closure. First they turned inward in anger and frustration. But they had a very good school, with good teachers, a good student-teacher ratio, a good record in grades and graduation, a very nice building and infrastructure.

They just didn't have enough students – so their children would now have to be bused to nearby urban schools. Someone pointed out that what they liked about their school was what was missing in some of the more urban schools. So why not bus the urban children to their rural school? They went to urban parents in Matane with the advantages of their school and were able to convince them to send their children to the Ste-Paule school.

Their school was kept open because they identified their assets, looked outside the community for an existing demand, and figured out how to meet that demand. In the process, they maintained their education infrastructure and expanded the networks of the current students.

