

**Social Cohesion in Rural Canada:
Implications for Policy**
(Cohésion sociale en milieu rural
canadien : Conséquences de la
politique)

Bill Reimer
reimer@vax2.concordia.ca
23 septembre 2002



The slide features four logos at the bottom: RRSB (Rural Research and Secretariat Board), CJ Project (Canadian Journal of Project), SSHRC (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada), and NRE (National Rural Extension).

Social Cohesion in Rural Canada: Implications for Policy

- Thanks for invitation
- Collaboration between researchers and policy-makers critical
 - Provide up-to-date insights and research results to people making policy
 - Provide reality-checks for researchers
- Thanks to supporters for our work
 - Rural Secretariat
 - SSHRC – Strategic grant on Social Cohesion
 - CRRF
 - Rural people

Cohésion sociale en milieu rural canadien

- En quoi consiste la cohésion sociale?
- Qu'avons-nous accompli?
- Qu'avons-nous retenu?
- Quels sont les conséquences de la politique?

La cohésion sociale est un concept complexe

- Perception et comportement
- Niveaux multiples : local, régional, national, mondial
- Valeurs importantes
- Quatre types liés au capital social, à la capacité sociale
- Conséquences multiples de la politique

Approche de la FCRR et de la NÉR :
la revitalisation rurale

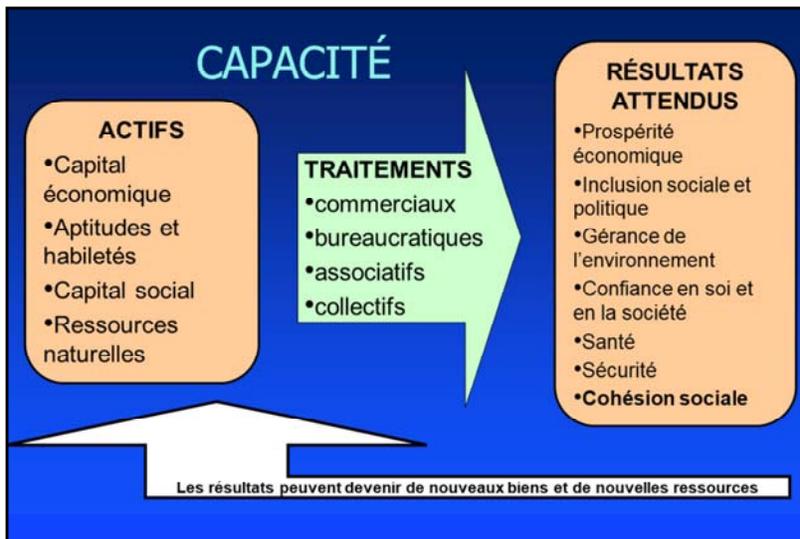
SoCo – the concept

•[Story

- At workshop organized by SSHRC for all of the research teams investigating SoCo
- Asked to write a definition of SoCo
- One group insisted on including a blank piece of paper
- Received the most votes]

•Complex concept

- (S) Some focus on perception, some on behaviour
- (S) Have found it useful to differentiate by the nature of the social relations on which SoCo is based (4 types)
 - Linked directly to other key concepts: Social Capital, Capacity
- (S) Different meanings for different levels
- (S) How much does one include the values in the definition?
- (S) important because of the many policy implications
- (S) Our approach – consider it from the point of view of rural revitalization
- Add to it – your concern with policy



(Re)vitalization occurs when capital and resources are (re)organized to produce desired outcomes. The ability of rural communities to do this in an appropriate and successful fashion is what we refer to as the community's capacity.

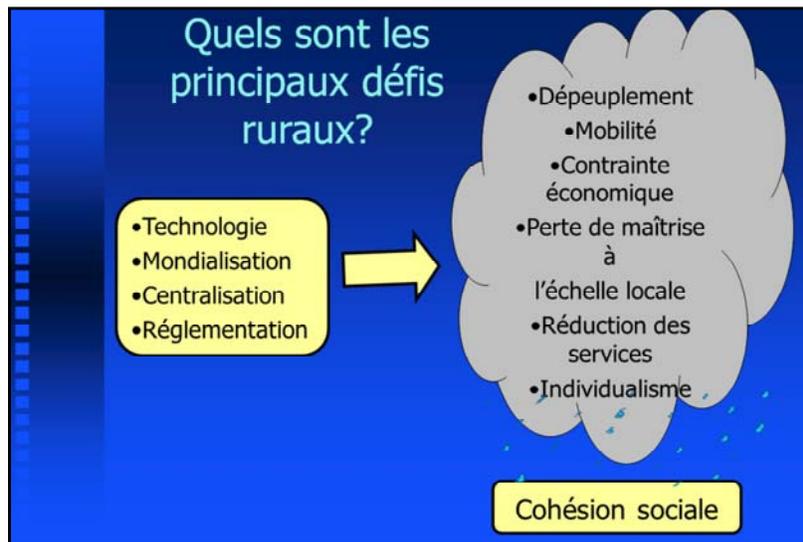
Cohésion sociale

Dans quelle mesure les gens sont-ils prêts à répondre collectivement dans le but d'atteindre les résultats attendus?

- La cohésion sociale est temporelle - propre à des activités
- Échelles de la cohésion sociale – propres à des groupes
- La cohésion sociale doit être évaluée – elle peut être positive pour certains et négative pour d'autres

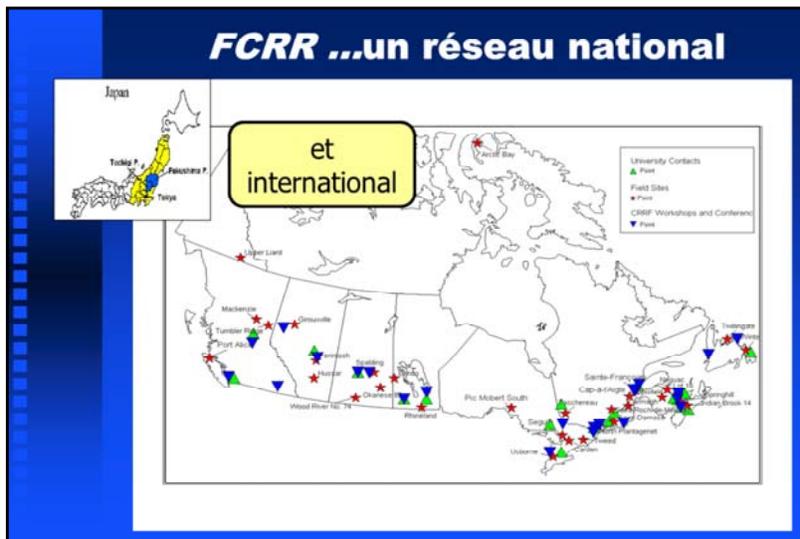
(S) Social Cohesion: The extent to which people respond collectively to achieve their valued outcomes

- (S) SoCo is temporal – specific to activities
 - Community may be fragmented around where to put the garbage dump, but cohesive with respect to fighting a fire.
- (S) SoCo scales – specific to groups
 - Community may be divided into 2 or more cohesive groups – producing a lack of cohesion for the community in general
- (S) SoCo requires evaluation – may be positive for some, negative for others
 - Cohesion of biker gangs may be negative for the rest of society



What are the key rural challenges

- Summary of our NRE research
 - (S) Driving forces in rural economy and society
 - Technology – labour-shedding for resource industries
 - Globalization – opens smaller communities to competition
 - Centralization – shifts control away from rural places
 - Policy
 - State involved in commodity trading
 - Fiscal pressures produce contraction of services and shift to private sector
 - (S) Impacts on rural social cohesion:
 - Depopulation as technology sheds labour
 - Mobility to urban and within-rural challenges SoCo
 - Cost-price squeeze with concentration on independent commodity producers (fishers, farmers, foresters)
 - Concentration and centralization
 - shifts control of local assets outside the rural communities
 - Makes it more difficult for them to capture value
 - Contraction of the state means loss of services or more conditions on services
 - Opening of mass culture produces more individualistic behaviour and dispositions
 - (S) all of these directly affect social cohesion
 - Challenge its traditional forms: associative, communal
 - Give advantage to new forms: market, bureaucratic



How do we know?

Who are we? CRRF

Our perspective is based on collaborative rural research over the past 15 years

- (S) Researchers associated with more than 20 universities and institutes
- (S) Program of workshops and conferences – in our 15th year, about 28 locations (always select rural areas)
- (S) 32 field sites chosen (5 dimensions of comparison)
- (S) International collaboration
 - 2 sites in Japan (Iitate, Awano)
 - Colleagues and centres in USA, UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Mexico
- We invite you to work with us

Qu'avons-nous accompli?

- Une analyse macro-économique à l'aide de données d'enquête et des résultats de recensement
- Conférences et ateliers annuels
- 32 sites – un « observatoire rural »
 - Économies rurales (PME, coopératives, entrepreneurs)
 - Capacité sociale (gérance, secteur de l'économie sociale, services et communication)
 - Exclusion sociale (cohésion sociale)
 - Entrevues avec des producteurs - 1995 (20 sites)
- Site Web (nre.concordia.ca/nre.htm#français)
- Consultation de plus de 100 documents : livres, textes, rapports, dépliants

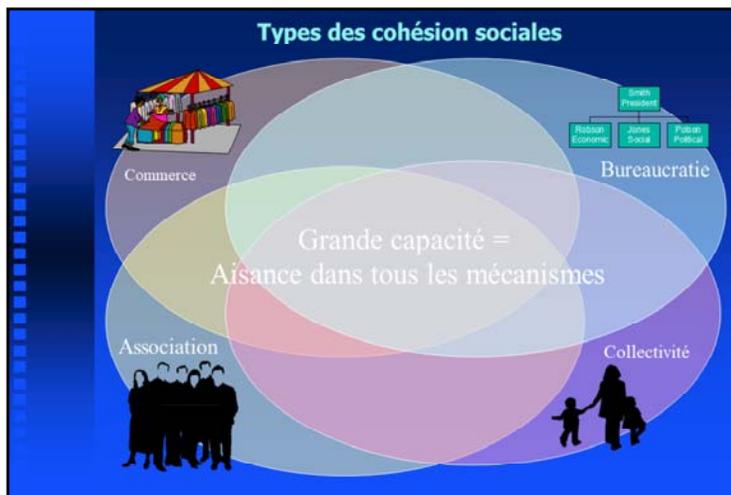
What We Have Done

- (S) Macro analysis using census and survey data
- (S) Annual workshops and conferences
- (S) 32 field sites – a 'Rural Observatory'
- We are learning about:
 - (S) Local economies (SMEs, Coops, Entrepreneurship)
 - (S) Social capacity (governance, 3rd sector, services, communications)
 - (S) Social exclusion (social cohesion)
 - (S) 1995 Household Interviews (20 sites)
- (S) Web Site (nre.concordia.ca)
- (S) Over 100 documents: books, papers, flyers, posters

Qu'avons-nous appris sur la
cohésion sociale en milieu rural?

...qui se rattache à la politique?





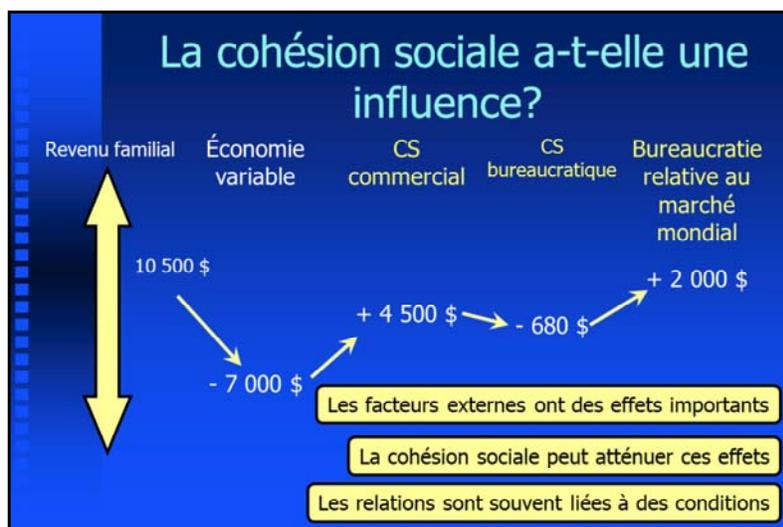
- This insight arises from our recognition that social cohesion is based in social relations
- Social relations are organized in different ways
 - Expectations, norms, institutions, rights, obligations are all different and integrated
- Each is supported and enforceable by socially recognized institutions (entitlements, laws)
 - (S) Market relations
 - Based on supply & demand, contracts
 - Supported and controlled by trade agreements, competition legislation, labour law, better business bureau, and the courts
 - (S) Bureaucratic relations
 - Based on rationalized roles, authority and status, generalized principles
 - Controlled by legislation, corporate law
 - (S) Associative relations
 - Based on shared interest
 - Controlled by civil law, municipal by-laws, social norms, and informal sanctions
 - (S) Communal relations
 - Based on biology, reciprocity, favours
 - Controlled by informal norms, legislation, family law, and government support agencies
- The systems by which they are organized can reinforce or conflict with one another.
 - Several of our research sites relied primarily on associative relations in the face of school closings. In some, the citizens learned how to articulate, lobby their case on the basis of bureaucratically recognized principles, and got their school back.
 - the Hutterite community next door to one of them uses communal relations intensively (family supported by religious belief) and combines them with bureaucratic relations (again legitimized by religion) to successfully compete using market relations (have even been able to expand while others fail).
 - In this case, the three systems reinforce one another
- Primary thing to note: (S) All forms are necessary in a complex, changing environment - The more agile a group is in being able to use all systems, the greater will be their capacity - especially under conditions of change

**Les Conditions affectent la
cohésion sociale**

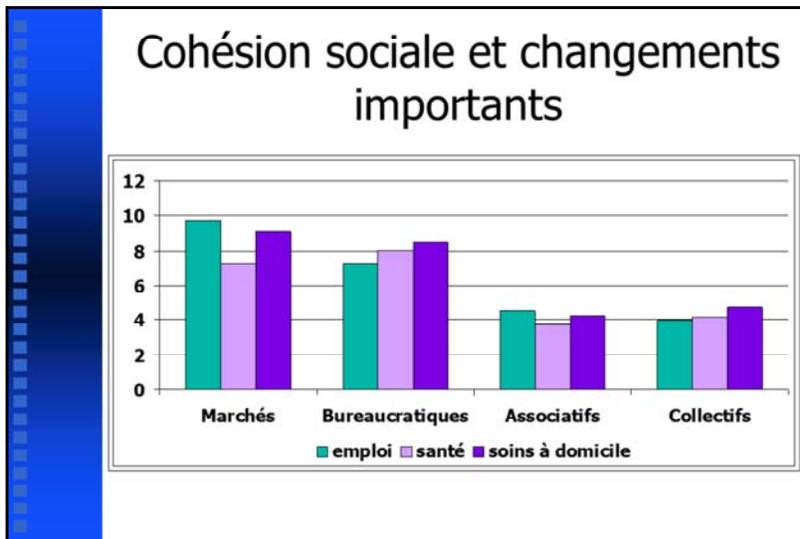
	M	B	A	C
Économie mondiale	H	B	B	B
Économie stable		B		H
Proximité des villes	B		B	H
Capacité institutionnelle	B	B		B

Conditions for use of social cohesion (Conditions -> SoCo)

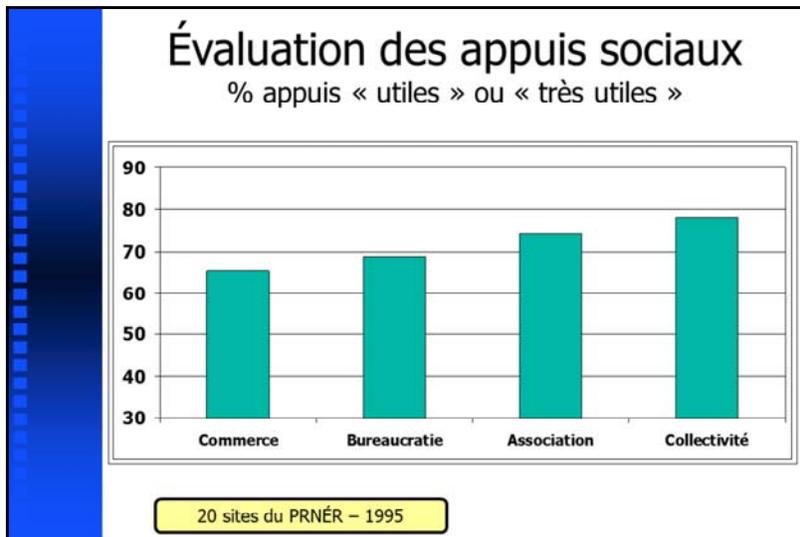
- Examined some of the external conditions where we found high levels of social cohesion
 - Social Cohesion based on all types of social relations
- Most of them were linked to conditions which are largely beyond the control of local communities
 - (S) Global or local economies: Global markets -> higher levels of market-based SoCo
 - (S) Stable or fluctuating economies: Stable -> higher levels of communal-based SoCo, lower levels of bureaucratic-based SoCo
 - (S) Metro adjacency: Adjacent -> higher levels of communal-based, but lower levels of market-based and associative-based SoCo
 - (S) Institutional Capacity (schools and hospitals): (provincial and federal jurisdictions) more capacity -> lower levels of all but associative-based SoCo
 - Reflects other findings regarding social capital: The availability and use of social capital are not strongly related
- Regression analysis (pscoh30) (1995 HHs)
 - $R^2 = .15$ (Betas)
 - High Institutional Capacity (-.631)
 - Global (-.517)
 - < gr 9 ed (-.449)
 - Construction (-.223)
 - Social services (-.218)
 - Agriculture (.210)
 - West & North (-.214)
 - # years in the community (-.103)
 - Distributive services (-.101)
 - Metro adjacent (.101)
 - Producer services (-.090)



- One of the major advantages of a systematic study such as the NRE
 - Allows us to estimate interactions among variables: Relative, Additive, Conditional effects
- What happens to a rural community that faces a fluctuating economy?
 - (S) Focus on household income for simplicity
 - Multiple regression analysis
- R^2 Adjusted = .281
 - Constant: \$46800
 - Market: \$4455 $\beta = .517$
 - **Stability**: \$7167 $\beta = .129$
 - Communal: -\$1097 $\beta = -.110$
 - **GloxBuse30**: \$1917 $\beta = .105$
 - Associative: \$573 $\beta = .077$
 - Bureaucratic: -\$680 $\beta = -.074$
 - **CapxAuse30**: -\$876 $\beta = -.059$
 - **High Cap**: \$2667 $\beta = .051$
 - **Stab x Csue30**: -\$868 $\beta = -.042$
- (S) If household is located in a site with a fluctuating economy -> Decrease of \$7,000
- (S) If they rely on market-based social cohesion -> Increase of \$4,500
- (S) If they rely on bureaucratic-based social cohesion -> Decrease of \$700
- (S) However: important interaction effect between Globalization and reliance on bureaucratic-based SoCo
 - Bureaucratic-based in Global or Non-bureaucratic-based in Local economy: higher incomes (+\$2000)
 - Bureaucratic-based in Local economies or Non-bureaucratic based in Global: lower incomes (-\$2000)
 - Perhaps:
 - In Global economies -> best strategy is to build bureaucratic-based social cohesion
 - In Local economies -> best strategy is to build other types of social capital
- Summary
 - (S) Many factors beyond the control of local people: Global, Fluctuating, Location
 - (S) Still some ways in which local action can mitigate those exogenous factors
 - (S) Beware of generally applied policies – many conditional effects



- Major Changes and Social Cohesion
- This examines the type of responses that people made to the major changes occurring in their households.
- Three types of major changes have been selected:
 - Employment
 - Health
 - Home Care
- What types of social cohesion were utilized in response to these changes?
- (S) Employment: Market, then Bureaucratic, then Associative and Communal
- (S) Health: Bureaucratic, then Market, Communal, and Associative
- (S) Home care: Market, then Bureaucratic, then Communal, and Associative
- Main point: Services and supports for social cohesion need to recognize the different types of networks and social relations called upon.
- Research: Are they called upon simply because these are the supports available?



How do people evaluate the different types of social supports?

- Social support a critical element of behavioural social cohesion
- Asked them what were the major changes that had occurred in their households over the last year
 - How did they deal with/respond to these changes?
 - To who did they turn?
 - Important component of social cohesion
- Were the supports helpful or very helpful for the majority of people
- (S) Varies by the type of social support
- Varies as well by the type of change that occurred (additional analysis)
 - E.g. home care: communal and bureaucratic
 - Financial: communal much higher, associative second, then market, with bureaucratic last

Conséquences des politiques – Services

- La cohésion sociale est influencée par des facteurs externes
 - Les politiques peuvent modifier ces facteurs
- La cohésion sociale apporte des changements
 - intègre les politiques sociales et économiques
- Éléments de cohésion sociale qui importent
 - Travailler selon les forces associatives et collectives
 - Payer les services relatifs aux besoins bureaucratiques

Policy Implications (2)

- (S) Social cohesion makes a difference
 - Mitigates external conditions
 - Affects many opportunities besides income (e.g. employment, quality of life)
 - Economic policies must take community conditions into account
 - Social cohesion
 - Location
 - Broad economy
 - (S) Integrate social and economic policies so they don't conflict, but reinforce one another
 - Business development vs. voluntary associations (Internet)
 - Greater emphasis on associative forms
- (S) Type of social cohesion matters
 - Different types have different effects (basis of social relationships important)
 - (S) Work from rural strengths (associative and communal)
 - Need to be integrated with market and bureaucratic
 - (S) Pay for bureaucratic requirements (competition, accountability, core funding)
 - Especially with associative-based SoCo
 - Requirements conflict: people participate in associative because of mutual interest in outcome, not organization
 - Support process

Conséquences des politiques - Innovation

- Elle reconnaît les conditions locales
 - Facilite les engagements au niveau local
 - Améliore les données et les analyses de petites régions
- La cohésion sociale n'est pas toujours synonyme de conformisme
 - Il faut adopter une vision à long terme
- Elle profite des forces locales
 - Elle soutient l'innovation sociale au niveau local
 - Elle prévoit certains échecs

Policy Implications (3)

- (S) Policies must recognize local conditions
 - Look for mutual interests, ways of operating, types of relations
 - Economic and geographical conditions will mitigate general policies
 - (S) Develop policies and programs that facilitate/encourage grass-roots involvement
 - (S) Develop information which is sufficiently detailed to be sensitive to local variation
 - Municipal-level services are the ones most used by rural people
 - Federal services are least known
- (S) Social cohesion does not always mean no conflict
 - Capacity-building and learning involve conflict
 - Lack of controversy should not be the primary goal – debate etc. are important component of capacity building
 - Perception vs. behaviour
 - (S) Long-term view is best – It takes time to build capacity
- (S) Policies can take advantage of local strengths
 - Different communities have different strengths – we can take advantage of these
 - (S) There is a great deal of local social innovation taking place
 - Market-based:
 - Corporate organizations, new marketing arrangements, niche market development
 - Bureaucratic-based:
 - Less hierarchical, distributive
 - Associative-based:
 - More flexible, broader (Internet opportunities) – eg. Japanese transform hobby into market
 - Communal-based:
 - New family structures (blended, mobile) – newsletters and Internet?
 - Roles for women continue to change
 - Need innovation regarding the caring for and support of the elderly
 - Must look to opportunities emerging across types of relations – even as we recognize the points where they conflict
 - Facilitate it
 - Take risks
 - (S) Understand that failure is a necessary part of learning and building capacity
- This is why we have advanced our research program to examine to look at Community Capacity
 - How it functions
 - How it can be built

Conférence annuelle
Rural matters:
The CRRF Rural University
 27 au 29 octobre 2002

Rodd Miramichi River Hotel et CCN-B :

- Gestions des ressources naturelles et des citoyens;
- Diversification et développement agricoles;
- Technologie de l'information;
- Changements ruraux et économiques dans les collectivités rurales;
- Économies basées sur le tourisme.

- Invitation to the CRRF Annual Conference
- Oct 26th – special workshop for rural citizens from the NRE field sites
- Field trips
 - Citizens and natural resource management (social innovations – forestry, Blissfield)
 - Agricultural development and diversification (Acadian innovations - agriculture)
 - Information technology (Moncton)
 - Social and economic change in rural communities (Neguac and Burnt Church - fishing)
 - Tourism-based economies
- Web site via CRRF or NRE web sites

Social Cohesion in Rural Canada (Cohésion sociale du Canada rural)

Projet chapeauté par la Fondation
canadienne pour la revitalisation
rurale

www.crrf.ca
nre.concordia.ca
23 septembre 2002

Devenez
membre dès
aujourd'hui!

