Policy Implementation & Social Marketing

From Awareness and Certification to Sustainable Action

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• **Mission**
  – use applied research to identify issues, to define responses, and to take action
  – participate in rural networks

• **Mandate**
  – co-create and disseminate knowledge
  – grow rural researchers

• **Organization**
  – 20 years of applied research
  – 13 research affiliates, 5 FTE, 4 project mngrs, 4 grad researchers
  – project funding (1:2-5 times)
Rural research networks

Aurora Research Institute (NWT); Centre for Sustainable Community Development (BC); Community Development Institute (BC); Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN); Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities; Canadian Rural Health Research Society (SK); Rural Development Institute (MB); Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research CRaNHR (Thunder Bay & Sudbury); PELA Institute for Rural Development (Picton & Napanee); Monieson Centre (ON); Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (ON); Centre de recherche sur le développement territorial (QC); Environment & Sustainable Development Research Centre (NB); Rural and Small Town Programme (NB); Centre of Environmental Excellence (NL); Leslie Harris Centre for Regional Development and Policy (NL)
Waterloo region: water resources

- **Issue**: Doubling water use projected to exceed supply
- **Response**: multi-pronged demand mngt 1) awareness 2) technology 3) price
- **Design**: Involve 100 homes, 100 control group in large-use neighbourhoods
- **Aware**: Door to door, flyers, mall booth, schools
- **Technology**: AquaSaver Univ/business partnership
- **Price**: Advocate increasing water pricing structure

**Results**
- 9% savings (awareness)
- 8-20% savings (family size)
- Changed water price structure
- Water bills show previous use
Why policy implementation?

Local challenges

- Rural Cda: varied & complex
- Depopulating (farmers=2% pop)
- Aging faster than urban
- Limited local capacity and resources
- Future: worsening – SME succession, labour market, wealth transfer

Govt challenges

- Limited rural services (costly)
- Services centralized (urban)
- Offer ‘tools’ to fill gaps
- Rural Canada: ‘Vanilla’

Responses

- Work locally and with public sector
- Interdepartmental responses
- Shift from vanilla to varied & complex

Social marketing
An approach to rural policy that detects variations and builds upon complexity-systematic-innovative
Background context

• Builds on RDI’s national reputation of relevant and applied research

• Social marketing offers a systematic approach with measurable outcomes (consistent with pillars of modernization initiative in public sector)

• Environmental scan: 1) More requirements for evaluating public spending. 2) Often missing is a systematic approach to policy implementation. 3) Rural centres with ltd capacity for policy implementation

Vision of SM @ RDI (2016)
RDI recognized centre of excellence of policy implementation with social marketing
Social marketing building blocks (5 yrs)

1. Awareness of SM
   - 1-2 day workshops (intro)
   - Webinars, e-newsletter
   - Blog
   - Listserve contributions

2. Client requested events
   - Guest speaker
   - 1-2 workshops

3. Advance skill building
   - 2-5 day sessions (workshops and online)
   - Intermediate and advanced skills

4. University Certificates
   - Train practitioners (no credit)
   - Content, instructors
   - Graduates

5. Cases and comments
   - Feedback
   - Publish cases

6. Network partners
   - Partner with rural centres and others
RDI development considerations

- Development approach: Strategic, deliberate and national
- Goal: $20k net revenues in 24 months
- Partnerships and ownership
  - Strategic partners across Canada
    - Content, expertise
- Funded from projects
  - Research projects involving SM (MB, Canada)
  - SM Awareness events (self initiated)
  - Client requests (responsive)
- Building regional capabilities
  - SM content adapted to rural responses
  - Proven SM expertise and certification
  - RDI project case studies
Next steps – 12 months

1. Identify potential strategic partners (content, expertise)
2. Complete a needs analysis & publish ‘rural’ case studies
3. Approve university certificates
4. SM integrated in RDI’s research proposals