



Rural-Urban Relations: Building Alliances (8 suggestions)

5. Build Capacities

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 learn how to function in all different types of social relations. The new economy favours market and bureaucratic so it is important for rural communities to build their capacity in these areas. It can be done by using the associative and communal skills that are usually well developed in those communities.

EXAMPLES

When the Cap-à-l'Aigle Municipal Council was looking for a community development project, they turned to an informal group of lilac lovers. These local people contacted lilac enthusiasts from around the world and were able to combine resources from private, public, and civic sectors to establish an annual festival with international links. The Festival provides a source of income, further networks, information, social cohesion, and identity that has inspired and facilitated other projects.

When faced with the prospect of a pig farm being established close to the village, municipal leaders in Ste-Françoise were able to use their informal networks and skills to negotiate a deal with the farmer involved. They provided land that was farther from the village in exchange for an agreement to locate the farm there.

When salmon fishing was threatened in the Miramichi valley, concerned sport fishers organized a committee composed of tourism agents, farmers, foresters, pulp mill managers, municipal officials, and environmental groups that developed strategies to manage the watershed. They became sufficiently influential that the Provincial government was careful to consult them regarding policies and projects affecting the region.

