

Building Rural Capacity in the New Economy

1. Summary of Proposed Research

This project will identify the major factors contributing to capacity in rural communities. At the same time, it will build the capacity of rural Canadians to thrive in the new economy. We will accomplish these objectives by combining high quality scientific research with collaboration among researchers, rural citizens and policy makers.

Capacity is the ability of people to organize their assets and resources to achieve the objectives they desire. It is built and maintained by norms, traditions, regulations, and institutions governing social relationships – enabling otherwise disparate individuals to co-ordinate their actions for collective ends.

These norms and institutions have changed significantly in the new economy, especially for rural society. Technological advances in computers, communication, and transportation have contributed to the dramatic out-migration of workers in primary industries and the subsequent decline of rural places. Market and corporate concentration have diminished local control over property rights, thus reducing the ability of rural people to respond to new opportunities. The state's withdrawal from its social service mandate has exacerbated the situation just when the aging rural population requires more support.

Rural residents have shown considerable resilience to these challenges: some have diversified in the face of economic concentration, established innovative social organizations to reorganize property rights and entitlements, and reactivated voluntary groups to support youth and the elderly. These innovations are not widespread, however, often remaining weakest in the sites that need them the most, or becoming unsustainable under the new economy. Old capacities must be strengthened and new ones developed, but the way to do it is unclear. This project will significantly improve that clarity.

The research builds on work conducted by the *New Rural Economy Project* (NRE) of the *Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation* (CRRF). For the past five years, we have been collecting and analyzing information regarding the economic, social, political, and cultural changes associated with the new economy. We have prepared a Rural Canada Database using census and survey information, built a "Rural Observatory" of 32 systematically selected rural sites, established working relationships with local people in these sites, and created a collaborative national network of over 20 researchers.

For the INE project, teams of researchers will be established to pursue four distinct themes: communications, environment, services, and governance. Each of these has particular relevance for economic vitality in rural Canada. The research will focus on the processes by which local capacities are affected, their implications for vulnerable types of individuals and groups, and how these capacities might be developed in ways that are appropriate for the new economy.

The research results will be disseminated in a number of ways. Researchers will learn about our work through refereed journal articles, books, conference presentations, and teaching materials. Policy-makers and analysts will continue to take an active part in our workshops and conferences where they will meet rural residents and benefit from our research findings in the form of reports, presentations, and round-table discussions. The rural public will benefit from their collaboration with policy-makers and researchers who have a keen interest in their well-being. At the same time, information from manuals, reports, presentations, public media, and web-based materials can be related to their own communities – providing a basis for economic and social development initiatives.

This project will not only make a contribution to knowledge through the research component, but will ensure that this knowledge is directly useful for rural people and policy-makers. Rural citizens will learn how to conduct research, interpret the results, and take appropriate action to further their own ends. Policy-makers will benefit from scientifically collected and analyzed information that is grounded in the context to which their policies are directed. All Canadians will benefit from a more appropriate representation of rural Canada, its contribution to non-rural areas, and a more accurate account of the way it is affected by the new economy.

1.1. Detailed Description: Building Rural Capacity in the New Economy

1.1.1. Program of Research

Introduction

Rural Canada is an integral part of the new economy, but the processes and impacts are significantly different than those found in urban regions.¹ Its heavy reliance on commodity trade, dispersed population, demographic structure, and cultural traditions means that the transformation of organizations, households, and communities takes different forms and has different consequences from non-rural centres (De Souza, 1990; Knox and Agnew, 1994; Wallace, 2002). Geographical dispersion means that transaction costs are higher, reducing the advantage of rural businesses that wish to compete in the global market (Apedaile and Rounds, 1991; Stabler and Olfert, 1992; Freshwater, 2001). The generally lower levels of education and older age structure create additional obstacles to participate in the knowledge-based, demand-driven, and ‘just in time’ character of new economic activities. The traditional artisan orientation of rural skills and production make it difficult to integrate into the more bureaucratic and scientific-based organization of the new economy. The heavy dependence on small and medium-sized enterprises in rural places often cuts them out of the economies of scale that are open to more concentrated population centres, and their smaller local markets means that it is difficult for them to specialize in goods and services (Trant and Brinkman, 1992; Marsden et al., 1993).

Most features of the new economy have disadvantaged rural places. The labour-shedding character of new technologies has resulted in a dramatic loss of population from many of the agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining communities (Bluestone and Harrison, 1982). Servicing smaller and more isolated places has placed an additional burden on state resources – a condition exacerbated by the decreased ability of the state to finance its social service mandate (Shucksmith, 2000). Increased mobility of populations, goods, and labour have undermined the traditional bases for social cohesion in many rural communities, reducing their ability to manage local affairs and respond to both short and long-term crises (Robinson, 1990). The decreased earnings resulting from these processes have not only increased the stress on households, but they have further restricted the choices for local business and government (Fitchen, 1991).

In spite of these challenges, our research over the past 5 years has made clear that rural people are not helpless. The diversity of economic and social outcomes found throughout rural Canada is a testament to the fact that many communities and places have been able to respond effectively to the changing conditions (Bollman, 1992; Bollman and Bryden, 1997). There is considerable anecdotal evidence of individuals, businesses, and communities recognizing and reorganizing for the new economy, often providing dramatic examples of the way in which even remote locations might be integrated into global markets for both goods and services (Cloke and Little, 1997; Pan Canadian Community Futures Group, 2001). We have worked with numerous individuals and groups throughout rural Canada that clearly manifest the skills and abilities required for participation in new economic activities and we have been regularly inspired by the high levels of motivation to do so. What is needed is the **capacity**.

To build this capacity, we propose a research project that will not only provide the information and analysis to understand the changing conditions, but will do so in a manner that increases the ability of rural people to assess their relationship to those conditions and mobilize appropriate action. This

¹We adopt a broad definition of rural to facilitate comparisons with other OECD countries. It includes all regions outside Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomerations. It includes population centres less than 20,000 people and Northern Canada (OECD, 1994).

means that the project must not only utilize high standards of scientific investigation, but it must transfer those standards and skills to rural people so they may apply them to further their own objectives.

This work has already begun. For the past 5 years, researchers, policy-analysts, and rural citizens have been building capacity through the activities of the *Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation* (CRRF) in a project entitled *Understanding New Rural Economy: Options and Choices* (NRE). The NRE project has brought together more than 20 researchers in 13 universities, developed a rural Canada database of census and survey information, established a “Rural Observatory” of 32 systematically selected rural sites, and produced more than 200 articles, books, public-oriented documents and flyers, policy documents, and media products. We have also developed and maintained a web site (nre.concordia.ca) linking researchers, policy-analysts, and rural citizens in an international collaborative network. Four books from this project are currently in preparation.

The Rural Observatory of the NRE project provides an innovative and powerful tool for our INE work. It includes 32 rural sites, systematically selected to provide strategic comparisons on 5 dimensions linking them to global processes:

- whether they are well connected to the global economy or not,
- whether their economy is stable or fluctuating,
- whether they are near or far from major metropolitan areas,
- whether they have a high or low level of institutional capacity, and
- whether they are leading or lagging on a number of socio-economic indicators.

It includes extensive historical and institutional information about each site (including both formal and informal organizations) as well as household information collected from a survey of about 2000 households in 20 of the sites. The result is a research database linking individual and household information with local site characteristics and global processes – specifically designed to investigate impacts of the new economy on rural areas.

The infrastructure, networks, and knowledge gained as a result of the NRE project will serve as a basis for the current INE proposal. To date, much of this work has been descriptive of the conditions involved, with heavy dependence on synchronistic confirmatory analysis. We are now in an excellent position to extend this work to examine the more dynamic processes involved – and to identify the implications of these processes for improving the capacity of rural Canadians. The INE project will make this possible.

1.1.2. Objectives

At the most general level, our INE project objectives are to:

- provide grounded, comparative, and comprehensive analysis of the processes of change relevant to building rural capacity under the new economy;
- identify important economic, social, and political outcomes of these processes of change;
- propose strategic and policy options with rural communities and government policy-makers in the light of these processes and outcomes;
- build the research and education capacity of rural citizens and their groups; and
- establish a long-term research and education infrastructure to serve the above objectives.

As a result of the NRE project we have identified a number of more specific objectives flowing from the general ones above. These include the following.

- To extend our understanding of key rural issues relating to the new economy and their implications for Canada. We have organized these issues under four themes: communications, environment, services, and governance.

- To build the research and educational capacity in several rural-focused Centres and individuals that have emerged over the last few years (cf. “Collaboration” below).
- To maintain and develop our partnerships with the sites in the NRE ‘Rural Observatory’ by extending the relationships with those already active, developing further collaboration, bringing site representatives together, and disseminating insights to all rural people.
- To develop appropriate indicators to analyse and monitor rural economies, social organization, and processes. This includes indicators that are sensitive to the structure and changes in local economies, trade, institutions (both formal and informal), social capital, social cohesion, health, environment, public safety, and household organization.
- To improve the quality, quantity, and access to, information relevant to rural Canada. This includes facilitating data access for research, policy, and local decision-making purposes, disseminating insights, and training rural people to use the information.

The INE project will build on the many innovative features of the NRE project. It will be the key support for Canada’s only national research and education forum specifically directed to rural issues. It will provide an infrastructure linking disparate research centres and professionals across Canada and around the world. It will strengthen and expand the “Rural Observatory”: a Canadian innovation in research and education. It will continue to nurture and expand the unique researcher/citizen/policy-analyst relationship that has proven to be so successful for knowledge dissemination, skill transfer, and policy development. And it will accomplish these while providing high quality scientific knowledge linking economic and social processes at household, community, regional, national, and global levels of analysis.

Theoretical Framework

In rural areas, the new economy is about complexity, increased exposure to global trade, volatile economies, and faster, cheaper communication (Bollman, 1992; Bollman and Bryden, 1997; Freshwater, 1999). It also means the loss of local control (Jean, 1997), reduced public services (Bruce and Halseth, 2001), and higher levels of mobility (Beshiri and Bollman, 2001). These changes are not uniform, however. Mechanization, trade policy, and migration have diminished the influence of rural people in political and economic processes, but they have not done so throughout all rural areas (Apedaile and Reimer, 1996; Byrne, 1999; Freshwater, 2001). Whereas many rural locations suffer increasing unemployment, diminished incomes, and reduced services, many others are maintaining or increasing their economic and social vitality within the new economy (Bollman, 1992; Bollman and Bryden, 1997). Understanding the reasons for this variation has been a focus of attention for both researchers and policy-makers (OECD, 1994; Marsden, 1998; Freshwater, 2001; Reimer, 2001b).

Existing research makes clear that economic base and human capital considerations account for only a small part of the variation among rural regions (Shortall and Bryden, 1997; Bollman and Bryden, 1997; Errington, 1998; Flora, 1998; Terluin et al., 1999; Putnam, 2001). NRE research supports this conclusion and suggests that institutional and social characteristics must be included for a more complete understanding of rural economies (Reimer, 2001b). For this reason our focus is on the social, political, cultural, and environmental implications of capacity in rural communities.

Capacity refers to the ability of people to organize their assets and resources to achieve objectives they consider important. These objectives may be reactive, where people are faced with some challenge – or innovative, where new visions are established and pursued. As illustrated in Figure 1, the analysis of capacity requires an understanding of the assets and resources available to rural people. These include economic, human, social, and natural capital in various forms (Putnam, 1993; Wall et al., 1998; Flora, 1998; Pierce, 1999; Young, 2001). It also requires an analysis of the outcomes valued by the various

actors. However, the most important aspect of the framework is the analysis of the structures and processes needed to create those outcomes from different arrangements of assets and resources.

We consider these social structures and processes to be embedded in four different, but interdependent types of social relationships: reflecting the different institutions and skills required to achieve various outcomes (Fiske, 1991; Reimer, 2001a). The first is capacity to function in **market** relations (e.g. financial, commercial, labour, and housing markets), where individuals or communities must gather information, assess demand, organize assets, and negotiate contracts. The second is capacity to deal with and build **bureaucratic** relations (most often with state, legal, or corporate organizations), requiring the ability to articulate specific objectives as general principles, operate in terms of roles rather than personalities, and rationalize objectives into specific but coordinated activities to achieve outcomes. The third is capacity to work with **associative** relations, such as those found in voluntary and 3rd sector organizations. This requires the ability to identify common interests, mobilize collective action, and communicate effectively. The fourth is capacity to manage **communal** relations, most often found in family, close friendship networks, gangs, and clans. This type of capacity requires the ability to build and maintain trust, manage intimacy, and deal with social-emotional pressures.

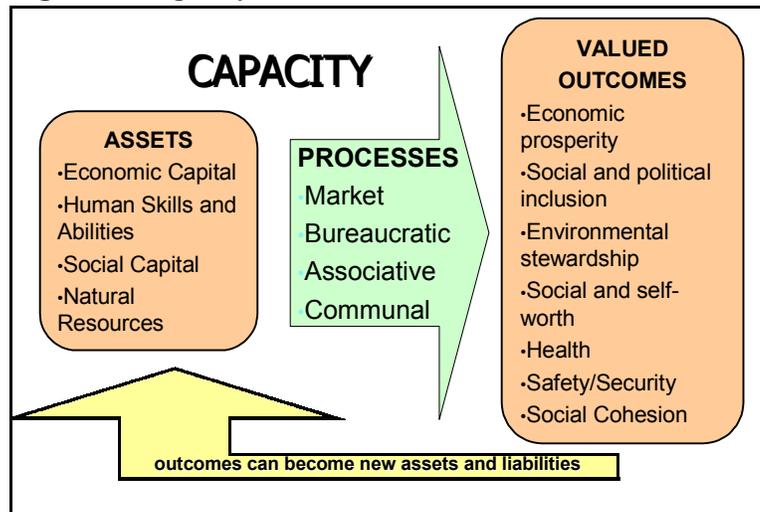
These four types of relations are interdependent. In some respects all are required for a social group to function successfully, but under certain circumstances some become more important than others. In the new economy, for example, market and bureaucratic relations dominate the social processes governing the organization and distribution of goods and services. Rural communities, traditionally organized on associative and communal relations, are at a disadvantage within this context. Their size and isolation often means that multiple capacities are difficult to establish and at the same time more in demand. The shift from state-regulated to more competitive models has left them vulnerable to the rapidly changing demands of the new economy. We need to identify which types of capacity are most crucial for rural areas, at what scale they are most useful, and how they might be developed or transformed.

To do so we will focus on four key themes identified by the NRE research as particularly important for rural areas: communications, environment, services, and governance. Each of them is critical for capacity development while being directly linked to changes in the new economy. They are also all directly implicated in policy positions and proposals articulated by various levels of government. This guarantees that our work will not only be relevant to the theoretical discussions regarding capacity, but will provide specific policy proposals while addressing issues that are of concern to rural people.

Theme 1: Changes and opportunities related to communication and communication technology

Communication and knowledge transfer are key elements of the new economy. They are also critical to rural capacity since they reduce the relatively high transaction costs that disadvantage rural economies and provide the infrastructure that structures social cohesion and exclusion. In order to function effectively in the new economy, communication capacity must be developed, both with respect

Figure 1: Capacity Framework



to physical infrastructure as well as the skills and social organization it requires (James, 1994). Access to the Internet, for example, has emerged as an important tool for expanding markets, accessing bureaucratic resources, building common-interest networks, and even maintaining family relations (Phipps, 2000). The federal government's commitment to the CAP and broadband access programs acknowledges this point (Halseth and Arnold, 1997).

The promise of communication technology is highly conditioned by local circumstances, however (Einsiedel and Innes, 2000). Our NRE research has shown how access to national and regional communication tools is only weakly related to the leading or lagging status of rural sites. On the other hand, access to (and sometimes control of) local communication tools is related to both capacity and the leading status of the field sites (Bruce et al., 1999). While Internet usage in rural locations continues to climb, there is still a rural/non-rural gap in its adoption and some evidence that the majority of uses are social rather than economic (Bruce and Gadsden, 1999; Birdsall, 2000; Reddick et al., 2000; Halseth, 2001). Policy objectives favoring economic growth, therefore, might be better served by programs that transform social uses to market-based ones rather than focus on business uses alone.

This theme team will build on these insights in two general ways. First, using available data, they will test several hypotheses regarding the characteristics of Internet users (at individual and site levels), the role of traditional media for individual and local capacity, and the types of uses made of all communication tools. By using the NRE sampling frame, this team will also be able to examine how both new and old forms of communication are related to more global changes in the new economy. The primary objectives of this work will be to identify the extent to which various communications tools are integrated into types of capacity, analyze how they have changed under the new economy, and assess their relative value for different types of capacity.

Second, the theme team will explore the nature and extent of communication innovation in rural areas (Nair and White, 1994). This will involve working with selected field sites to initiate and develop various communication projects. These may involve the introduction or building of skills or facilities related to community radio, virtual town hall meetings, newsletters, local cable TV, CD-ROMs, or web sites. Using Industry Canada's Special Events radio license, for example, a community-based group could broadcast on FM for about a month. Our objective will be to monitor the processes by which this occurs, the challenges and strategies entailed, and the impacts on local governance, services, economic, and social relations. Sites will be selected to ensure strategic comparisons by economic, social, and policy contexts.

Theme 2: Changes and processes by which the natural environment is used and affected

In many ways the new economy has intensified the stresses placed on the natural environment. Modern technology has given us the means to over-fish the seas (Steele et al., 1992; Milch, 1999), over-cut the forests (Norcliffe, 1999), and degrade the soil on a massive scale (Smithers and Smit, 1995; Furuseth, 1997). In spite of the fact that most of Canada's natural resource wealth is publicly owned, the concentration and centralization of production has meant that some of the most important assets for local development have been removed from local control (Hamilton and Seyfrit, 1994; Ramsey and Everitt, 2001; Ramp and Koc, 2001). If we are to build local capacity, therefore, it is necessary to explore options for reversing some of these trends, develop alternatives to them, or take advantages of new opportunities (Sinclair and Smith, 1999; Beckley and Reimer, 1999; Russell and Harris, 2001).

The degree to which local communities benefit from the resource wealth that surrounds them varies dramatically. In some cases communities have added value to traditional commodity production. Some have found new uses for the resources by emphasizing their amenity or service uses (e.g. tourism, pollution control, pharmaceutical uses). Others have managed to reorganize property rights to be more beneficial for their communities, through local ownership, community control of natural resources, or

co-management of those resources (Beckley, 1998). Still others involve the discovery and mobilization of previously unexploited natural assets to produce desired outcomes.

Using this variation, we will compare resource management organization within and near our field sites to explore how they have changed, how competitive or cooperative approaches develop, how they define and achieve goals, what are the challenges they face, what types of capacity they use, and what their outcomes are for resource development, environmental sustainability, and quality of life. This includes comparing sites with respect to local ownership, community control of natural resources, co-management of natural resources, the role of social movements, and other issues related to management, allocation and distribution of natural resources.

As with the first theme, this one will be addressed in two ways. The first is to describe recent and current conditions, along with the processes contributing to them. It will include an analysis of the literature as well as existing NRE and other data, the collection of selected information regarding natural resource stocks for each of the NRE sites, as well as the extent of their use by local, national, and international organizations. This information will be used to answer questions such as: How has the reorganization of commodity production affected the capacity of local communities and regions? Which types of land and natural resource entitlements contribute most to increased local capacity? and How are natural resource conflicts manifested and dealt with in various types of rural locations?

The second approach will be to focus on innovation in natural resource production, value extraction, and resource management. Examples will be selected from among our field sites and detailed analysis of the conditions, processes, challenges, strategies, and outcomes will be conducted to understand the role of capacity in the emergence and outcomes of these innovations. The examples will be selected for their innovation in natural resource production or management so that both successful and unsuccessful innovations are included .

Theme 3: Changes and options in services and social support (formal and informal)

During the 1950s and 60s, basic social services came increasingly under bureaucratic relations as the state took over from civil society. In many rural communities, this transition was a difficult one since their dependence on associative and communal forms of social services was deeply entrenched. By the 1980s, however, it was largely complete (Rosenberg, 1983). Since that time, the state has been withdrawing from its service role and arguing that the private and public sectors can once again take up the slack (Bruce et al., 1999; Chappell, 2001).

Rural locations have been hard hit by these trends and policies (Bruce and Halseth, 2001). The relatively low population density and long distances between rural centres have made them particularly vulnerable (Pinch, 1985; Furuseth, 1998). In addition, the aging population structure has placed greater demand on services at the same time that higher levels of out-migration have undermined the traditional bases of social cohesion which supported the informal social service structures (Hayslip et al., 1980; Windley, 1983; Gill and Everitt, 1993; Keating et al., 2001). The overall effect is having a significant impact on local quality of life and the ability of places to hold or attract economic development (Bluestone and Harrison, 1982; Fitchen, 1991).

Communication, transportation, business, health, education, welfare, and justice services each play a role in maintaining local economic activities in communities (Pierce and Dale, 1999). These are even more important under the rapidly changing conditions of the new economy (Knox and Agnew, 1994). Services are crucial for attracting new economic activities since the provision of social services creates the quality of life that footloose economic development seeks while communication, transportation, and business services provide the tools required (Pinch, 1985; Potapchuk et al., 1997; Putnam, 2001; ISUMA, 2001). The analysis of conditions and changes in these basic services (related to health, education, quality of life, and infrastructure) is therefore a critical component of our analysis of rural capacity.

As with the previous themes, we will examine the changes in services in two primary ways. First, we will provide an analysis of the current conditions and processes relating to service provision in rural Canada (both formal and informal) (Delaney, 1995; MacLeod et al., 1998). This includes an update of the NRE data already collected in 1998 and 2000 along with a more focused study of volunteer-based services (Bruce et al., 1999; Bruce and Halseth, 2001). We will concentrate on the forms of capacity they utilize and the integration of those forms within various types of service providers and communities. Particular attention will be given to the implications of service changes for vulnerable populations such as elderly people (Fast et al., 2001), the working poor (Reimer, 2001a), youth (LeBlanc, 2000; LeBlanc and Gauthier, 2001; Looker and Andres, 2001), and single mothers (Reed, 1999; Halseth and Lo, 1999; Preston et al., 2000).² Social services (both formal and informal) will be prominent in this analysis (Blacksell et al., 1988; Northern and Rural Health Task Force, 1995; McGranahan and Kassel, 1997; Jané, 1998). This part of the research will address such questions as: How is the organization and provision of social and commercial services changing under the new economy? Which types of capacity are most effective in providing such services? How do the different types of community organization contribute to the different types of capacity? and Which types of rural people are particularly vulnerable to changes in services?

Second, we will focus on some of the many innovations in service delivery that have emerged as a result of the changing conditions (Boone et al., 1997; Halseth and Williams, 1999). We will track examples of innovative servicing such as the Tumbler Ridge agreement to supply basic education and medical services and the Saskatchewan case of innovative provision of women's shelters. Both experiments were designed to build a foundation for retaining existing companies and residents and attracting new companies and residents. They also give us a chance to explore the longevity of these arrangements and the 'lessons' which may be learned from their experience. Cases selected will include examples from our international networks in order to provide comparisons of different administrative and political regimes.

Theme 4: Structures and processes of local governance (formal and informal)

Our NRE site research suggests that the most resilient communities are those where new rural governance is evident. This data challenges the classical view of rural people as traditional, passive, and with little capacity and supports the position that rural people are both knowledgeable and able to act effectively under many conditions (Giddens, 1984; Gunn and Gunn, 1991). The history of agricultural marketing co-operatives and socialized medicine demonstrate how rural people have been able to develop innovative social institutions in the face of external pressures. We expect, therefore, that the new economy will generate similar social innovations (Reed, 1993; O'Neill, 1994; Halseth, 1999; Jean, 2000; Carrier and Côté, 2000).

Our NRE research has shown how "leading" rural communities have a more balanced form of leadership. In those sites, local power tends to be shared by various groups and interests, whereas in the lagging sites, power is controlled by a small group of persons (Odagiri and Jean, 2000). The underlying processes are unclear, however. We know little about the dynamics whereby local issues are identified, represented, and turned into social action. Nor do we know how outcomes are affected by the different

² Although Aboriginal peoples are clearly vulnerable to changes in the new economy, we do not have the experience and resources within our team to deal with their situation. Some of our team members have conducted research on Aboriginal matters (Peters et al., 1991; Reimer and Trott, 1997), but we feel that an appropriate integration of them into our analysis is beyond our resources at this point. We have held discussions with DIAND, Industry Canada, and Natural Resources Canada to this end, but await the availability of research personnel before we can commit ourselves to such a task.

institutional, social, and legal structures in which they are embedded. The INE research will seek to provide this knowledge.

As with the previous themes, we will conduct the research using two approaches. The first will involve a comparison of how sites deal with common problems and issues. To meet the requirements of such a comparison, we have identified two conflicts that are faced by most of our sites: those relating to land use and stewardship of the environment and those relating to the challenges of service delivery. We will compare how existing governance structures deal with these issues under different conditions. In this way, the research will not only contribute to our understanding of governance, but advance the objectives of both the natural resources and services themes. The sites will be selected to ensure appropriate comparisons by governance structures and economic conditions.

Even as the new economy places stress on rural communities, its new conditions and technology provide opportunities for the governance of rural areas. The second approach of the governance team will identify some of these innovations in governance and compare them to more traditional forms (Herbert-Cheshire, 2000). New local and regional agencies, municipal amalgamation, community-based resource management, co-operative ventures, and government/voluntary-group partnerships will be examined for their contribution to local capacity and the conditions under which they emerge (Chouinard and Desjardins, 2000).

1.1.3. Methodology

The INE project will combine a number of different methodological approaches in an innovative manner. Data will be collected from historical, institutional, survey, observation, key-informant, and census-based sources. The analysis will include literature reviews, historical and longitudinal analysis, content analysis, the full range of statistical techniques, and quasi-experimental design. Where possible, these will be organized in a reflexive and participatory manner, integrating rural citizens in the process through consultation, data collection, site meetings, and evaluation processes.

The NRE Project serves as the model for the organization and value of this approach. It provides information regarding rural Canada in general from census and survey sources that will be used as baseline information to analyze changes in economic and social conditions. This information will also be used to compare the field sites (and other rural sites) with respect to global economic and social conditions via the structure of the NRE Sample Frame. Data from the 2001 census will be integrated into this database to provide us with longitudinal information from 1986 to 2001. The NRE also provides a rich source of site-level information from 1997 and 2000 regarding businesses, co-ops, services, institutions, voluntary organizations, and major historical events for each of the field sites. This will be updated in 2004 to provide longitudinal information for our analysis by all theme teams. Finally, the NRE household survey will be used to examine the communication, services, and informal economic activities of households under the new economy. Hierarchical statistical techniques will be used where appropriate in order to accommodate the multi-level nature of this data.

One of the more innovative aspects of our approach is to invite local people into the research process itself – thereby enabling them to develop research capacity while they learn about their situation (White, 1997; Babbie and Benaquisto, 2002:318). We have found that the benefits to our capacity-building objectives outweigh any reactive effects this approach might introduce. To minimize the latter effects, we record information about all our encounters through log books for each site, ‘triangulate’ our research conclusions using multiple forms of data collection and analysis (Denzin, 1989), and periodically review the methodological implications of our site work through the production of reports. These reports and experiences will result in a book as another product of our work.

The research will be organized around the four themes outlined above. Each theme will have a leader and team members with the responsibility to develop the theoretical framework for their theme,

prepare data collection and analysis activities, and produce the relevant materials. Integration of the themes will be assured in the following ways.

1. Our common focus on capacity and capacity building. Each of the themes will use the capacity framework when addressing theoretical, operational, and policy issues. This means, for example, that the analysis of the reorganization of services will include an examination of changing governance structures, just as the analysis of changing markets for natural resources will include the examination of new forms of communication and knowledge transfer.
2. Integration will be enhanced by research on several topics that cut across the four themes. The nature and impacts of the new economy is the most obvious example, but we have identified several more specific issues relevant to rural Canada that will be examined by all themes: aging, gender-based processes, youth out-migration, trade policy, health, education, and social exclusion. In the process, individuals will work within more than one theme group to produce the research documents associated with the cross-cutting topics.
3. Our organization. Several individuals will serve on more than one theme team, thereby ensuring transfer of information and analysis. Our regular workshops and conferences will reinforce this transfer both within our research network and between researchers, policy-analysts, and rural citizens.
4. Our common focus on the Rural Observatory. We have found that the sharing of commitment to these sites and the people in them has had significance benefits for integration: they provide common points of reference for our theoretical discussion, the operationalization of key concepts, and the production of documents. At the same time, they provide excellent bases for comparison with all the knowledge-generating benefits that implies.
5. Integration will be ensured by the production of common documents under joint authors.
6. The mandate of the Principal Investigator and Liaison Officer will be to ensure the theoretical integration of the project as well as its administrative coordination. This will be accomplished by facilitating exchanges and joint activities of the project members.
7. Perhaps the most important technique for ensuring integration among the themes and partners will be the design of common instruments for data collection and analysis along with the common activities in which we engage. The process of formulating and refining these instruments forces us to clarify positions and integrate the theoretical positions that structure the operational decisions. Some of the key common activities are the following.
 - Development of the capacity framework. Indicators for the key concepts have already been constructed using the NRE household and field site data (Reimer, 2002b), so the initial work will involve the testing and refinement of those indicators. This data is integrated with census data from the rural Canada database (1986, 1991, 1996). Using the usual techniques of multi-variate analysis for survey materials (regression, log-linear techniques, longitudinal analysis, factor analysis, hierarchical analysis, etc.) the work will focus on hypotheses relating capacity to the conditions for its emergence and development, its outcomes, and its relationship to the theme issues.
 - Expansion and analysis of the NRE Sample Frame and Rural Observatory. This work will focus on the NRE Rural Database. Each of the five sample frame dimensions will be considered with respect to the various issues addressed by the theme teams (Reimer, 2002c). We will also update the NRE site profile database using the methodology developed over the last 5 years. Key informants and organizations will be identified using a set of standardized procedures to ensure appropriate representation. They will be interviewed using modified versions of the NRE instruments. The results will be integrated into the Rural Observatory database and several of the types of analysis conducted under the NRE will be upgraded to include the new data (Reimer, 1999). The teams working with this data will also produce

special materials for distribution to the field site personnel and rural people as part of our dissemination activities. They will also be responsible for helping research colleagues from outside the INE team to integrate non-NRE sites into the sample frame, instruct them regarding the use of the NRE materials, and conduct comparative analyses as they become necessary.

- Innovation studies. As outlined above, each of the theme teams has proposed studies in strategically selected sites to examine innovations in capacity building. These proposals will be coordinated to ensure appropriate comparisons and efficient use of sites and resources. For example, the examination of innovation in resource management can be coordinated with the analysis of innovation in governance structures since they will be considering the nature and changes in capacity within similar contexts.
- Media studies. The proposal by the communications theme to introduce new forms of media will also be coordinated with the other theme teams. Not only will we examine the relative capacity of different sites to use these various forms, but the work will provide an opportunity for teams interested in service delivery or governance, for example, to examine the ways in which new media opportunities are integrated into the current structures and the extent to which they affect the various types of capacity.

Schedule of Activities

In the fall of 2002, the NRE and Social Cohesion Projects culminate in a national conference where the principle findings and insights will be showcased. Four books arising from these projects are currently being written. Following from the 2002 conference, the first year of the INE project will emphasize smaller meetings and consultations among researchers, rural citizens, partners, and policy-analysts. These meetings will serve as occasions for analyzing and evaluating the results of the previous projects, integrating specific objectives and strategies for the INE Project, and organizing working groups for advancing the work. They will culminate in the first of four annual conferences in the fall of 2003.

Year 2 will include more extensive data collection and project development than year 1 since the working groups will have identified specific information necessary to answer their research questions. Working group and theme team meetings will continue within the framework of an annual spring workshop and national conference. Profile information from the field sites will be updated.

Year 3 will continue some data collection, but will emphasize dissemination and discussions with rural communities and policy-makers. By this time, the initial results will begin emerging so that working groups can report back to their relevant stakeholders for 'ground-truthing' and evaluation purposes. Our experience in the NRE Project has made clear how valuable this step is for improving the quality of results while serving the objectives of education and accountability.

Year 4 will concentrate on the completion of outstanding projects, integration of the themes and capacities perspectives, and preparation of documents, particularly for public and academic audiences.

In all 4 years, we will continue the tradition established by the NRE Project of having a workshop in the spring and a conference in the fall – always in rural areas, with significant local participation. The workshop is a focused event for invited researchers and the fall conference is a larger open event (approximately 200 people) to which local people, regional and national policy-analysts, and international colleagues are welcome.

Products

We will produce a wide variety of products from this project. Commitments by co-investigators identify at least 15 academic peer-reviewed articles, 3 books, 3 'guidebooks' for rural capacity development, 4 national conferences with international participation, 4 national workshops, academic presentations, numerous flyers, booklets, and brochures for public distribution (especially in our field sites), web-site products, numerous presentations at academic, policy-maker, and citizen meetings, and

several media products (e.g. newspaper articles, TV and radio interviews, CD-ROMs, video productions). The extensive involvement of students will result in numerous theses, papers, and essays as well. We will provide mentoring assistance to facilitate the preparation of peer-reviewed articles from these documents where appropriate. We will also produce policy reports and presentations in response to invitations by policy-makers if our past experience is an accurate guide.

Collaboration

The new economy is complex and its impacts are pervasive. Researching it requires analysis that is multi-level, systematic, and comparative. This can only be done in a collaborative context. An adequate study of local impacts, for example, is demanding on time, money, and energy. To have sufficient number of cases for appropriate comparison, therefore, requires the efforts of many people. Analyzing, evaluating, and disseminating the results in a useful manner requires many more. In our project, this collaboration will take three major forms: collaboration among researchers, collaboration with rural citizens and leaders, and collaboration with policy-analysts.

Our research team consists of a national network of rural researchers – directly connected to 13 universities throughout Canada. In this way, our work will contribute to the research capacity of these centres while increasing capacity to rural people in general. Two of these centres have been recently awarded Canada Research Fellows (one junior and one senior) – reinforcing the quality of our network. In addition, we have working relationships with about 50 other research centres or groups. Some of these are identified as research partners, but many others are projects on which our team members participate.

We will also continue the international collaboration that has enriched both our education and research objectives. One of the most prominent is the relationship with our colleagues from the Institute for Rural Revitalization in the 21st Century (IRR21). It includes comparative case study research with 2 Japanese rural sites, regular academic exchanges, and joint publications. We will also continue our work with centres and projects from Scotland (The Arkleton Centre for Rural Research), England (The Rural and Tourism Research Group) (Errington and Courtney, 2000), USA (Flora, 1998; Freshwater, 2001), Ireland (Shortall and Bryden, 1997), and the Netherlands (Post and Terluin, 1997). International comparisons are strategically important for our objectives since they provide information regarding the impacts of different political regimes. As Canadian representative for the International Rural Network, Reimer is well placed to identify opportunities in this regard.

Collaboration will also be organized between researchers and rural citizens. A primary forum for this will be the annual conferences (“the Canadian Rural University”) that will continue from the 15-year CRRF tradition. They include considerable involvement of local people.

Our organization of the “Rural Observatory” represents another innovation in collaboration with rural people. These site teams will continue to act as consultants and advisors to the research process – enabling the research to take place and at the same time building the local research capacity.

Our collaboration activities will include policy-makers and analysts as well. Our conferences and workshops have involved members from key government departments at all levels, including both federal and provincial Cabinet Ministers. The Rural Secretariat of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada will continue to provide important support. In addition to financial resources, they will serve as a conduit to policy-makers and the development of policy itself. Statistics Canada will support our work through advice, data, space, facilities, and contract arrangements for students. We benefit from their Data Liberation Initiative through the universities in our network. Several of these universities provide support through research Centres, space, equipment, and financial assistance. Other Federal agencies such as Health Canada, Natural Resources Canada, HRDC, and DIAND will be included wherever appropriate – most often through our program of conferences and workshops, but occasionally through

contract work or specific ‘add-ons’ to the project. Regional, provincial, and municipal government organizations will also be included wherever possible – as they have been in NRE activities.

1.1.4. Communication of Results

CRRF and the NRE Project have a long history of experimentation and development of dissemination techniques for scientific, policy, and public audiences. This experience is the basis of our dissemination plans for the INE project. They are international in scope.

Academic audiences will be informed using the traditional methods of peer-reviewed articles, books, working papers, workshops, and conference presentations. We have also found that our web site serves as an excellent tool for disseminating material. It includes ‘Powerpoint’ presentations, working documents, and discussion forums that are used by all target groups both within and outside our project (over 21,000 hits to date). The dissemination of considerable academic material will also occur through the networks in which our members are involved.

Our results will be communicated to policy-makers through other formal events, often initiated by policy groups. Through CRRF we have been invited to appear before three different Senate or House Committees on topics of relevance to rural policy. In each case, documents have been produced that get wide distribution. Two of our members are on the Advisory Committee to the Secretary of State for Rural Affairs. Several others have been invited to appear before *ad hoc* advisory groups established by various government departments such as Health Canada, Agriculture and Agri-food Canada, and Statistics Canada as well as before public interest groups such as the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. Policy-makers will also make use of our web-based facilities and are likely to arrange contracts with us.

Rural citizens and community leaders will also be important target groups for our materials. Our past experience makes it clear that providing written material is not enough – they must be included in a program of dialogue that allows citizens to understand the relevance of the material to their local situation. For this reason, most of our dissemination materials for citizens will be provided within a program of discussion and feedback. This includes regular site visits, communications in the rural media, research activities related to the Rural Observatory, our annual conferences, and our web site. The NRE project, for example, has had just under 100 such communications during its 5-years.

One of our more innovative approaches to dissemination is through the Site Workshops that we hold at each of our national conferences. We invite people from our research sites to meet for a day with NRE researchers and policy-makers. At these events, common issues are discussed and local insights and responses are considered. It provides an opportunity for people from diverse parts of the country to exchange experiences and establish support networks.

As a result of our NRE work we have come to realize the important role that non-rural citizens and leaders play in the future of rural Canada. For that reason, the INE project will include a dissemination program for urban audiences. The experience of our Japanese colleagues suggests that this should include dissemination through public media, rural/non-rural exchanges of key leaders and young people, and cross-department dialogue with governments.

Finally, the communications theme team will develop innovative methods for disseminating our results. For example, we will prepare a video presentation regarding rural and small town Canada in the new economy along with an interactive and web-integrated CD-ROM showcasing our major findings. These products will be produced primarily for schools, universities, and the general public (both rural and non-rural). They will be distributed in such a manner that we can evaluate their effectiveness.

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1.3. Description of Team

The research team brings together people from several disciplines. The areas and diversity reflect our emphasis on the social implications of the new economy in a rural context. The team has demonstrated expertise in a wide variety of research approaches, including historical, qualitative, quantitative, survey, participatory research, case study, modeling, and statistical techniques. Collectively, they have field-work experience in all provinces and territories.

INE Team	☆=Theme Leader	+ =Field Site Coordinator	S=Steering Committee			
			Themes			
Person	Disciplines	Location	Communi- cation	Services	Environ- ment	Governance
Co-Investigators						
Tom Beckley+S	forestry	UNB			☆	
David Bruce+S	geography	Mt. Allison U.	☆	●		
Omer Chouinard+	fisheries	U. of Moncton			●	●
Ivan Emke+	sociology	Memorial U.	●			
Greg Halseth+S	geography	UNBC		☆		
Bruno Jean+S	sociology	UQAR				☆
Patrice LeBlanc+	sociology	UQAT		●		●
Diane Martz+S	geography	U. of Sask.		●	●	
Doug Ramsey+	rural development	Brandon U.		●	●	
Bill Reimer+S	sociology	Concordia	●	●	●	●
Derek Wilkinson+	sociology	Laurentian	●			●
Collaborators						
Ray Bollman	economics	Statistics Canada			●	
Norah Keating	human ecology	U. of AB		●		
Dianne Looker	sociology	Acadia U.		●		
Steve Plante	geography/anthrop.	UQAR				●

As Principal Investigator, Reimer will be responsible for the theoretical and analytical integration of the project as well as its coordination and financial control. He will also be responsible for project-wide analysis of census, survey, and field site data that cuts across themes and locates the case studies in broader frameworks. In the case of the NRE project, for example, this has included the preparation of profile materials outlining the general trends in rural Canada (Reimer, 1999), the analysis and evaluation of the overall sample frame (Reimer, 2002c), and both theoretical and empirical analyses of social cohesion (Reimer, 2002a). Reimer will be responsible for providing this type of analysis in the INE project as well, including the analysis of the capacity framework and sample frame. He will also be heavily involved in the maintenance and development of partnership liaisons for research, policy, and dissemination objectives.

He will be aided by the 4 theme leaders plus Martz as a Steering Committee for the project. Each member of the Steering Committee will have a particular administrative support role in addition to their research objectives. Beckley will help develop the research program through the identification of new opportunities for the integration of our ongoing work both within and outside our networks. Bruce will focus on our dissemination activities – evaluating those currently in place and seeking new options for more effective communication. Halseth will establish and facilitate procedures for ensuring quality control of the project, including the research products and ethical standards. Jean will maintain our relations with collaborators and partners as well as build new relations as opportunities arise. Martz will

deal with our education objectives: for students, policy-analysts, and citizens. This includes developing our program of student exchanges and support, proposing innovations in knowledge development, and evaluating our success in capacity-building. These support roles will include monitoring the activities related to their responsibility, suggesting activities to enhance the project, and aiding the PI and Administrative team where required in the completion of those activities.

The PI and Steering Committee will be supported by an administrative team centred at Concordia University. Our experience in the NRE has made clear the value of a central administrative location to coordinate the widely dispersed nature of our network. The administrative team will consist of 4 assistants: a Research Manager, Executive Secretary, Liaison Officer, and Communications Officer. The Research Manager will be responsible for the implementation of the project as directed by the PI and Steering Committee. The Manager will be supported by an Executive Secretary who will maintain the administrative records of the project – including minutes and financial accounts.

The Liaison Officer will be responsible for the many tasks associated with maintaining and building our relationships with collaborators, partners, and the wider public. The NRE project has taught us that this is both time-consuming and essential to the effective operation of a collaborative project such as this. Too often, it is sacrificed to the demands of research since it is not recognized by our institutions and therefore contributes little to our academic careers. In response, our more senior researchers have taken on this burden in order to support the more junior team members. This strategy comes at a cost, however, for even the more senior members must maintain a strong publication record to attract grants. A part-time Liaison Officer will serve to overcome these challenges by supporting the PI in these activities.

The Communications Officer's responsibility is to facilitate communication within the project and between the project, partners, and the wider public. This involves the preparation of communications materials, maintenance of the Web site, as well as the organization and control of the data and archives.

The remaining Co-investigators will contribute to the theoretical and operational direction of the project in a number of ways. First, they are all field site coordinators for the research and education activities in the 32 field sites. They are responsible for liaison with up to 4 sites. This means maintaining good relations, managing site research, and ensuring frequent and appropriate dissemination activities in the sites. In addition, they will be part of the theme teams that deal with the central questions of the project. As team members they will be involved in the formulation of specific research initiatives, data collection, analysis, quality control, and dissemination of the materials. Several of the collaborators are themselves supported by Research Centres and local networks of students.

Most of the research collaborators will contribute through research activities on specific topics: Keating on health and aging, Looker on youth; and Plante on governance. Bollman will contribute through his expertise in rural economics as well as his networks and knowledge relating to Statistics Canada.

The activities of the project will be organized with considerable responsibility distributed to the rural research centres represented by the Co-investigators. Particular emphasis will be placed on the four Centres of the theme leaders (the Rural and Small Town Programme in Sackville, NB; the Centre de recherche sur le développement territorial in Rimouski, QC; the Centre for Resources and Natural Environment in Fredericton, NB; and the University of Northern BC in Prince George, BC), but several others will be supported (le Chair Desjardins en développement des petites collectivités in Rouyn-Noranda, QC, INORD in Sudbury, ON, the Rural Development Institute in Brandon MB, and the Centre for Cooperative Studies in Saskatoon, SK). This approach will contribute to our objective to build the research capacity for rural Canada. By linking these Centres and supporting their work we will overcome some of the major challenges faced by rural researchers: they typically come from smaller universities with less support for research, they usually have a smaller pool of students from which to draw, and their costs for transportation and infrastructure make both research and collaboration more expensive.

1.4. Student Training and Education

The INE Project will continue the NRE tradition of significant student involvement in the research process. For example, since its inception in 1997, the NRE had 68 students involved in the production of approximately 18 reports, 47 popular media materials, and 11 theses. Students will be involved throughout the project in six primary ways.

- First, they will participate in all aspects of the deliberations by theme and headquarters teams. This includes problem formulation, literature review, research design, analysis of census and survey materials, field work (including observation, interviewing, record-keeping, and analysis), qualitative and quantitative data analysis (including GIS), report production, preparation of media materials, public relations, and administration.
- Second, they will be involved in the field work activities of the project, including general liaison, preparation and administration of surveys or interviews, as well as dissemination of the results, whether this be through the production of reports or meetings with site people.
- Third, they will be involved in our research exchanges, both nationally and internationally. In the NRE project, for example, this has meant that over 10 students participated in national exchanges and 3 students in our international exchanges.
- Fourth, students will be encouraged and supported to present materials in both academic and non-academic venues. For example, NRE-based students made 10 presentations at conferences and workshops. Most of these were for academics, but they often included policy-makers and rural citizens as well.
- Fifth, students will be involved in the production of papers, reports, and theses.
- Sixth, students will participate in the preparation and in some cases, the authorship of peer-reviewed articles. Eight students were involved in this type of activity during the NRE period.

The experiences and skills acquired by students have made them very desirable to both academic and non-academic organizations. For example, 3 of our NRE-trained students have gone on to higher academic degree programs and 7 of them have moved to employment in positions where their research and administrative skills are directly relevant. One of our students, for example, was employed by Statistics Canada in their professional development program. The skills she developed in survey design, SPSS analysis, and project organization were identified by her employers as crucial to her selection.

Rural research faces some special challenges with respect to student involvement. Since most rural universities are small, researchers often have difficulty finding students with appropriate interests and training. For this reason, we will include a program of student exchanges within our project. Students from one location, for example, will be invited to spend time (1 to 4 weeks) in one of our other research centres wherever possible. Such exchanges would include specific activities (e.g. field work) and products (e.g. reports or media materials). They may also be assigned course credit where possible. Such a program would not only enhance the capacity in the destination location, but it would have many benefits for both the student and the project from the comparative experience. Special meetings for students in this program will be organized at our national conferences in order to facilitate knowledge transfer.

Many of our graduates are forced to continue their education or seek employment in non-rural areas because of facilities and the job market. In order to maintain their interest in rural issues, we will establish a network of new researchers founded on the current cohort of students who have been involved in the NRE project. Bulletins and newsletters will be sent to these and other new graduates to maintain their contact with rural issues. They will be welcomed to our national conferences and special student events. This will not only serve to ensure rural interests as they move into careers in non-rural locations, but it will facilitate the re-entry of those who wish to continue their education in the future.

2. Budget Justification - Funds Requested from SSHRC

The INE Project is designed to build on existing Research Centres and activities. We will not duplicate or co-opt the activities in these Centers, but add value to their activities by facilitating collaboration and comparative work. Central elements to this end are the maintenance of the 32 research sites as a Rural Observatory, the Rural Canada Database and associated analysis, workshops and conferences, web facilities, dissemination and communication infrastructure, and the administrative organization to support coordination and new initiatives.

Student Salaries and Benefits: 55% of the expenses will be directed to student salaries and benefits. Each of the theme teams will work with the equivalent of 2 undergraduate and 2 graduate students per year. The equivalent of 6 MA students per year will be required to facilitate our research agenda in the field sites (visits, data collection, analysis). The equivalent of 2 MA and 2 doctoral students will be involved in projects that cut across the themes. The equivalent of 1 MA student per year will provide administrative support. Most of the student money goes to those at the MA level since, being rural, most of our institutions are smaller universities with no PhD programs.

Non-Student Salaries and Benefits: The major part of this budget item goes to support a Research Manager for the project. This job cannot be done by a student since the complexity of the project requires full-time attention and continuity that is incompatible with student demands. One Post-Doctoral student will also be recruited to develop our research agenda. A small proportion of this budget item includes an honorarium for field site people who will provide us with specific services that further our research (e.g. arranging for interviews, collecting data).

Release Allowance: Two applications are made: one for the PI to provide the extra time required to direct the project and a second to one of our co-investigators who requires compensation from his teaching in order to free him for INE research. This is a policy of the research centre in which he works.

Travel and Subsistence for Team: High travel costs are one of the most serious challenges facing research rural. The travel and subsistence costs for a 3-day site visit have averaged over \$400 per site, for example, with considerable range in that amount, depending on the site. Since most of our team members live in relatively remote areas, travel to meetings is also particularly high. The cost for travel alone from Rimouski to Montréal is about \$635, for example, while from UNBC it is about \$809.

At the same time, the relative dispersion and isolation of our research team requires frequent contact. Some of this will be accomplished through communication technology (phone, e-mail, Netmeeting, video-conferencing), but face-to-face discussions remain essential. For that reason, our travel and subsistence costs are relatively high. They will be used for our spring workshops, fall conferences, and several regional meetings where the opportunity arises. International travel includes travel to our field sites in Japan and meetings with our colleagues in Europe and the USA. To save on such costs, most meetings are organized in conjunction with other conferences or events.

We have also included a small amount (\$13,200/yr) to bring local team members from our field sites to a workshop associated with our annual conference. Our NRE experience has shown this event to be a highly significant one, both for our research and education agendas. Since these site teams are composed of volunteers with few resources, they could not attend without support (cf. site letters).

Travel and Subsistence for Students: Students face the same problems of isolation as other team members. These funds will enable them to travel to the research sites to conduct research and dissemination activities, attend our workshops and conferences, and participate in exchanges both nationally and internationally. Student exchanges among our research sites and centres will help to stimulate the intellectual and career capacities of both students and centre personnel. Any exchange activity on the part of students requires them to produce some material for network use.

Professional/Technical Services: About 11% of the budget goes for professional and technical services. Most of this budget item will be used to pay for the technical services of our Communications Officer.

This person will be responsible for the archiving of the data emerging from the project (including that already collected from the NRE project). It includes survey-based data (much of it in SPSS format), textual data (usually processed using NUDIST), media products, photos, historical documents, site-level field logs, and other materials. This person also serves as the web site manager – maintaining the site and developing it as new initiatives arise. Once again, because of the time and continuity demands, we have found that students are unable to serve in this role.

The other main expenditure for this budget item is the Liaison Officer. This is a new role from the NRE Project, but one that has emerged as the Rural Observatory and collaboration features of our network have evolved. It has become clear that we need someone who can pay attention to the many requests, meetings, and collaboration opportunities emerging from our work (especially with policy-makers and citizens). Since the person must be familiar with the project, we will look first to those recent graduates who have participated in the NRE project. Not only will this ensure consistency with our objectives, but it will provide support for students who are likely to continue their studies in the future.

A small proportion of professional expenses will go to support one of our colleagues who is neither teaching nor post-graduate in the narrow sense. She has her PhD and has been working as an independent researcher for the last few years. She has been an active participant in our network and supervised relations with three of our sites. To continue in this role, she requires support for her services.

Some of our professional expenditures will go to support translation services. Since we operate in both official languages, it is necessary for us to translate some of the key documents (e.g. site flyers, research instruments, and selected reports) and to provide translation for our site people who participate in our national conferences and workshops. We have managed to keep these costs low by using techniques of small-group simultaneous translation in meetings rather than full service translation.

Finally, we have included a small item for hiring a technical assistant to produce a video and CD-ROM for our dissemination activities.

Supplies: The supplies budget item includes primarily office supplies. The highest level of expenditure in this item is for our dissemination program. This includes specially prepared flyers, and brochures for policy-makers and rural citizens. Using desktop publishing technology we have been able to produce high quality materials for low cost. Other supply costs include computer software for research and the maintenance of our web site.

Non-Disposable Equipment - Computer Hardware: The primary expenditures for this item are a printer for the Administrative office and upgrades for the Web Server.

Other Non-Disposable Equipment: This amount will be spent on a video camera for the production of video materials in those sites where one is not available and incidental equipment to facilitate Internet collaboration among team members (headsets, microphones, webcams).

Other Expenses: We anticipate having to purchase data that is not available through the Data Liberation Initiative (e.g. justice, health, business, and education statistics at a small area level).

Communication of Research Results: About 19% of our expenditures will go to the communication of research results. This is rather high by comparison to conventional research standards, but it reflects our collaborative approach to building research capacity. We have learned that to build a learning culture in rural Canada it is necessary to include rural citizens in the research process. Thus, many of our expenditures for field work involve communication of research results as well as the traditional activities of research such as data collection. A workshop in Ferintosh, AB, for example, provides an important source of information while at the same time it is a format for local people to learn about and integrate our findings into their understandings. This has proved to be a much more effective means of communication than simply providing reports or information. To reflect this feature of our work, we have included more than the production of reports, brochures, flyers, and the web site in this item – it includes travel to the field sites, conferences, and site workshops as well.

3. Budget Justification - Support from Other Sources

Institutional support for the INE project will come from four major sources: universities, research centres, governments, and citizen groups.

Universities (over \$130,000 per year)

Universities have demonstrated their support for our work by the allocation of space, facilities, in-kind, and financial resources. Two of our network members have recently received SSHRC Canada Research Chairs that will be integrated into the work on this project.

This support is more than \$85,000 in cash with the balance in-kind for space, facilities, and personnel. These are conservative estimates since they do not include individual professional allowances for travel and equipment, student time for credit-based activities, and unconfirmed promises.

Research Centres and Projects (over \$60,000 per year)

This is in-kind support, including a substantial component for travel. International centres have promised over \$35,000. Two have initiated funding requests for collaboration from their side.

Governments (over \$40,000 per year)

During the earliest period of the NRE project, financial support was provided through contract arrangements or conference contributions with government departments that had an interest in rural issues (e.g. The Rural Secretariat of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, HRDC, the Interdepartmental Working Group on Rural and Remote Canada, Statistics Canada, DIAND, ACOA, FEDNOR, and Provincial Government Departments). This has always been a strain on our research agenda since the conditions of such contracts were often short-term, narrowly focused, and difficult to administer. As the project developed we were able to include more funding from researcher grants and over the last 3 years have benefitted from SSHRC Strategic Grant funding under the Social Cohesion Program (with Reimer as PI). This has greatly improved the flexibility of our research and community collaboration objectives.

During the INE Project we will continue to work with government organizations at all levels. As indicated in their letters of support, their commitments are primarily in the form of information, access to networks and policy-makers, and communication of our results. These are major contributions to our policy objectives. Statistics Canada will also provide research facilities and data.

Citizen Groups and Sites (over \$64,000 per year)

The fourth major source of support comes from public sector groups and our research sites. The Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation, the non-profit organization that inspired and supported the NRE project is a key example. CRRF will continue to support the INE Project through its networks, international connections, and some financial support from conference proceedings and contracts.

The other major sources of public support are the many rural communities, organizations, and volunteers that contribute to our site-level research activities. As in the NRE project, each annual conference will be made possible because of rural communities offering their space, intelligence, and energy to make it happen. Since the communities will continue to drive much of the program agenda and all of the local arrangements, this amounts to a considerable contribution on their behalf. We have refined this model over the last 13 years so that it is now an efficient and effective way to communicate and deliberate over key rural issues. At the same time it has helped build the capacity of each location where the meetings are held.

Local community people will also contribute through many hours of volunteer work as members of research teams, informers, reviewers, and participants in our activities. Under the INE communication projects, for example, they will be actively involved in the production of media materials and events. In some communities this contribution will include financial, transportation, space, and personnel types of support. We conservatively estimate their contribution as \$34,000/yr (5 days by 25 sites+30 days for the conference at \$200/day)