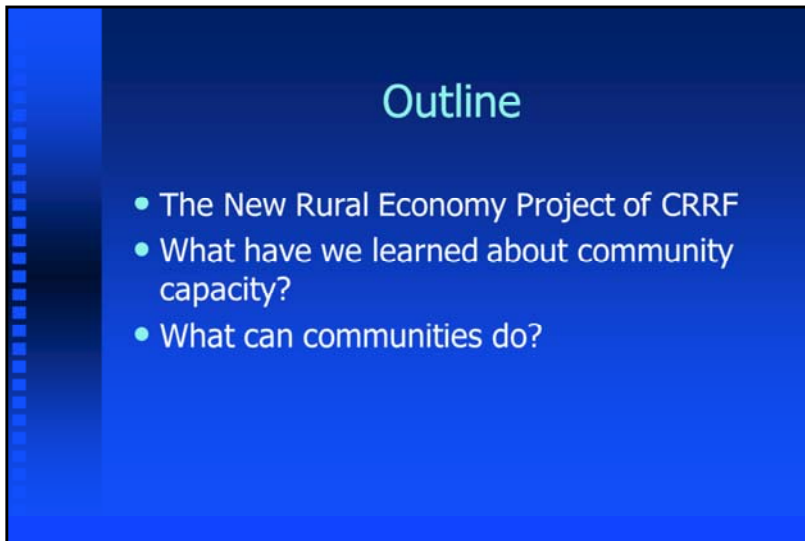Acknowledgements:

•The Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation

•Ray – General picture: Pressures affecting how we got here

•Peter – Focus on rural economy: implications for policy-makers and their programs

•Bill – Focus on implications for community members

Outline

•Before getting to the action part: The New Rural Economy Project of CRRF

•What have we learned about community capacity?

•What can communities do?

NRE Objectives

- Grounded, comparative, comprehensive analysis of the new rural economy in Canada
- Establish collaborative research and education networks to build capacity
- Develop insightful, documented recommendations for communities and policy
- Establish long-term research and education infrastructure

NRE Objectives

•NRE a project of CRRF

•Established in 1997 – 5-year project

  •Provide grounded, comparative, and comprehensive analysis of the new rural economy in Canada

  •Establish a collaborative research and education network that will build capacity to improve the quality of life for all rural Canadians

  •To develop insightful, documented recommendations for long run rural business performance, inclusive development, and public policy

  •To establish a long-term research and education infrastructure to serve the above objectives

CRRF ...A National Network
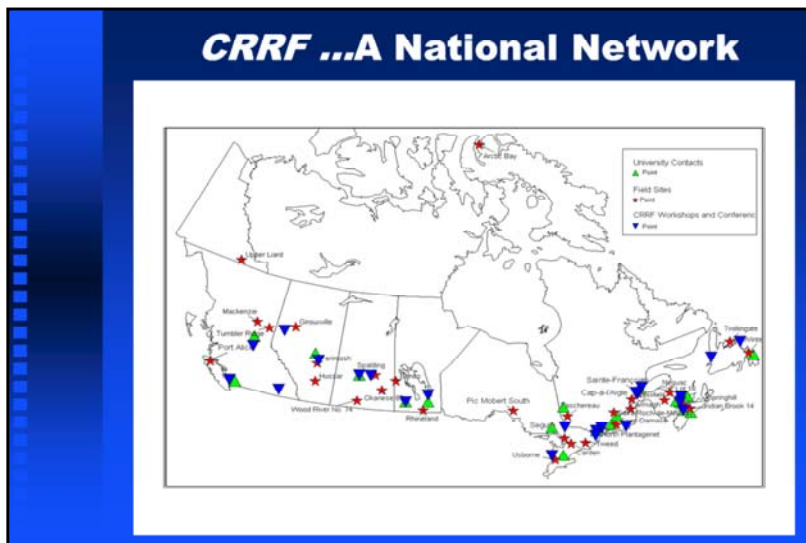
•Researches associated with more than 20 universities and institutes

•32 field sites chosen (5 dimensions of comparison)

•Program of workshops and conferences – over 13 years, about 25 locations

•International collaboration

   •2 sites in Japan

   •Colleagues and centres in USA, UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Mexico

•Invitation to work with us

What We Have Done

•Macro analysis using census and survey data

•32 field sites – a 'Rural Observatory'

•We are learning about:

  •Local economies (SMEs, Coops, Entrepreneurship)

  •Social capacity (governance, 3rd sector, services, communcations)

  •Social exclusion (social cohesion)

  •1995 Household Interviews (20 sites)

•Web Site (nre.concordia.ca)

•Over 50 documents: books, papers, flyers, posters

What have we learned about rural Canada?

•Rural Canada is vulnerable

- •Commodity trading and concentration have undermined communities and environment
- •Cannot survive on its own
- •Must look for alliances in regions, provinces, nationally, and internationally – usually urban-centres

•Rural Canada is diverse

- •No longer source of commodity resources alone – multiple functions
- •Existing locales are changing functions and activities
- •Mobility is changing the composition of rural areas
- •Diversity is reflected in regions, but also within regions:
  - •3 rural Canadas
  - •In each region and each community

•Rural Canada is unpredictable

- •Global exposure means that local communities are susceptible to decisions and events well beyond their borders
- •Small sizes mean that relatively small changes have big impacts
  - •E.g. plant closing: impacts different in urban vs rural areas
- •Risk is uninsurable and less shared

•Rural Canada needs to increase its capacity to deal with these changing conditions

- •Traditional strengths are in less demand
- •Volitile environment requires a major increment in education and social capacity
  - •Ability to learn and act

•This is capacity

Build community capacity through:

- Market relations
- Bureaucratic relations
- Associative relations
- Communal relations

We have found it useful to think about capacity in terms of 4 ways by which it is organized.

•They are distinguished because they are supported by 4 different ways of relating to others – along with distinct, rules, sets of values, legitimation structures, and bases for the distribution of assets

•Sometimes reinforcing one another, and sometimes conflicting

  •(S) Market relations

  •(S) Bureaucratic relations

  •(S) Associative relations

  •(S) Communal relations

Market Relations

- e.g. commodities, labour, housing markets
- rights and obligations determined by supply and demand
- contractual relationships
- Capacity: identify bankable projects, anticipate demand, take risks, make contracts

•**MARKET** relations

•(S) predominate in contexts where there is the exchange of commodities, labour, finances, housing, etc.

•(S) rights and obligations are determined by supply and demand

•(S) fundamentally based on contract relations

•(S) Capacity is reflected in the ability to:

- •Identify bankable projects (those that generate assets)
- •Anticipate demand
- •Take risks
- •Make deals (contracts)

•*self-organization for market relations requires access to information about the market, ability to anticipate demand, willingness to take risks, having resources or services to exchange*

•*most often found in conditions where:*

- •*easy entry and exit to these relations, easy access to information*
- •*requires constraints on the extent to which participants can deceive, renege on promises, or otherwise limit free exchange*
- •*works best with a high level of certainty, openness, absence of opportunism (Granovetter and Swedberg, 1992:61), and a willingness and ability to find mutually satisfactory exchanges*
- •*"works best" means it produces equality and fairness*

Bureaucratic (Legal) Relations

- e.g. governments, corporations, legal institutions
- rights based on authority and status
- universally applied rights and obligations by roles
- Capacity: identify objectives, rationalize tasks, negotiate

•**BUREAUCRATIC** relations

•(S) predominate in government, corporate, legal, and other bureaucratic institutions

•(S) organized on the basis of authority and status

•(S) reflected in formal, universally applied rules and division of labour

•'identified as a number'

•the rules identify the status rights and obligations of people in various positions - (eg. President, Directors, Project Leader, Secretary, Labourer). Reflects the organization of roles, not people

•(S) Capacity is reflected in the ability to:

•Identify objectives

•Break down the objectives to its constituent parts and necessary activities (rationalize tasks)

•Integrate them over time and actions

•Negotiate arrangements – often where ultimate goals are vague (requiring deferred gratification)

•*Authority systems work best where there are clearly defined goals, stable environments, and high levels of legitimation for the rationalization of tasks*

•*"works best" means reaching goals and conducting instrumental tasks*

•*self-organization requires the ability to formulate these goals, rationalize tasks, and revise the rules as a means of changing the status and eligibility rights of participants.*

Associative Relations

- e.g. religious, recreation, farm, environmental, internet groups
- rights based on shared interests
- collective rights take precedence over individual
- Capacity: identify interests, communicate, network, symbolize

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•**ASSOCIATIVE** relations

•(S) predominate in groups such as churches, recreation groups, farm organizations, clubs, environmental groups, and other voluntary associations. They may also include networks which are geographically disbursed - e.g. Internet networks

•(S) organized on the basis of shared interests

•people organize themselves into these relations for many reasons: recognition, respect, camaraderie, or to share in the resources or benefits of the collective activity

  •Cornelia Flora: people are willing to be involved when it is clear that something they value will get done

•(S) collective interests take precedence over individual interests

•they are responsive to the changing interests of the community

•they provide a strong force for social cohesion since they often overlap in membership. People in the amateur theatre group also meet on the baseball diamond, or at church.

•(S) Capacity is reflected in the ability to:

  •Identify these interests

  •Work with communication tools

  •Developing networks to locate people with similar interests

  •Work with symbolic representations to attract and encourage people's commitment to the goals

•*they predominate where interests are focused (including natural disasters or social crises), people interact frequently, and where charismatic leaders are found*

•*self-organization requires the ability to identify interests and maintain them through various techniques of boundary maintenance (symbols, rituals, secrecy, stigmatization)*

Communal relations

•(S) predominate in families, kinship, tribal groups, gangs, close friends

•(S) rights and obligations are based on favours and services previously granted or anticipated

•these obligations are often established in elaborate ways: I owe you a favour because your daughter helped me repair my fence.

•(S) commitments form to individuals or groups, not to particular interests

•they are most likely to emerge under conditions of proximity and frequent and long-term contact - facilitated by ascriptive characteristics

•they require a high level of trust and the expectation of loyalty

•they often survive and sometimes flourish under conditions of uncertainty

•(S) Capacity is reflected in the ability to:

   •Communicate frequently

   •Share common experiences (multiple contexts)

   •Create new common experiences

   •Recognize and respect social boundaries

•*self-organization requires frequent contact, the ability to develop trust and maintain boundaries (e.g. through symbols, shame, identity)*
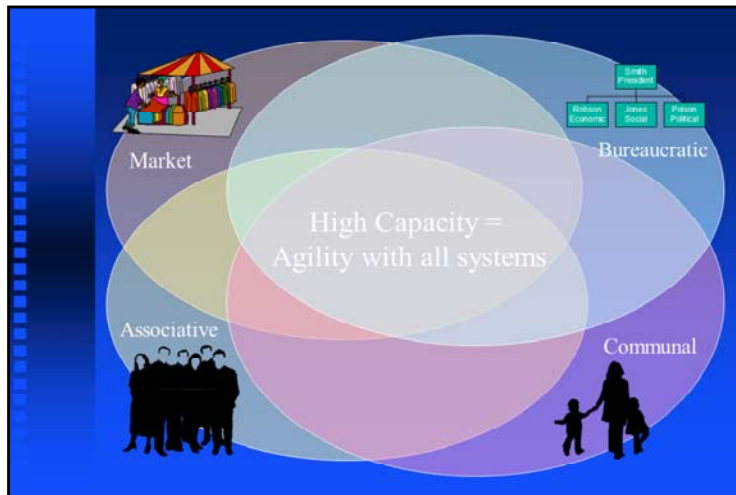
- (S) The systems are interrelated (S)

  - (S) 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

- Each is supported and enforceable by socially recognized institutions (entitlements, laws)

  - market relations supported and controlled by trade agreements, competition legislation, labour law, and the courts

  - authority relations controlled by legislation, corporate law, and the better business bureau

  - associative relations controlled by civil law, municipal by-laws, social norms, and informal sanctions

  - communal relations controlled by legislation, family law, government support agencies, and public norms

- 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

Example 1

•(S) in one of our field sites, cohesion was built through a network of people interested in lilacs (associative)

•(S) the town municipality (bureaucracy) shared its offices and bureaucratic structure, thereby increasing both the capacity and effectiveness of the informal group.

•(S) The two systems reinforced each other and produced a new opportunity for strengthening market relations through tourism (market).

•(S) Using the Internet, they have expanded those networks to advertise and build their contacts throughout the world.

•Similar to the local Winter Festival – they now represent themselves as the "lilac village"
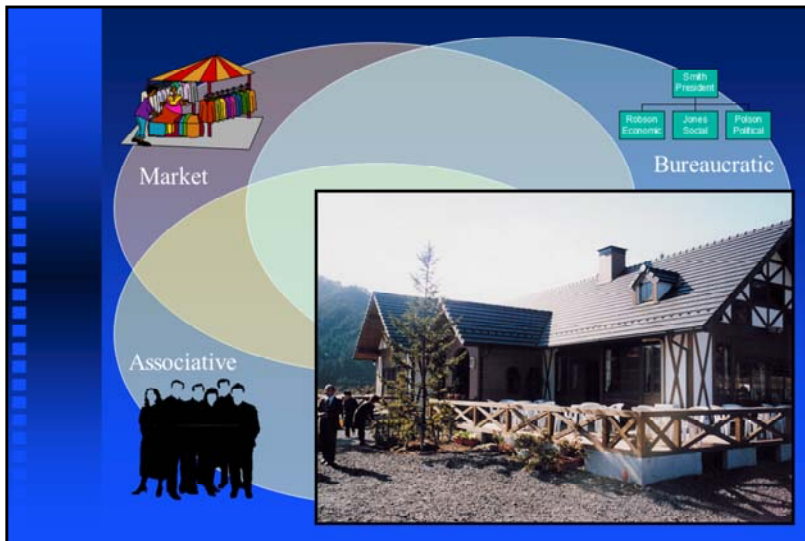
Another example can be found in our Japanese sites

•(S) Interest in herbs drew a group of women together to exchange tips and socialize

•Children grew up, women looking for something to do with their interest and knowledge

•Restaurant option, but must involve herbs - therefore Italian or French

•(S) Aided by local community development program and officer

　•Brokered the rules and regulations to provide and teach them the bureaucratic requirements

•(S) Helped them develop the necessary business plan and find the financing that was necessary to move in the context of market relations

•(S) Eventually established a french restaurant

　•Attract urban customers from Tokyo who wish to enjoy some time in rural Japan and dine in an exotic setting

•For us – was also an inspiration regarding the importance of local control over assets

　•Japanese local control much greater than Canada

　•Provides options for innovation and speedy response to opportunities

The relations between the 4 systems are not always mutually reinforcing, however

•The Burnt Church conflict in Atlantic Canada (near Neguac), for example, and the reaction which followed it, illustrates a situation where all 4 systems come into conflict.

•(S)The bureaucratic structure of the fisheries exacerbated the contradictions between the market relations of the Non-Aboriginal fishers and the associative and communal systems binding Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal fishers.

•Capacity building in these circumstances means

   •Recognizing the fundamental differences in the types of relations that complicate the resolution objectives

   •Finding ways that the various types of relations can facilitate common interests rather than get in the way of establishing joint objectives

Problems between Associative and Bureaucratic

Bureaucratic	Associative
• Competition for fund allocation	• Self-selection by interest
• Standardized criteria	• Goal and social foci
• Public accountability	• Private accountability

(S) e.g. Problems between associative and bureaucratic

•Our research on voluntary associations demonstrates how the regulations of government bureaucracies have a difficult time with the ways in which associative relationships are organized.

•(S) Bureaucracies

•(S) Require competition for allocation of funds

•(S) Standardized criteria for decisions

•(S) Accountability to the public

•All of them valid and necessary requirements of public bureaucracies

•(S) Voluntary Associations

•(S) People are self-selected by their interests - they participate because of their interest in the goal of the group

•Filling out proposals and justifying expenditures is not high on their agendas

•(S) Their foci of attention are on the goals of the organization and the social pleasure they get from working together

•(S) Their criteria for accountability are private – they quickly vote with their feet

•As a result, the more the bureaucratic criteria are required, the greater the problem that voluntary groups have with funding and membership

•Seldom recognized in the allocation of funding by bureaucratic organizations

•This gap in orientation is not always overcome by the involvement of community development personnel to broker the forms and organizational requirements.

•Both here in Canada and in my experience in Europe (LEADER+), I have noticed a dissatisfaction on the part of volunteers as the professionals have more influence over the formulation of objectives and imposition of conditions.

•Typically, it is the weakest and most vulnerable who get excluded from such a system

Build from Strength
- Use local associations to build networks
- Identify and support transferable skills
- Design programs for local system mix
- Increase synergy between systems
- Respect and support local organizations
- Orient for the long term

When thinking about action, therefore…

•Build your Capacity from Strength

  •Rural areas usually strongest in associative and communal relations

  •Need work to build capacity in market and bureaucratic relations

•(S) Use local associations to build networks

  •NRE requires networking and external relations (bridging capital)

  •Local associations organize interests – so extend them (e.g. Lilacs and herbs)

•(S) Identify and support transferable skills between the systems

  •organizing the infrastructure for a conference on lilacs can create a marketable service as a conference centre

  •if a community has strong associative relations at the local level, then these skills may be used to extend them to a global level

•(S) Design programs that meet the local mix of system strengths

  •Communal relations play a more important role in Aboriginal communities than in others.

  •One objective would be to see how these communal relationships and their associated skills might be made compatible with other of the three systems (this is part of our research plan)

  •Reconsider the organization of local governance - if the bureaucratic relationships are incompatible with the local systems, there is bound to be trouble. Experiment with new forms of governance (include the excluded – Youth, Aboriginal peoples)

•(S) Increase synergy between systems

  •If you wish a community to become more market-oriented, then look at the ways in which associative systems might support this- by increasing the extent of the networks, for example.

  •If youth outmigration considered a problem: use communal relations to maintain knowledge and ties

    •Frequent community events with support for diaspora to visit

    •Community news to the diaspora (bulletin, Internet, surveys)

    •Invitations and support to return with new business and social skills

  •Health care delivery might be improved by training local people as "community health aids" (cf. Alaska): building on communal and associative relationships to improve bureaucratic obligations.

•Respect and support local organizations and their systems of control

  •clearest problem in our voluntary sector study: more than 30% of the organizations had to modify their mission in order to get funding

  •Suggestions: re. Celebration of volunteers – reinforces the value of associative relations

•Orient for the long term

  •commitment to rural communities must be long term - we are only now discovering new information in our sites after 4 years there

  •results are long term - therefore short-term project driven approaches are inappropriate

  •E.g. Bollman's conclusion re. Nurturing from birth – 9 months.

The NRE Project: Building Capacity in Rural Canada

A Project of the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation

www.crrf.ca

nre.concordia.ca

October 27, 2001

Become a member today!

Finally:

•Make use of other groups and networks – like CRRF

•Cannot deal with these problems alone

    •Many of them are rooted in pressures over which communities have no control (cf. Peter, Ray)

    •The complexity of NRE requires continuous learning and information from a wide variety of sources

    •Capacity building is a social and long term process