



211-620 View Street, Victoria, British Columbia CANADA V8W 1J6
Tel: 250-386-9980 Fax: 250-386-9984 www.ccednet-rdec.ca

Media Contact:
Erin Brocklebank
(250) 386.9980 ext. 106
ebrocklebank@ccednet-rdec.ca

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 10, 2008

NEWS RELEASE

Community Economic Development Organizations Question Harper's \$1-Billion Community Development Trust

Victoria, BRITISH COLUMBIA - The \$1-billion dollar fund promised to communities under the Conservative government's Community Development Trust announcement, will be short-lived unless led locally, says the Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet). CCEDNet - representing the interests of thousands of community economic development organizations - believes the measures outlined in the announcement do not take into consideration the extensive challenges facing resource-based communities. They also state that the government has made no indication of working with pre-existing community organizations to find solutions to local needs.

While CCEDNet welcomes federal investment in community efforts to manage economic change, they point out the importance of ensuring that community leaders are part of the decision-making process deciding how the funding will be spent. CCEDNet recommends that the government make use of the combined expertise of local community organizations, non-profits, co-operatives, and entrepreneurs who are already working to diversify the economies of resource-based towns across Canada.

Like other groups concerned that the amount of money pledged is not enough to deal with the crisis facing many communities, the Canadian CED Network is also concerned that the funds are tied to a new budget and the political process associated with it.

"If the federal government really were serious about reducing poverty, they would make these funds available now to respond to the needs of hard-pressed communities facing economic change," says Rupert Downing, Executive Director of the Canadian Community Economic Development Network. "They have the authority and existing programs to make this money available today."

Community economic development has a long history of success in revitalizing communities across Canada through locally-led action engaging a diverse cross-section of community members. The combined values of inclusiveness, sustainability and reciprocity ensure that economic change is long-lasting for struggling communities.

"The combined vision and energy of concerned local people is what actually turns a community around," says Mr. Downing. "It is imperative that the federal government commitment isn't a one-time shot. What our communities really need is sustained support from all levels of government."

The Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet) is a national non-governmental charitable organization established to support the work of community organizations that are creating economic opportunities and enhancing social conditions in Canada. The membership of CCEDNet is made up of hundreds of community groups, municipalities, foundations, and practitioners from every region of the country. CCEDNet brings these groups together to share expertise, mobilize communities, and build a national focus on CED.

Community Economic Development (CED) is action by people locally to create economic opportunities and better social conditions, particularly for those who are most disadvantaged. CCEDNet's national office is located in Victoria, BC.

