

# **COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS AS VEHICLES OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT**



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# **“Does Rural Matter?”**

(McKie, 1992, p. 425)

**“it matters to rural residents who continue to value the style of life and social institutions which are characteristic of rural areas....”**






# Topic Outline

- Rural Restructuring, Revitalization, and Change
  - Community-Based (Local) Development Organizations
  - Manitoba CDCs: A Case Study
  - Community Economic Development
  - Capacity Building: Some Basic Points
  - Community Organizing, Organizational Development, and Collaboration
  - Concluding Remarks
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# Rural Restructuring/Revitalization

- rapid or continual social change
  - urbanization
  - technological innovation
  - shifting demographic conditions
  - economic restructuring
  - rural community change, survival, and sustainability
  - rural revitalization, resilience, and health
  - ‘top-down’ versus ‘bottom-up’ community development
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# Rural Development Issues: A Retrospective Glance (Baker, 1980, p. 4)

## **The Community Viewpoint Project, 1972-73:**

- “rural-urban shift”- depopulation, youth migration, unemployment
  - “education”- poor facilities, dropout rates...
  - “economic viability of communities”- loss of businesses and professional services
  - “community concerns relating to government”- taxation, lack of funds for community development...
  - “financial concerns”- low, unstable incomes, high cost of living, low standard of living...
  - “community conflicts”- intra- and inter-community
  - needs of the elderly - special care facilities and recreation
  - “community culture”- heritage site preservation, declining quality of life...
  - “apathy”- lack of leadership and youth involvement
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# The “Resilient” Community

(Centre for Community Enterprise [CCE], 2000)

*“A resilient community is one that takes intentional action to enhance the personal and collective capacity of its citizens and institutions to respond to, and influence the course of social and economic change”* (CCE, 2000, p. 1-5).

**Five primary functions of a local economy:**

“access to equity,” “access to credit,” “building human resources,” “infrastructure,” and “research, planning, and advocacy” (CCE, 2000, p. 1-8).





# Community-Based (Development) Organizations (CBDOs)

- commonly termed grassroots-based organizations
  - local involvement, local resources, and local control
  - can differ in terms of:
    - **geographical context:** immediate community, locality, and/or surrounding region
    - **resources:** local combined with 'outside'
    - **institutional/governance structures:** informal vs. formal, non-profit vs. for-profit...
    - **issue areas:** economic, social, cultural...
  - often involve a volunteer board, community meetings
  - broadly based participation: resident input into priorities, planning, and decision-making processes
  - local autonomy
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# Diverse Types of CBDOs in Manitoba

- Community Development Corporations (CDCs)
  - Unincorporated development organizations
  - Regional Development Corporations (RDCs)
  - Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs)
  - Other community-based organizations
    - local development groups
    - service clubs
    - voluntary associations
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# Basic Characteristics of CDCs

- community-based, -oriented, and -controlled development
  - integrated economic, social, and cultural goals (e.g., business and economic development, employment, training, and affordable housing)--**sustainability**
  - reliance on volunteer time and resources (e.g., Board members, committee work, administrative support, and local leadership and expertise)
  - multiple sources of funding/revenue
  - short- and long-term community capacity-building (e.g., capital projects and asset development)
  - reinvestment in the community
  - partnerships with private and public institutions
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# Survey of Manitoba CDCs


(Bessant, 2005)

- Mail-out questionnaire sent out to 92 **incorporated** CDCs in Manitoba.
  - Results of study were based on responses provided in **55** returned questionnaires.
  - Survey included questions on:
    - I. Community/regional development issues
    - II. Administrative or procedural features
    - III. CDC functions, activities, and priorities
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# Key Study Findings

## ***I. Community/Regional Development Issues:***

- 45 (or 81.8%) of the respondents considered the CDC to be the *primary* community development organization in the area.
  - CDCs commonly engage in a range of inter-agency activities aimed at local and regional development.
  - 30 (or 54.5%) of the respondents indicated that their local CDCs were involved in broader *regional development organization and planning*.
  - Potential **role(s)** of CDCs in *regional development* included: mutual cooperation and support, partnering, sharing resources/information, promotional activities, as well as business development and attraction.
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## ***II. Administrative/Operational Features***

- **Board Characteristics:** The Boards of the CDCs responding to the survey commonly met on a monthly basis (65%), and the vast majority took minutes (100%), made use of agendas (98.1%), recorded motions (92.6%), and had formal by-laws (90.7%).
  - **Staffing Issues:** Reliance on volunteers, need for additional professional and support staff, and technical expertise. Of the 55 participating CDCs:
    - 8 had a *full-time* economic development officer
    - 15 had a *part-time* EDO
    - 6 had one other (*part-time*) position in addition to an EDO
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## ***II. Administrative/Operational Features (Cont'd)***

- **Committees:** 33 (or 60%) of the respondents indicated that their CDCs made use of committees.
  - **Financial Assistance:** 45 out of 47 CDCs responding to the financial question indicated having received assistance from their local municipal councils and, in most instances, these funds took the form of *direct cash contributions* (82.6%), followed by *VLT revenues* (13.0%), and *mill rate levies* (8.7%). Of these 47 CDCs, 4 (< 9%) received \$50,000.00 plus.
  - **Board and Staff Training:** Respondents rated the availability and adequacy of Board and Staff training. Several noteworthy areas include *business attraction and retention, opportunity identification, marketing and promotion, housing, as well as project development and evaluation.*
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## ***II. Administrative/Operational Features (Cont'd)***

- **Planning Activities:** 39 out of 53 individuals responding to a general question on planning (or 73.6%) indicated that their CDCs were involved in some form of short-term and/or long-term planning. Answers to supplementary planning questions suggested that these plans were:
    - a) followed “Somewhat” or “Very Closely” (97.4%),
    - b) deemed to be *integrated* or *coordinated* with other community-based organizations (85%), and
    - c) reviewed periodically (90.2%).
  - **Community Profile:** Responses suggested a perception that community *awareness* and *understanding* of CDC goals and objectives was concentrated in the “Very Low” and “Moderate” categories.
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### ***III. CDC Functions, Activities, and Priorities***

- **Business Development:** business attraction, financial support, and business retention.
- **Opportunity Identification:** business opportunities, resource inventory, and industry research.
- **Investment and Capital:** attracting community, individual, and external investment.
- **Capital Projects:** financing, project management and design.





### ***III. CDC Functions, Activities, and Priorities***

- **Community Profile:** data collection, maintain/update profiles, and publish/release profiles.
  - **Community Promotion and Marketing:** publications, business solicitation, and website.
  - **Human Resource Development:** youth retention, population retention/increase, and attracting employees.
  - **Other Sector Activities:** housing development, community facilities, and social/recreational projects.
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## CED Principles and CDC Characteristics<sup>a</sup> (Bessant, 2005, p. 57)

Comparative Element	CED Principles and Practices	CDC Mandates and Characteristics
Community Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>concerned with enhancing diverse types of community resources (e.g., financial, human, technical, social, physical, and organizational).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>focus on strengthening community capacity via business and economic initiatives, infrastructure upgrades, training, planning,...</li> </ul>
Multi-sectoral Approach to Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"multi-functional, comprehensive strategy or development system" (Bruce, 2001, p. 70).</li> <li>integration of economic, social, cultural, and environmental dimensions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>flexible structure for addressing a wide range of economic and socio-cultural goals (e.g., business development, affordable housing, and local facilities and services).</li> </ul>
Civic Participation and Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>grass-roots, 'bottom-up' approach.</li> <li>broadly based, inclusive participation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>involve residents, groups, and organizations in processes of community revitalization.</li> </ul>
Community Organizing, Organization, and Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>stress the importance of local input, leadership, organizations, and action in solving problems.</li> <li>employ "a core-organization format that is non-profit, independent, and non-governmental" (Bruce, 2001, p. 71).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>rely on local citizens and leaders to carry out voluntary board functions, committee work, and other administrative duties.</li> <li>can operate as a vehicle for building community consensus, agendas, and action.</li> </ul>
Partnerships, Collaboration, and Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>emphasize the importance of building networks among various groups, associations, and organizations to strategize, fund, and accomplish development goals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>encourage collaboration with multi-level groups or organizations (i.e., local, regional, provincial, and/or federal), in the pursuit of development initiatives.</li> </ul>
Program Planning, Implementation, and Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>closely aligned with strategic planning models, that is, visioning, assessing situation, setting goals, and devising, implementing and evaluating plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>include efforts to build "the community's capacity to plan, design, control, implement, and assess its own future" (Brodhead et al., 1990, p. 12).</li> </ul>
Community Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>comprehensive approach to building local capacities, capital, involvement, and action.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pursue a community-based, -oriented, and -controlled development agenda.</li> </ul>

<sup>a</sup> Comparative elements adapted from Bruce (2001) and Roseland (1998).





# Community Capacity Building

- “the ability of residents to mobilize and organize local or extra-local resources in the pursuit of communally defined goals” (Garkovich, 1989, p. 197).
  - *“the interaction of human capital, organizational resources, and social capital existing within a given community that can be leveraged to solve collective problems and improve or maintain the well-being of that community”* (Chaskin et al., 2001, p. 7).
  - **PROCESS vs. PRODUCT**– the ability, of a group or a community, to mobilize and translate assets into desired outcomes.
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# Diverse Capacity Domains (Gibbon, Labonte, and Laverack, 2002)

- common interests or shared vision
  - sense of community (solidarity)
  - participation and empowerment
  - leadership development
  - organizations, groups, associations...
  - asset mobilization (e.g., knowledge, financial capital, infrastructure...)
  - linkages, networks, partnerships
  - local control over/management of planning processes, programs, projects...
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# Basic Capacity-Building Process<sup>a</sup>




<sup>a</sup> Adapted from Department for International Development (1999), Dykeman (1990), and Reimer and Wilkinson (2003).





# “Levels of Social Agency”


Chaskin et al. (2001, pp. 19-22) note **three** “levels of social agency”:

- “Individuals”
  - “Organizations”
    - Community-based organizations (CBOs)
    - Local development organizations (LDOs)
  - “Networks” (intra- and inter-community)
    - interactional fields (Wilkinson, 1991)
    - interorganizational linkages
    - multicomunity collaborations
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# “Strategies for Building Community Capacity”

Chaskin et al. (2001, pp. 25-26) discuss four key capacity-building strategies:

- “Leadership development”
  - “Community Organizing”
  - “Organizational development”
  - “Interorganizational collaboration”
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# Community Organizing

- can be described broadly as a process that contributes “to social change by mobilizing people to act for their own interest in an organized way” (Shragge, 2003, p. 19).
  - Aigner, Raymond, and Smidt (2002, p. 95) discuss “whole community organizing,” that is, “the increasing focus on building more authentic reciprocating relationships across barriers” and the treatment of the community as an *interactional field* (Kaufman, 1959; Wilkinson, 1991).
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# Organizational Capacity Building


## Types of Capacity (Nye and Glickman, 2000, p. 167)

- **“Resource”**
    - long-term, stable financial support
    - additional funding opportunities
  - **“Organizational”**
    - board and staff training
    - leadership development
  - **“Networking” (or Partnerships)**
    - linkages with other CBDOs
    - joint initiatives
  - **“Programmatic”**
    - greater local involvement (community organizing)
    - diverse forms of programmatic planning
  - **“Political”**
    - improved public awareness, relations, and communication
    - Increased interaction with local government
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# (Inter)Organizational Collaboration

Chaskin et al. (2001, pp. 125–126, 140) discuss three strategies for building organizational collaboration:

- establishing “broker organizations” that “*mediate and foster relations*” among existing organizations operating within or across communities (e.g., information sharing, resource enhancement, and problem-solving),
  - “creating mechanisms of direct, ongoing communication and collective planning and action,” and
  - developing “specialized partnerships.”
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# Types of Interorganizational Relationships<sup>a</sup>

Dimension	Self-Seeking	Emergent	Cooperative	Coordinating	Collaborative
1. <b>Interactional field</b>	Unit-based/ Narrowly defined	Emergent/Unit-based (Typically specific)	Loosely defined interaction (Variable)	Somewhat more structure (Variable)	Intentionally broadly based (Complex)
2. <b>Goal Inclusiveness</b>	Intra-organizational Unitary (Strong)	Intra-organizational Unitary (Strong)	Interorganizational Dispersed (Weak)	Interorganizational Dispersed (Moderate)	Interorganizational Dispersed (Strong)
3. <b>Decision-Making/ Division of Labor</b>	Internal to unit/organization	Internal with issue-based inputs	Primarily internal/ some external ties	Modest shift to external linkages	Greater emphasis on external locus
4. <b>Collective Orientation</b>	Low	Low (unless interests coalesce)	Low to moderate (flexible)	Moderate (receptive)	Strong (intentional)
5. <b>Formality of Inter- organizational ties</b>	Little or none	Little or none	Informal/ Weakly structured	Either informal or formal	More formalized (e.g., contractual)
6. <b>Joint Resource Commitment</b>	None	Issue-based	Typically Information exchange	Some commitment: time, funds <sub>...</sub>	Significant allocation
7. <b>Degree of Inter- penetration</b>	Very low	Very low	Low	Low to moderate	Moderate to high
8. <b>Organizational Autonomy</b>	Very high	Very high (even with emergent ties)	High (but with some resource sharing)	Increased inter- organizational ties	Partial relinquishing of unitary autonomy
9. <b>Generalization of Interests</b>	Limited (unless dictated by goals)	Organizational focus/ some issue-based generalization	Item-specific inter- organizational interests	Increased focus on interorganizational/ community interests	Greater openness to regional, multi- community interests

<sup>a</sup>Adapted from Cigler (1992), Lauman et al. (1978), Warren (1967), and Wilkinson (1991).




# Multicommunity Collaboration

Cigler (1992, pp. 53-55) discusses several core attributes distinguishing **types of partnerships** that can, in turn, be arranged along a *continuum*:


***“Network”–“Cooperation”–“Coordination”– “Collaboration”***

The above types differ in terms of:

- “complexity of purposes” (information exchange vs. problem-solving)
  - “intensity of linkages” (shared goals, decisions, tasks)
  - “formality of agreements” (informal vs. highly formalized agreements, policies, and procedures)
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# Tax Sharing Agreements

- mechanism of inter-municipal/community cooperation
  - regional (economic) development and promotion
  - interorganizational networks and partnerships
  - core issues include:
    - distribution formula (tax revenue)
    - how/which resources are to be provided by various partners (e.g., utilities, services...)
    - fairness and equity
  - collaboration, cooperation, and mutual interests
  - overcoming competition and working in a unified manner
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- community organizing: public awareness, local participation, shared (common) vision...
  - community organization: local development group
  - community leadership
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# CDC Challenges and Dilemmas (Bratt and Rohe, 2007)

- competition over limited resources (mergers/autonomy)
  - “over-reliance on one or two funders” (p. 68)
  - attracting/retaining skilled staff (low salaries, turnover...)
  - “communication between the CDCs and their support communities” (p. 68)
  - undertaking initiatives that build a successful record despite limited funds (positive reputation)
  - as a CBDO, it is important for the CDC to address “community interests” (often diverse and complex)(p. 70)
  - balancing development activities (e.g., business/economic and community organizing/advocacy)
  - pursuing narrow, more specialized services vs. a broader range of activities
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# Ongoing Issues Confronting CBDOs



- **diversity** of locally, provincially, and federally mandated agencies, programs, and initiatives
  - **resource deficiencies** (e.g., funding, staffing, and training)
  - **overlapping mandates**: various CBDOs share similar goals and priorities but may operate on a unitary basis
  - problems of **territoriality**: community-based, locality-oriented, and regional development
  - the need to be more **entrepreneurial** and innovative (competitive advantage and best practices)
  - sharing control and responsibility: **partnerships, cooperation, coordination, and collaboration**
  - organizational and community **capacity building**
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# Concluding Remarks


## **CBDOS CAN:**

- take on the role of important **vehicles** of community economic development.
  - facilitate linkages among diverse community (interest) groups in the promotion of local development—**convergence of interests**.
  - **network** with other local development organizations to combine resources and pursue joint interests.
  - engage broadly based **community participation** and volunteerism (e.g., Board and staff members).
  - provide **professional and technical assistance** (e.g., EDO).
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- provide organizational structures (e.g., **committees or working groups**) to identify and address various community interests.
  - pursue **diverse funding** sources to carry out objectives.
  - enhance **sense of community** and **empowerment**.
  - serve as a platform for community/strategic **planning processes** and project/program implementation.
  - address a **comprehensive** range of social and economic development issues by being open to a wide range of potential initiatives and activities: opportunity identification, investment, community promotion, business development, attraction, and retention.
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