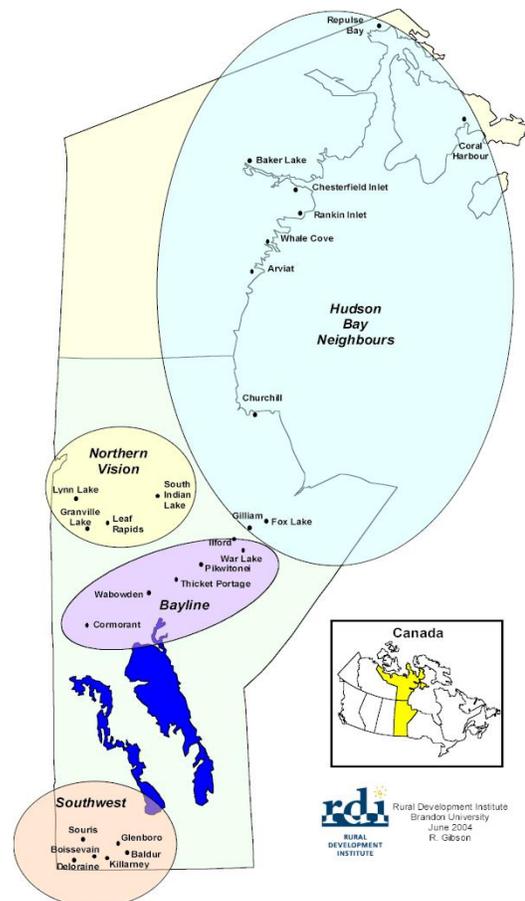


1999 - 2004 Manitoba's Community Collaboration Project

The Community Collaboration Project (CCP) was an innovative approach to community economic development and capacity building in rural areas. The vision of CCP was to encourage communities to explore and develop processes to increase their ability to address change and work toward becoming more sustainable. A sustainable development approach is based on the belief that citizens can work together to achieve social, economic and environmental balances that will ensure long-term community survival. This often happens through capacity-building at the local level, which the CCP aimed to accomplish. Community representatives came together to participate in Regional Round Tables (RRTs) and worked with a steering committee to identify regional socio-economic challenges, find common solutions, and implement programs and projects that address regional needs.

In 1999 the Community Collaboration Project (CCP), facilitated by Brandon University's Rural Development Institute (RDI), evolved from identifying the need for increased communication between rural citizens and governments and other organizations to a major collaborative effort involving twenty-six communities in Manitoba and Nunavut with a steering committee of representatives from provincial, territorial and federal government departments, government agencies, and academic institutions. Through the Community Animation Program, Environment Canada and Health Canada jointly funded the CCP, with additional support from the Canadian Rural Partnership Initiative of the Rural Secretariat and Manitoba Community Connections. Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs and participating communities provided in-kind contributions.



Four diverse RRTs formed through this process. The *Northern Vision Regional Round Table* is comprised of four northern Manitoba member communities: Lynn Lake, Leaf Rapids, South Indian Lake and Granville Lake. The *Southwest Regional Round Table* has six member communities in southwestern Manitoba: Baldur, Boissevain, Deloraine, Glenboro, Killarney, and Souris. The *Bayline Regional Round Table* is comprised of communities along the Bayline rail line with six member communities: Ilford, Cormorant, Pikwitonei, Thicket Portage, Wabowden and War Lake First Nation. The *Hudson Bay Neighbours Regional Round Table* is a unique blend of three northern Manitoba communities: Gilliam, Churchill and Fox Lake First Nation, and seven communities from Nunavut's Kivalliq region: Arviat, Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet,

Coral Harbour, Rankin Inlet, Repulse Bay and Whale Cove. All of the RRTs evolved with individual membership requirements for each of the participating communities. Each RRT identified issues and projects to work on that were important to their region as well as initiatives to collaborate on across the RRTs. The northern RRTs are devising strategies to work together on projects for mutual benefit.

Membership in the CCP Steering Committee grew to include representatives from: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (Rural Secretariat); Community Futures Partners of Manitoba Inc.; Community Information Management Network (CIMnet); Environment Canada; Health Canada; Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives; Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs; Manitoba Community Connections; Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs and Western Economic Diversification Canada. The Rural Development Institute of Brandon University was the project sponsor and facilitated the initial community meetings, provided support and meeting facilitation for the Steering Committee and conducted ongoing reviews of the CCP.

A key to promoting sustainability at the community level was in managing information. The Community Information Management Network (CIMnet) was developed as a vehicle to provide usable, affordable information and communication technology (ICT) services and infrastructure for rural, remote and urban organizations. CIMnet became an active member of the CCP and played an important role in supporting CCP communities' access and use of enabling technology to assist in their community building processes.

In 2004 RRT representatives and Steering Committee members were asked to reflect on the CCP. They indicated that the project was successful in engaging participants, bringing communities together and providing mutual learning experiences in community-government relations. They identified five **success factors**: *commitment*; *leadership* among the RRTs and the Steering Committee; *facilitation* to ensure the process was followed and continued; *funding*; *ICT* and *trust*. Relationships that developed among and between communities and governments could only manifest as a result of trust that was built over time.

Outcomes that emerged from the CCP included recognition and action toward sustainable community development practices; trusting relationships and capacity building processes between and among community residents and government officials; exploration and implementation of new decision-making processes moving from "government" to "governance" and exploration and implementation of Horizontal Management among provincial and federal officials. The key to finding optimal, locally relevant approaches to the opportunities and challenges experienced in Canada's rural, northern and remote areas was a collaborative effort among community residents, non-government organizations, governments, the private sector and academics to address policy and community development initiatives. The CCP experience indicated successful collaborative efforts could occur among these stakeholders.

Additional Information

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