Overview

- RDI’s structure & research interests
- RDI’s approach to research & community development
- Three illustrative examples of RDI’s approach
- Lessons we have learned
- Issues for consideration
- Discussion
The Rural Development Institute is a research unit of Brandon University in western Manitoba that focuses on rural and northern Community Development research, practice & policy.

Structure & Research Interests

The Team

Dr. Robert Annis, Director & administrative staff
RDI Advisory Committee
- Provides advice & guidance from internal and external constituents
Brandon University Faculty
- Faculty members from the Department of Rural Development, Faculties of Arts, Science & School of Health Studies
Research Affiliates
- Dept. of Rural Development, Faculty of Science, University of Calgary PhD student, Community Development practitioners
Student Research Interns
- Masters of Rural Development students
Research Assistants
- Graduate and undergraduate students
- Community development practitioners

Research Interests

- Community economic development
- Community leadership
- Environmental & agro-economic issues
- Information technology: utilization & access
- Policy and program research & development
- Rural health
- Rural tourism
- Rural adaptation & change
RDI’s Collaborative Approach to Research & Community Development

**Community Development**

“Community Development is community-based and people-centred: is inclusive; promotes good practice; builds on strengths; ensures the decision-making comes from the community; recognizes and develops expertise of community residents; requires assessment and does not rely on assumptions; and is understood by those involved.” (Frank, 2001)

**Participatory Action Research (PAR)**

“PAR aims to empower participants through their participation in and control of the research agenda, process & findings; and their establishment of individual and community change as a planned outcome. PAR has great potential to effectively incorporate desirable, planned community outcomes, as it links research purposely with community action and change.” (Dickson, 2000)
Illustrative Community Development and Research Projects

- Built collaborative processes and partnerships between groups of communities, governments and academic institutions in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and the Yukon. Developed a Regional Round Table Handbook for collaboration and evaluation.

Rural Immigration: Demographics & Temporary Foreign Workers in Brandon & Area (2007 …)
- Created a RDI Temporary Foreign Worker Dialogue Group to encourage a dynamic exchange between community, employers, government, and researchers & identify key topics and speakers for generating dialogue.

Manitoba Rural and Northern Youth Migration (2008)
- Created a dialogue in selected regions of Manitoba to understand rural/northern youths’ experiences and their motivations for leaving, staying, or returning to rural/northern MB communities.
CCP Process

Activities

Time

Community Capacity

External Facilitation (RDI)

Visioning

Refining

Agenda Setting

Project Activity

Forming

RRT Advisory Group

Resources – Financial & Human
Community Partners
WaterWolf (SK), Yukon and Manitoba/Nunavut Regional Round Tables.
- 6 regional round tables
- 85 communities

Government Partners
Rural Team Advisory Groups in Saskatchewan, Yukon and Manitoba

Academic Partners
Brandon University, University of Saskatchewan, Malaspina University-College and Yukon College

Strengthening Community Capacity
Partnership Building
Community Collaboration Model Project

Partnership Building
Trust and Valued Relationships
Community Engagement
Capacity Strengthening
Partnership Building
Community Collaboration Model Project
Community Collaboration Model Project

WaterWolf Regional Round Table

Established in 2005:
- Membership of 43 towns, villages and rural municipalities
- Leveraged $176,000 from Western Economic Diversification
- A regional services delivery model to increase capacity to assess needs & deliver services from a community-led approach:
  - The regional round table established committees to work on:
    - a governance model to provide good stewardship and oversight of development in the South Saskatchewan River valley South of Beaver Creek;
    - potential solutions to the issue of long term stability and sustainability in providing technical oversight for water quality to small communities in accordance with provincial regulations;
    - a process and time table for development at or near Danielson Park as a demonstration pilot for tax and investment sharing;
    - recommendations for priorities in the development of data layers within the region -- what the priorities for GIS digitization in the region should be; and
    - a framework for municipal sharing of the cost of infrastructure development and sharing taxes on new regional developments.

“In 2007, WaterWolf was awarded the Minister’s Award of Excellence and Innovation to recognize their efforts, innovation and initiatives towards economic development and support to their communities.
To be a recipient of awards such as this certainly underscores WaterWolf’s capacity to initiate and lead innovation and change in their region.”
(Annis & Beattie, 2008)
Community Collaboration Model Project

Yukon Regional Round Table

Established in 2006:
- Membership of 14 communities including First Nation, incorporated & unincorporated communities
- Focuses on action & implementing projects
- Proposals out for:
  - Sustainability & Development Initiative (Yukon Territorial Community Development Fund & Indian & Northern Affairs Canada Targeted Investment fund for $91,500)
  - Asset Mapping pilot project (Northern Affairs Canada Targeted Investment fund for $28,215)
  - Asset Mapping database (Northern Affairs Canada Innovation & Knowledge fund for $19,100)

“The regional round table has helped build understanding between government departments, communities and First Nations. This understanding will be a key asset toward building trust.” (Annis & Beattie, 2008)
Rural Immigration: Temporary Foreign Workers in Brandon & Area

Research Areas and Interests

The Temporary Foreign Worker Program
- Gain information on the process of recruiting and hiring TFWs.

The Worker
- Explore workers’ experiences with the TFW process.

Workplace and Community Experiences
- Explore the implications of an influx of diverse cultures on Brandon and southwestern Manitoba, and in the workplaces.

Retention Rates
- Explore retention rates in Canada, southwestern Manitoba, and in the workplaces.

Demographic Shifts and Population Change
- Utilize traditional data analyses (Statistics Canada).
- Utilize demographic modeling.
- Build an international research network, exploring comparability.
Temporary Foreign Workers in Brandon & Area

TFW Estimates, 2007-2011
with Estimated Family Arrivals

Cumulative Future Employment
Cumulative Current & Future Employment and Family Reunification
Cumulative Current Employment

Source: Economic Development Brandon (2008)
Population Projection Scenarios for Brandon, 2011-2031

Temporary Foreign Workers in Brandon & Area
RDI Temporary Foreign Worker Dialogue Group

- Multi-perspective, dynamic discussion amongst community, industry, government, & researchers.
- Discussion Topics include:
  - Roles & responsibilities of involved stakeholders
  - Settlement
  - Implications for smaller centres & service providers
  - Transitioning from TFW to Provincial Nominee
  - Family reunification
  - Community preparedness
  - Recruitment
  - Retention
- Discussion Papers focused on dialogue group topics & literature reviews.

“Communication amongst all sectors and stakeholders is critical to developing settlement priorities, service provision strategies, and community programs to successfully react to the influx of newcomers that Brandon is experiencing.”
(Annis, Bucklaschuk & Moss 2008)
Youth Migration in Manitoba Study: Project Partners

- A Rural Team Manitoba Youth Committee research initiative
- Partners include:
  - Rural/northern Communities in 3 regions of Manitoba:
    - Francophone region: LaBroquerie, Notre Dame des Lourdes & St. Laurent
    - Parkland region: Dauphin & Grandview
    - Northern region: to be determined
  - CDEM - Le Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba (association of francophone municipalities)
  - Manitoba Rural Team
    - Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs
    - Manitoba Education, Citizenship & Youth
    - Rural Secretariat, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada
  - Rural Development Institute
    - “Youth” research team
Youth Migration in Manitoba Study

Goal: To develop a deeper understanding about rural youth migration in Manitoba

Objectives
- Investigate the extent of youth migration to and from rural communities
- Explore reasons for youth migration
- Provide data to assist communities, regions, government departments and others to identify opportunities to keep youth in Manitoba and to attract youth back to rural communities.

Themes
- Background: Age, gender, education level
- Opinions and Attitudes: employment, education & training opportunities; recreation and social activities
- Knowledge: issues pertaining to Youth; ability for levels of government to address rural
- Behaviours: family ties, community connections

“Preliminary findings in the francophone communities indicate that cultural ties greatly influence francophone youth’s decision to return to rural communities. It should be noted that emphasis was on moving to ‘French speaking rural communities’, not necessarily on returning to the community of origin.”

Annis & Moss (2008)
Lessons Learned

Collaborative Partnerships

- Developing trusting and valued relationships and partnerships require:
  - deliberate effort
  - time
  - financial resources
  - committed, skilled & sustained leadership

- Partnership and relationship-building processes should be considered investments. Resources are needed to develop, maintain and grow these investments.

“The dividends or returns on partnership investments will be realized, however, not for considerable time, perhaps as long as ten years.”

(Annis & Beattie, 2008)
Lessons Learned

Communities

To effectively partner with governments and academic institutions, communities and regional organizations need:

- individuals who have the desire, skills & time to devote to the partnership and relationship-building efforts
- to move from competition to collaborative strategies to achieve success
- organizational infrastructure including:
  - a vision, goals & objectives
  - terms of reference for membership
  - defined roles for executive
  - defined roles for coordination and administration
  - established communication processes
- to contribute resources

“Moving from rivals for attention and resources takes deliberate effort and visionary leadership.”
(Annis & Beattie, 2008)
Lessons Learned
Governments

To effectively partner with communities, regional organizations and academic institutions, governments need:

- to move from funding deliverables to supporting capacity development
- to better manage files horizontally
- to better manage complex accountability structures
- government representatives to have mandates and reporting structures that are flexible enough to work with communities and regions in non-traditional ways:
  - move from “under the radar” to “in the radar”
- flexibility, creativity & innovation in program and accountability structures to fit with and adjust to community interests:
  - permission to be creative to accomplish agreed-upon goals

The Rural Teams provide opportunities to explore horizontal file management and collaborative research and community development activities.
To effectively partner with communities, regional organizations and governments, academic institutions need:

- to find new and creative ways to engage the human and capital resources of universities and colleges to be more engaged in community development processes;
- to enable communities to view academic institutions as resources to their efforts;
- to view communities as something more than research laboratories;
- to better understand and value community service by:
  - refining understanding of how community service is defined when individuals are “judged” for advancement purposes.

Developing partnerships and networks take effort, time and investment with a long-term view.
Issues for Consideration

RDI’s Partnerships & Networks

- Communities and Regions
  - Southwestern, eastern and northern Manitoba, central and northern Saskatchewan & Yukon
- University Colleagues
  - Calgary, Concordia (Montreal), Guelph, Malaspina University College (Nanaimo), Manitoba, Regina, Saskatchewan
- International Comparative Rural Policies Studies Consortium
  - Universities of Missouri- Columbia (U.S.), Barcelona (Spain), Highlands & Islands (Scotland), Budapest (Hungary), Leuven (Belgium) Colegio de Postgraduados Puebla (Mexico) and Brandon University
- Rural Teams in Manitoba, Saskatchewan & Yukon
- Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF)
- Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CEDNet)
- Pan-West Community Futures Network
- Canadian Consortium for Health Promotion Research
- Canadian Rural Health Research Society
- National Rural Research Network (NRRN)
- Pan-western Invasive Species Network

Rural research institutes have opportunities to network and partner with each other and with communities and governments on research projects that are pan-Canadian.
Issues for Consideration
RDI’s Knowledge Translation & Dissemination

- Newsletters
- News releases
- Project fact sheets
- Annual reports
- Working papers
- Research reports
- Conference presentations
- Books
- E-Books
- E-journal
- Workshops
- Think Tank sessions
- Community Town Hall meetings

There are opportunities for development and enhancement of technology platforms for knowledge translation & dissemination to rural and remote Canada.
RDI tries to purposely balance research, practice and policy.

Determine where you are and where you want to be.
Questions
Comments
Observations
For Additional Information

Rural Development Institute

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