Social Inclusion and Community Economic Development

Final Report

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The Canadian CED Network

Le Réseau canadien de DÉC

Strengthening Canada's Communities

Des communautés plus fortes au Canada

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Ce document est aussi disponible en français.

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Summary

The Pan-Canadian Community Development Learning Network was a two and a half year project of the Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet) that promoted learning about and examined how integrated, community-based initiatives contribute to social inclusion.

Running from October 2003 to March 2006, the project facilitated peer learning and developed evidence-based research to strengthen integrated models of service delivery that build assets, skills, learning, social development and economic self-sufficiency opportunities relevant to local community conditions.

The final publication of the project, this document presents an overview of the research results and policy recommendations supported by the research.

The literature review established that social inclusion is both a process and an outcome. As an outcome, it is characterized by:

- a widely shared social experience and active participation;
- a broad equality of opportunities and life chances for individuals; and
- the achievement of a basic level of well-being for all citizens.

As a process, we understand that social inclusion:

- is composed of multiple interrelated dimensions that require parallel action;
- involves both the removal of barriers and actions to bring about the conditions of inclusion;
- must be participatory and inclusive;
- can be articulated along a spectrum from 'weak' models that basically preserve existing social structure and power relations to 'strong' models that aim for a transformation of social relations;
- happens at a variety of levels, including: individual, family, institution, community and government.

The most effective community-based practices to strengthen social inclusion:

- are comprehensive, addressing interrelated dimensions that require parallel action;
- are concerned with process, engagement and capacity building as much as outcomes and therefore are participatory and inclusive themselves;
- focus on long-term outcomes.

A survey of 78, comprehensive, community-based initiatives from across the country showed that:

- While many respondents appreciated the opportunity to view their activities through a social inclusion lens, the language and concepts were unfamiliar and often required reformulation to be understood. If the concept of social inclusion is to be retained as a

useful framework for analyzing comprehensive, community-based efforts, ongoing dialogue and opportunities for practitioners to appropriate and apply the concept to their practice will be necessary.

- An analysis of activities carried out by these initiatives showed that most activities addressed multiple sectors of CED and dimensions of inclusion simultaneously. Some sectors of CED were more closely linked to specific dimensions of inclusion, offering potential strategies for directing impacts to prioritized dimensions.

- Respondents confirmed that taking a comprehensive approach had a very strong influence on the way they carried out their work, especially in the realm of partnership building. The impetus for the comprehensive analysis comes mostly from staff and Board, suggesting that this kind of leadership needs to be supported if communities wish to move to a more comprehensive framework.

- Among survey respondents, groups serving women only rated the challenges of using a comprehensive approach higher than the mean rating of all respondents, except in the category of tools and training. Groups serving minorities emphasized the importance of accounting for cultural differences, especially aboriginal culture, in a comprehensive approach.

- Rigorous outcome evaluation of comprehensive community-based initiatives, an enormous challenge in the permeable, complex adaptive systems of communities, is made even more difficult when organizations are faced with the instability and transition created by short-term project funding, multiple evaluation criteria, and an overall lack of organizational capacity due to under-funding.

- Urgent policy changes are necessary to improve funding terms and reporting requirements, to shift focus to accountability for appropriate outcomes, and to break down the inter-governmental and inter-departmental silos that fragment community support.

Finally, the survey revealed that there is a significant community infrastructure already existing across the country that is attempting to strengthen social inclusion through comprehensive initiatives.

Policy recommendations generated by the project are that government:

- make social inclusion and the social economy an overarching federal policy objective;
- create new horizontal program supports for comprehensive community development;
- support education on the new paradigm of integrated social and economic development;
- invest in sector strengthening activities, that will stimulate peer learning, action research, private investment, learning, and practitioner development.

1. Introduction

Canada is regularly rated as one of the best places in world to live by organizations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). However, Canada is also a society where these benefits are often limited to certain sectors and geographic areas. In the last 15 years, inequality has grown in Canada, creating a widening gap that is ever more difficult for marginalized groups to cross. Innovation and productivity have suffered and real incomes have declined. In many communities, destructive cycles of poverty are holding communities back from reaching their potential.

At the same time, some communities are creating vibrant, healthy environments through a community economic development (CED) strategy – a multi-purpose social and economic strategy for systematic renewal, conceived and directed locally. By taking a CED approach to development, these communities are making Canada stronger as they transform themselves into attractive places to live and work that are full of opportunity.

The Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet) was created by CED organizations and practitioners across the country who are committed to dramatically reducing inequality, fostering innovation and raising productivity.

The Canadian Community Economic Development Network

Founded in 1999, CCEDNet is a national, member-based organization that is actively working to build a "communities agenda" in Canada. Its mission is to promote and support community economic development for the social, economic and environmental betterment of communities across the country.

CCEDNet represents over 500 members who are practising CED in a wide variety of social and industry sectors. The rich experience of these CED practitioners has provided the foundation needed to promote a national Policy Framework and raise the bar for CED in Canada.

CCEDNet is working towards a communities agenda in Canada where CED is recognized by all levels of government as a proven and effective development strategy. The Network wants to revolutionize how CED is understood, practiced and funded in Canada by promoting evidence-based policy recommendations to all levels of government. CCEDNet members believe that CED has the potential to dramatically reduce inequality in Canada and foster innovation and productivity. CED has a proven track record for building wealth, creating jobs, fostering innovation and productivity, and improving social well being, with numerous success stories documented across the country illustrating how wealth, jobs and community health have been fostered. What's needed now to scale up these successes to other communities across the country is further evidence, education and policy changes to provide better support for CED organizations, to develop human capital, to increase community investment, and to support social enterprise.

The Pan-Canadian Community Development Learning Network Project (PCCDLN)

In 2002, the Social Development Partnerships Program (SDPP) of Human Resources Development Canada[1] put out a call for project proposals on social inclusion. CCEDNet already knew how some communities in Canada have taken innovative steps to overcome exclusion and promote social inclusion, particularly with comprehensive community-building strategies that simultaneously work across social, economic and physical sectors. But to that point, those community economic development initiatives had not been analysed through a social inclusion lens. Bringing together these two concepts allowed us to consider the links between the characteristics of a socially inclusive society and the core principles of multi-faceted community-based development strategies, with the clear goal of expanding our understanding of the strengths and challenges of these comprehensive approaches, and identifying improvements to practice and policy that can lead to even greater inclusion in Canadian communities.

The two-and-a-half year project facilitated peer learning and developed evidence-based research to strengthen integrated models of service delivery that build assets, skills, learning, social and economic development opportunities relevant to local community conditions.

Bringing together social inclusion and community economic development allowed us to consider the links between the characteristics of a socially inclusive society and the core principles of multi-faceted community-based development strategies, with the clear goal of expanding our understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of these comprehensive approaches, and identifying improvements to practice and policy that can lead to even greater inclusion in Canadian communities.

Summary of Project Activities

The project consisted of ten complementary elements that can be divided into two broad categories: research and peer learning.

The research activities included:

- A **Literature review** provided the conceptual foundation linking social inclusion and locally driven place-based development strategies, and highlighted some examples of initiatives supporting social inclusion.

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[1] SDPP is now the Community Development and Partnerships Directorate of Human Resources and Social Development Canada

- A **Survey** of 78 comprehensive, community-based initiatives examined their efforts both through social inclusion and CED lenses, describing their characteristics and identifying effective practices and common challenges.

- **Case studies** of 17 examples of the most effective comprehensive, community-based initiatives strengthening social inclusion tell the stories of the unique context and innovative responses that can serve as models for other locations.

- A report was prepared describing the use of **socio-economic indicators and mapping** to inform and support community-based efforts for social inclusion, which includes an extensive list guides, examples, data sources and other resources.

The activities supporting peer learning included:

- A searchable, on-line **Toolbox** of resources, documents and tools supporting community efforts was made available on CCEDNet's website and filled with the most useful tools identified by survey respondents, other practitioners and project staff.

- **Learning Resource Package:** PowerPoint presentation, handouts, Info sheets, and email teaser campaign promoting the documents and learning generated by the project. All have been made available for download from our website so that practitioners can adapt and use them locally.

- **National and Regional Learning Events:** Numerous local, regional and national presentations on the concepts of social inclusion and CED, and the key characteristics of effective local initiatives to strengthen social inclusion.

- **2004 National Conference:** 570 people came to Trois-Rivières, Québec for the 2004 National Conference on CED and the Social Economy, *Communities Creating the World We Want,* May 19-22.

- **2005 National Conference:** Almost 500 participants contributed to *Building an Inclusive Movement,* at the 2005 National Conference on CED and the Social Economy, May 4-7 in Sault Ste Marie, Ontario.

- **2006 National Conference:** 641 participants came to Vancouver on March 15-18 for the 2006 National Conference on CED and the Social Economy, *Rooting Development in Community.*

The following sections look at the issues prompting comprehensive community-based initiatives and the research results in greater detail.

2. The Need for Change

When communities are by-passed or marginalized by the ordinary processes of regional or national economies, a vicious circle of destructive social and economic forces tends to reinforce the trouble and consign such communities to continuing problems with disinvestment and declining human resources. These economically challenged communities (whether urban neighbourhoods, rural villages, towns and regions or disadvantaged segments of local populations such as women, immigrants, or Aboriginals), instead of contributing what they might to the strength of the country, exacerbate national social and economic problems of unemployment, business failure, family stress, crime, deteriorated housing, and poor health, among other ills. Thus even in times of prosperity, Canada experiences a dual economy of mainstream growth but with continuing, even expanding pockets of poverty.

Although Canada's GDP per capita grew by 36 percent from 1986 to 2004, not only were the benefits of that growth unevenly distributed, but the conditions of some groups and regions in fact worsened. For example, social assistance recipients in all Canadian provinces now have, after inflation, lower real incomes than comparable individuals did 20 years ago (Osberg, 2006).

While the overall incidence of low-income among Canadian households has been relatively stable in recent years, two alarming trends underlie this aggregate stability in poverty rates: an increasing depth of poverty for those households that experience low income, and an increasing concentration of that deeper poverty among more focused geographical areas and/or ethnic communities. The proportion of people in poverty in Canada may not be increasing, but the situations of those people living in poverty are worsening, and the social and economic impacts of this poverty are becoming more costly (Stanford, 2006).

Growing Inequality in Canada

As far as income trends between 1980 and 2000 are concerned, the 1980s can be generally described as a decade of improvement, with incomes rising for both higher- and lower-income families (although they increased more for high-income families). The low-income rate in Canada's 27 Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) fell over the 1980s from 18.3% to 17.2% (Heisz, 2005).

The 1990s, on the other hand, was a decade of increasing disparity between higher- and lower-income families. In many CMAs, income rose for higher-income earners but actually fell for lower-income families, eliminating some of the gains made through the 1980s. Between 1990 and 2000, incomes fell for persons in the bottom 10% income bracket in 15 of the 27 CMAs (Heisz and McLeod, 2004). By 2000, the low-income rate for all CMAs was back up to 17.7%, only slightly lower than it had been in 1980. Over the whole period from 1980 to 2000, a rise in the median incomes of most CMAs would imply an improving standard of living for most residents. However, the faster rise in incomes for top-income families and the comparative

stagnation or decline of incomes at the bottom in most CMAs suggests that incomes have become significantly more unequal (Heisz, 2005)

Another indicator of this increasing inequality is the Gini index, a measure of the overall inequality of incomes. Between 1986 and 2003, the Gini index increased from 0.388 to 0.425 – by about 10% (Orsberg, 2006).

But it is the way this increasing inequality and concentration of poverty is playing out that is having particularly damaging effects. Both specific population groups and new territorial concentrations of poverty are appearing across the country.

Inequality Among Population Groups

For the period from 1980 to 2000, low-income rates within CMAs were disproportionately higher among three groups in particular: recent immigrants (those who arrived during the decade preceding the census), Aboriginal people, and lone-parent families. Compared with an average low-income rate of 17.7% for all CMAs in 2000, the low-income rate for lone-parent families in CMAs was 46.6%, for recent immigrants it was 35.0% and for Aboriginal people, 41.6% (Heisz, 2005).

The trends behind those numbers were very different, however. Low income actually improved among lone-parent families between 1980 and 2000, falling from 52.4% to a still very high 46.6% (Heisz, 2005). Unfortunately, this improvement is a notable exception to the overall situation for low-income families over the same period (Picot and Myles, 2004).

In 2000, 41.6% of Aboriginal people living in metropolitan areas were living in low income, more than double the national average for metropolitan areas (Heisz and McLeod, 2004). Although this represented an improvement since 1981, some of that improvement may have come from those people in CMAs who changed their reporting from non-Aboriginal to Aboriginal identity on their census forms over time (Siggner and Costa, 2005).

> *Between 1990 and 2000, virtually all the rise in overall low-income rates in Toronto and Vancouver was concentrated among recent immigrants.*

It is recent immigrants whose situation worsened dramatically between 1980 and 2000. In 1980, recent immigrants had a low-income rate of 23.1%. By 2000, it had increased to 35.0%, nearly twice the average rate for metropolitan areas overall. At the same time, this group increased their share in the population of metropolitan areas, from 6.1% in 1990 to 9% in 2000. Between 1990 and 2000, virtually all the rise in overall low-income rates in Toronto and Vancouver was concentrated among recent immigrants (Heisz and McLeod, 2004).

With recent immigrants, lone parents and Aboriginal persons disproportionately represented among low-income populations, the ethno-racial and gender impacts underlying the distribution of poverty are key aspects of the issue.

Inequality Among Neighbourhoods and Regions

Income distribution trends among neighbourhoods followed tge same pattern as those seen among families, with a growing gap between higher- and lower-income neighbourhoods in virtually all metropolitan areas between 1980 and 2000. In Toronto, median family income in the poorest 10% of neighbourhoods rose .2% between 1980 and 2000, but in the richest 10%, it was up 23.3%. In some CMAs, the lower-income neighbourhoods had smaller increases than the higher-income neighbourhoods. But in Hamilton, Winnipeg, Calgary, Montréal, Québec and Edmonton, while incomes rose in higher-income neighbourhoods, they actually fell in lower-income neighbourhoods (Heisz and McLeod, 2004).

> **The growing gap between higher- and lower-income neighbourhoods was observed in all larger metropolitan areas.**

Ross and Dunn (2005) also found that overall, income segregation through the early to mid-1990s showed a rise in the spatial separation of income groups across the urban landscape. They found an increase in the spatial isolation of low-income households in all but one (almost 98%) of the metropolitan areas, and an increase in the centralization of low-income households (i.e. the degree to which low income households occupy inner city areas) in all but four (almost 90%) of the metropolitan areas. On its own, a highly unequal income distribution within a metropolitan area would suggest a mixture of poverty and wealth. Income segregation, however, means that poverty and affluence are spatially concentrated.

Other community socio-economic indicator and mapping exercises have revealed similarly increasing concentrations of poverty. In Winnipeg, a report on the state of the inner-city revealed that the low-income cut off (LICO) rate for the inner city was at 44.1% in 2000, almost double the citywide rate of 24.7%. Within that area, Lord Selkirk Park low-income rate is 87.8%, while in Spence and Centennial neighbourhoods, approximately two in every three households have incomes below the LICO.

The United Way of Greater Toronto and the Canadian Council on Social Development's *Poverty by Postal Code* studied evolution of low-income distribution for all of Toronto's 522 census districts in 1981, 1991 and 2001. The research revealed a dramatic rise in the number of higher-poverty neighbourhoods in the City of Toronto between 1981 and 2001, approximately doubling every ten years. In
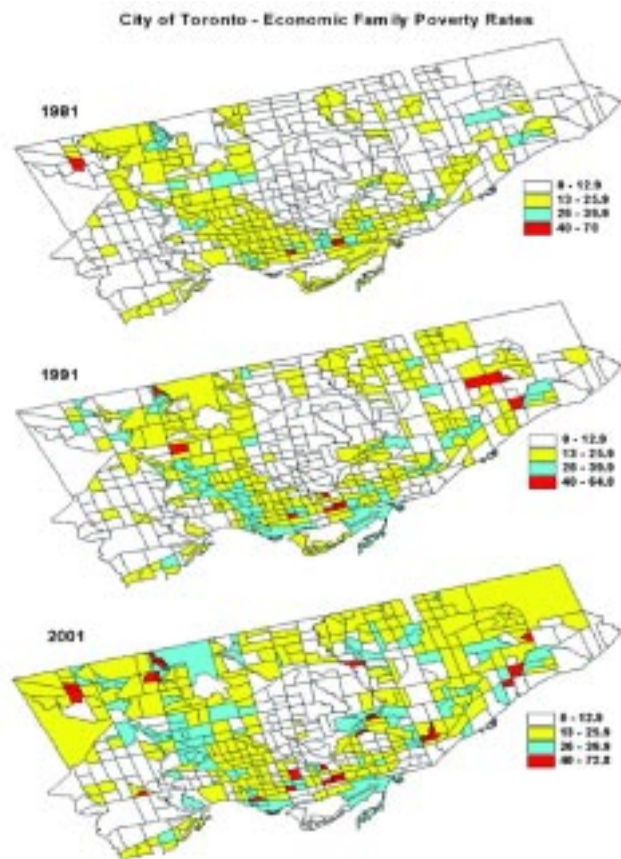
Source: Poverty By Postal Code, United Way of Greater Toronto

1981, only 30 neighbourhoods had high or very high levels of poverty, compared to 394 with lower or moderate poverty. By 2001, the number of high or very high poverty neighbourhoods had grown to 120 (Poverty by Postal Code, 2004). The maps presented above show the evolution of neighbourhood poverty at each of the three measurement dates.

Territorial inequality is not just an urban phenomenon, however. The trend of growing wealth and increasing poverty is also playing out along urban/rural lines. Statistics Canada's analysis of the geography of income disparities across Canada shows a slow but steady shift from provincially-based differences to a national rural / urban divide. The income share of the smallest census districts (predominantly rural) declined almost steadily from 1992 to 1999. Clusters can be identified of persistently low-income census districts in marginal and northern areas whose relative economic position tends to further deteriorate through time. In contrast, clusters of rich census districts can be found in core urban regions whose relative economic position is improving still more. (Alasia and Rothwell, 2003).

For Canada as a whole, the rural-urban income gap actually widened between 1980 and 2000, as predominantly rural areas got poorer relative to predominantly urban and intermediate regions (Singh, 2004).

BC's Socioeconomic Indices show that rural and remote areas can have major variations amongst themselves and relative to urban areas in health, crime, employment and income criteria. For example, in the central coast region of BC between 2002-2005, 59.4% of 18 year olds did not graduate, compared to the provincial average of 24.4% and the lowest percentage, in Greater Vancouver, at 17.8%. The Central Coast's infant mortality rate between 2000 and 2004 was also over 6 times the provincial average, at 25.9 deaths per 1,000 live births, compared to 4.1 for the province. Similarly, the average unemployment rate in the year prior to September 2005 in the Central Coast was 3 times the provincial average (9.3% versus 3.1%) and employment income was only 70% the provincial average ($22,338 compared to $31,544).

For Canada as a whole, the rural-urban income gap widened between 1980 and 2000, as predominantly rural areas got poorer relative to predominantly urban and intermediate regions.

There are also large differences in health conditions across Canadian CMAs, with life expectancy at birth in 2000 varying from 81.1 years in Vancouver to 76.7 years in Sudbury – a greater variation than across a list of 22 OECD countries. (Heisz, 2005). This is paralleled by Statistics Canada research that shows significant differences in health indicators between urban and rural regions (Mitura and Bollman, 2003).

The Costs of Inequality and Exclusion

The proportion of people in poverty in Canada may not be increasing, but the situations of those people living in poverty are worsening, and the social and economic impacts of this poverty (including on the non-poor) are becoming more costly. In 2001, 43% of all poor families lived in poor neighbourhoods, compared to just 18% in 1981. Poor people are much more likely to live

in places where poverty is both geographically and ethnically concentrated. This tends to accentuate the impacts of poverty on health, economic prospects and family life –reinforcing the cycle of poverty within definable communities, with increasing (and often violent) intensity (Stanford, 2006).

With poor people more likely to live in poor neighbourhoods, their individual poverty is compounded by the attributes of the poor neighbourhood, which often include numerous disadvantages including: a) barriers to recreation; b) underinvestment in neighbourhood services and public goods; c) environmental stress such as noise, crime, conflict, disarray; d) socialization effects on behaviour and social norms (e.g. cultivation of working-class or underclass identity, differing values placed on education); e) underdeveloped human capital and collective efficacy; and f) isolation from economic opportunity. (Ross and Dunn, 2005).

The connection between inequality and health (both in terms of costs and outcomes) are intuitive and generally accepted. Besides the human tragedies and lost potential that are represented by high rates of poverty, additional costs are incurred due to poverty being a leading cause of health problems. The US Institute of Medicine, a branch of the National Academy of Sciences, notes that "…more egalitarian societies (i.e. those with a less steep differential between the richest and poorest) have better average health, because a dollar at the bottom 'buys' more health than a dollar at the top." (Committee on Assuring the Health of the Public in the 21st Century, 2003, p.59).

Janice MacKinnon, former Finance Minister in the government of Saskatchewan, argues that, "it would also be more cost-effective to invest less government money in acute care health services and devote more resources to reducing poverty." She cites a 2005 UNICEF study, which found that almost 15% of Canadian children are poor, ranking Canada 19th out of 26 developed countries. She contrasts Canada and Sweden, which has a child poverty rate of just over 4% (ranked 4th), and spends less on health care than Canada does, but has one of the highest ratings in terms of the overall health of its population. "Devoting more resources to social programs that alleviate poverty would lead to a healthier population and a less expensive health care system" (MacKinnon, 2006, p. 19).

The 'racialization of poverty' compounds inequalities in living conditions and health status. Galabuzi refers to 'racialized groups' as those racial categories imposed on certain groups on the basis of superficial attributes such as skin colour (the federal term 'visible minority' approximates the same category). Aboriginal people, recent immigrants and racialized group members are among the most marginalized in Canadian society. Labour market segregation, high unemployment, low occupation status, living in substandard housing and in dangerous or distressed neighbourhoods, homelessness, working at dangerous work sites, working extended hours and /or multiple jobs and experience with everyday forms of racism, lead to unequal health service utilization and differential health status. Children whose health is most at risk tend to live in low-income families, single families, or among racialized group populations, including immigrant and refugee families and aboriginal families. Among youth, the psychosocial stress of discrimination contributes such health problems as hypertension, mental health concerns and substance abuse (Galabuzi, 2002).

Stanford (2006) adds that recent research on social capital and the causes and consequences of social exclusion link absolute and relative deprivation with measurable and predictable

negative impacts on educational attainment, family stability, health, crime and other important social and economic indicators. A growing body of research has found that localities with a more active associational life, a denser network of social ties and a higher level of trust have higher growth rates of GDP per capita. Increasing inequality corrodes social ties and thus has both a direct and an indirect effect on well-being. Even after controlling for social capital, income inequality is a significant determinant of the incidence of violent crime. (Orsberg, 2006)

It is clear that the effects of inequality and exclusion are not limited to the individuals who experience the exclusion – they also create external costs on the broader economy and community. Similarly for investment and development, there is a new sensitivity in economic development literature to the importance of quality of life and the condition of cities as key factors in investment attraction, economic development and prosperity. City-specific attributes and conditions have become recognized as key factors in explaining the attraction and retention of high-knowledge workers and the investment which tends to accompany those workers. "For both reasons, the growing concentration of poverty in Canada among particular neighbourhoods and visible minority populations is a worrying and dangerous trend" (Stanford, 2006, p.35).

A New Approach

The concentration and persistence of poverty has led policy makers to conclude that universal programs, while necessary, cannot on their own cope with social exclusion (Burstein, 2005). The diversity of realities and need to build on local capacity and networks means that the problems of poverty and exclusion are resistant to traditional, monosectoral interventions designed by distant bureaucracies. "Instead, they demand place sensitive, holistic approaches. That is, strategies built from the 'ground or street up,' on the basis of local knowledge, and delivered through networked relations crossing program silos, even jurisdictional turfs" (Bradford, 2004, p.40).

Hatfield (2004) reminds us that exclusion and persistent low-income often reinforce one another. Many of the factors associated with persistent low income reflect absent, disrupted or ineffective social networks. Breaking the cycle of poverty for marginalized groups as well as depressed neighbourhoods means creating environments that are conducive to positive networks while finding and capitalizing on opportunities for individual and collective development.

All across the country, local organizations and community initiatives are innovating and evolving to meet these challenges and counter the decline of groups and neighbourhoods into poverty and marginalization. The next section relates the results of our research into the links between social inclusion and community economic development, and tells the story of these inspiring, effective practices.

3. Research Findings

Project research was carried out through a literature review, a survey of community initiatives, and case studies of the most effective practices in a variety of settings across the country.

Literature Review on Social Inclusion and CED

The first stage of the project was a literature review on social inclusion and community-based initiatives. The literature review identified the following six sectors of CED and eight dimensions of social inclusion for the purposes of the research:

Sectors of Community Development and Community Economic Development

Sector	Examples
Asset Building	Creating child care or youth facilities, housing, individual development accounts, revitalization of community owned buildings, community access facilities for use of computers
Skills Development	Employment training programs, work experience programs, self employment assistance, entrepreneurship mentoring, English as a second language, training enterprises, financial literacy
Community Learning	Community learning networks, peer learning, adult education, early childhood education, literacy, experiential learning programs for youth
Social Development	Child care services, support to individuals, life skills, nutritional programs, self help programs, home care services, community safety, youth programs
Economic Development	Social enterprises, loan funds, business development, cooperative development
Capacity Building	Community planning, research, community indicator and benchmark projects, social marketing, cross sectoral mobilization, democratic engagement, support to self help groups, neighbourhood mobilization

Dimensions of Social Inclusion

Dimensions	Examples
Cultural	**Valuing contributions** of women and men to society, recognition of differences, valuing diversity, positive identity, anti-racist education.
Economic	**Adequate income** for basic needs and participation in society, poverty eradication, employment, capability for personal development, personal security, sustainable development, reducing disparities, value and support caregiving.
Functional	**Ability to participate**, opportunities for personal development, valued social roles, recognizing competence.
Participatory	**Empowerment**, freedom to choose, contribution to community, access to programs, resources and capacity to support participation, involved in decision making, social action.

Dimensions	Examples
Physical	**Access** to public places and community resources, physical proximity and opportunities for interaction, healthy / supportive environments, access to transportation, sustainability.
Political	**Affirmation of human rights**, enabling policies and legislation, social protection for vulnerable groups, removing systemic barriers, will to take action, long-term view, multi-dimensional, citizen participation, transparent decision making.
Relational	**Belonging**, social proximity, respect, recognition, cooperation, solidarity, family support, access to resources.
Structural	**Entitlements**, access to programs, transparent pathways to access, affirmative action, community capacity building, inter-departmental links, inter-governmental links, accountability, open channels of communication, options for change, flexibility.

(Shookner, 2002, p.5)

The literature review established that social inclusion is both a process and an outcome. As an outcome, it is characterized by:

- a widely shared social experience and active participation;
- a broad equality of opportunities and life chances for individuals; and
- the achievement of a basic level of well-being for all citizens.

As a process, we understand that social inclusion:

- is composed of multiple interrelated dimensions that require parallel action;
- involves both the removal of barriers <u>and</u> actions to bring about the conditions of inclusion;
- must be participatory and inclusive;
- can be articulated along a spectrum from 'weak' models that basically preserve existing social structure and power relations to 'strong' models that aim for a transformation of social relations;
- happens at a variety of levels, including: individual, family, institution, community and government.

To effectively move towards effective social inclusion processes and outcomes, the same range of actors that are the agents or objects of exclusion (individuals, families, institutions, communities and governments) must work together to become agents of inclusion. Each actor has different powers and tools at its disposal that are necessary. Much of the literature on social exclusion and inclusion deals with the policy and program options available to governments, and these play a crucial role in the removal of barriers to and support for the inclusion of individuals, families and communities. Without supportive government policies and programs, there is little promise of success despite the best efforts of other actors. But governments alone cannot effectively reach the most marginalized individuals, families and communities.

Furthermore, the complexity of causality in social systems renders a straightforward 'intervention - outcome' prescription for social inclusion impossible. Avrim Lazar (2001:10-11) reminds us, "In a world of multiple causation, we cannot know a priori which interventions will have what impacts…. Inclusion and cohesion cannot be managed or controlled. They can only be influenced. This puts a premium on empowerment and on stimulating local participation and local solutions."

The literature review and feedback from our practitioner-led project advisory committee established the following conclusions:

- Governments, communities, institutions and individuals need to work in concert for maximum success in improving social inclusion.

- At the community level, the most successful initiatives are comprehensive, addressing interrelated dimensions that require parallel action;

- they are concerned with process, engagement and capacity building as much as outcomes and therefore are participatory and inclusive themselves;

- they focus on long-term outcomes.

The survey then examined the relationships between the sector(s) of CED, dimension(s) of inclusion, and target level for community-based activities.

Survey

The first phase of the Profile of Effective practice examining the links between social inclusion and CED was a survey of 78 community-based initiatives that self-identified according to the following criteria:

- the initiative takes a participatory, inclusive approach
- the initiative is community-based and -led
- the initiative is grounded in a comprehensive analysis, recognizing the interconnectedness of social and economic issues

In practice, these criteria can be nebulous. The following guidelines were developed to inform the selection of initiatives for participation in the survey:

- *The initiative takes a participatory, inclusive approach*

  Taking a participatory, inclusive approach means making concrete efforts to promote participation and include groups/populations that are often excluded from decision-making processes that affect them, such as people living in poverty, youth, Aboriginal Canadians, people with disabilities and members of racial minorities. Initiative leaders should be conscious of the diversity of the people they are trying to serve, and attentive to which of the many voices are being heard and which are not

- *The initiative is community-based and -led*

  This criterion is closely linked to the previous one. Community-based and community-led means not only that the community is included in the decision-making process, but that the community controls the decision-making process. This control should be effective (not just consultation, but accountability) by a meaningful spectrum of representatives of the community. Often strengthening community control means building community capacity to take part in governance as the project evolves.

- *The initiative is grounded in a comprehensive analysis, recognizing the interconnectedness of social and economic issues*

A comprehensive analysis recognizes the links between such fields as child development, health, education, training, employment, homelessness, food security, income security, the environment and crime. Lewis suggests a model of these economic and social functions:


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It does not mean that the initiative attempts to intervene on all the interrelated issues at once, but that strategic action is taken on one or more key issues, based on a decision-making process that is rooted in a comprehensive analysis.

The survey was conducted by telephone interview that permitted some interaction and dialogue between the survey administrator and respondent. A diversity of settings was sought from within the sample, and the 78 respondents came from 11 provinces and territories, with a mix of rural / urban / remote territories and different populations served.

The results of the survey showed that most activities carried out by these initiatives addressed multiple sectors of CED and dimensions of inclusion simultaneously. Some sectors of CED were more closely linked to specific dimensions of inclusion, offering potential strategies for directing impacts to prioritized dimensions: on the whole, the skills development, community learning, social development and capacity building sectors of CED tend to be more often linked with all dimensions of social inclusion. The asset building and economic development sectors were least connected to the dimensions of social inclusion, with the exception of the economic dimension of inclusion, which was pre-eminent in the economic development sector.

The graph bellows plots the number of times each dimension of inclusion was reported for each community development / CED sector, allowing us to visually compare the relative frequency of the different dimensions and contrast different trends (for a breakdown of these results, see the Survey Report).

Dimensions of Inclusion & Sectors of Activity
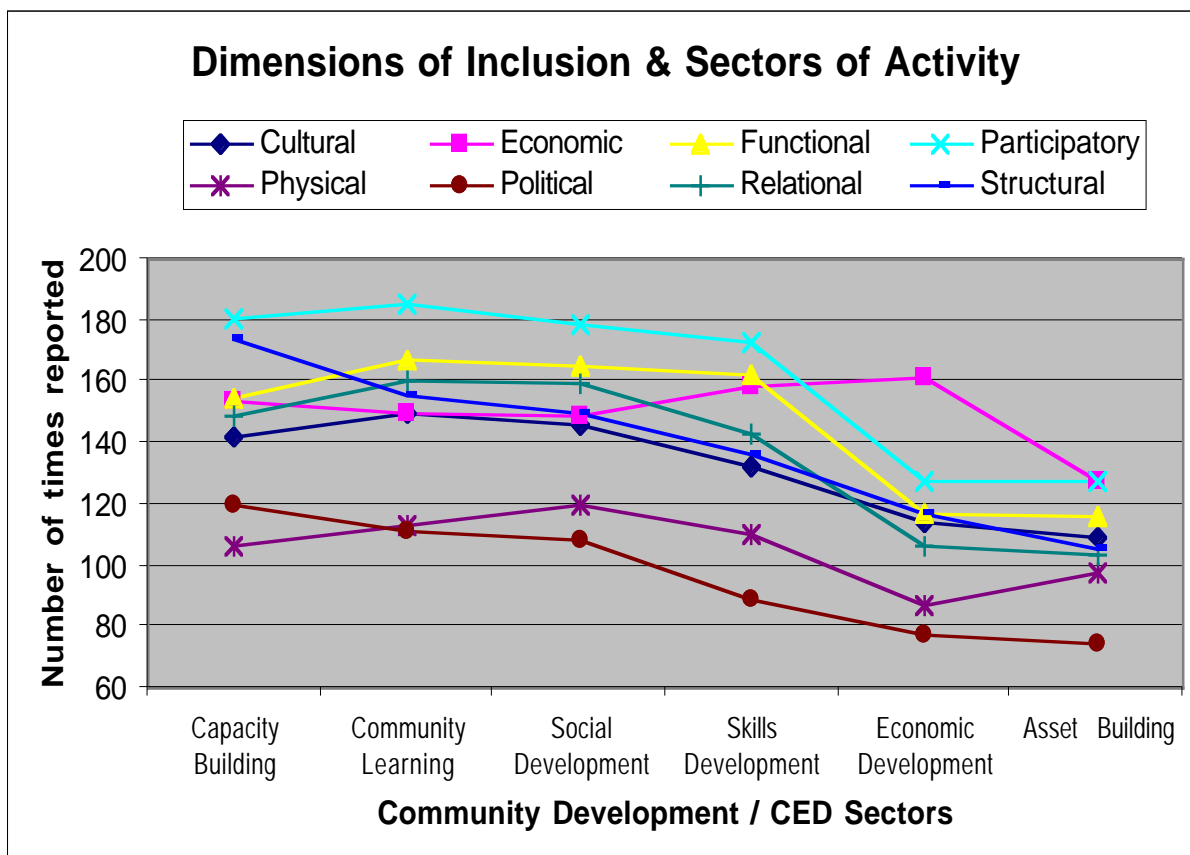
The dimensions of inclusion were grouped into three trends when related to the sectors of CED, highlighting some commonalities between dimensions and suggesting some links between strategies and outcomes.

- The first group of cultural, functional, participatory and relational dimensions of CED all tend to be focused on the human element of contributing, participating and belonging – linked to community learning, capacity building and social development strategies.
- The political and structural dimensions deal with rights, policies and institutional relationships (bureaucracy) – linked to capacity building strategies.
- The physical dimension is concerned with public infrastructure – linked to social development strategies.
- The economic dimension focuses on income and poverty – linked to economic development strategies.

An interesting contrast between the sectors of activity and the dimensions of inclusion can be found in the economic and asset building spheres. Although economic development and asset building were second to last and last respectively in frequency of sectors reported, the economic dimension of inclusion was the second *most* reported dimension. Several explanations are possible:

- Respondents may have wanted to differentiate what they do from mainstream or traditional economic development, while recognizing that their activities have an impact on the economic dimension of inclusion.
- Respondents may not have considered the development of collective or community-based assets as part of the Asset Building sector, or it may be that these kind of developments are not the focus of on-going activities that were reported in the survey, but tend to be sporadic, opportunity-driven projects.
- Asset Building and Economic Development may not be the traditional domain of many of the non-profit respondents, who face challenges to becoming active players in the business and financially focused sectors.

Researchers noted that respondents often reported activities that, while not directly being asset building or economic development, were done with the expectation that there would be indirect benefits for these dimensions. There was a sense that respondents may have felt discomfort in identifying explicitly with economic development, feeling that they don't know enough or aren't qualified to describe what they are doing as economic development, which has an established practice and domain. When they look at the outcomes of their work, they tend to see community learning and the 'soft' outcomes of community mobilization and process as distinct from simple economic development, even though those activities and the social capital generated by them are often the foundation of long-term economic development (such as literacy, shelter, community mobilization, etc.) Conversely, business-oriented respondents were often unsure about the contributions of their work to the 'soft' CED sectors such as learning, capacity building and social development.

Respondents also found it challenging to link their activities to the political dimension of inclusion, which was evident from the political dimension's low reporting rate. A possible explanation for this is that front line agencies may not consider political issues to be their responsibility. If they are affiliated with a national office or federation with a mandate to advocate to governments on their behalf, political inclusion would not be a day-to-day issue. This would be consistent with the result that governments were last among targets of activities identified. Another factor to be considered is that over half of respondents had charitable status, which could make many reticent to work explicitly on political inclusion.

Finally, some organizations that have succeeded in developing a highly integrated approach actually had difficulty separating their sectors of activity and dimensions from each other into the distinct categories offered by the survey because of their high level of integration.

The varying relationships between CED sectors and dimensions of inclusion raises questions for further consideration: Given that some CED sectors are more strongly linked to certain dimensions of social inclusion, can improvements to practice be made so that activities in those sectors can address more dimensions of social inclusion? Or should practitioners strategically select activities knowing which dimensions will be more impacted to ensure a variety of activities that effectively address the priority dimensions for that community. The likely the answer is both, requiring us to learn more about the most effective multi-dimensional practices in each sector of CED, to better understand the full potential and limits an activity can offer.

Other survey results included:

- While many respondents appreciated the opportunity to view their activities through a social inclusion lens, the language and concepts were unfamiliar and often required

reformulation to be understood. If the concept of social inclusion is to be retained as a useful framework for analyzing comprehensive, community-based efforts, ongoing dialogue and opportunities for practitioners to appropriate and apply the concept to their practice will be necessary.

- Respondents confirmed that taking a comprehensive approach had a very strong influence on the way they carried out their work, especially in the realm of partnership building. The impetus for the comprehensive analysis comes mostly from staff and Board, suggesting that this kind of leadership needs to be supported if communities wish to move to a more comprehensive framework.

- Among survey respondents, groups serving women only rated the challenges of using a comprehensive approach higher than the mean rating of all respondents, except in the category of tools and training. Groups serving minorities emphasized the importance of accounting for cultural differences, especially aboriginal culture, in a comprehensive approach.

- Rigorous outcome evaluation of comprehensive community-based initiatives, an enormous challenge in the permeable, complex adaptive systems of communities, is made even more difficult when organizations are faced with the instability and transition created by short-term project funding, multiple evaluation criteria, and an overall lack of organizational capacity due to under-funding. One survey response was typical of many: long-term planning and evaluation is simply "impossible with the funding situation. Most programs have one-year funding."

- Respondents made it clear that urgent policy changes are necessary to improve funding terms and reporting requirements, to shift focus to accountability for appropriate outcomes, and to break down the inter-governmental and inter-departmental silos that fragment community support.

Finally, the survey confirmed that there is a significant community infrastructure already existing across the country that is attempting to strengthen social inclusion through locally-driven comprehensive initiatives.

> *"We take a holistic approach, seeing neighbourhoods, families and communities as organic. We see our approach as social, economic, ecological and human development -- none of those things can occur in isolation. We take a socially and environmentally responsible approach to development -- we have an assessment process for enterprise development: they have to demonstrate social and environmental responsibility before we will support them. In terms of sustainable development, we like to think that we're where the rubber hits the road. If an internal enterprise wants to expand, they have to demonstrate social and environmental responsibility."*
>
> *Survey Respondent*

Case Studies

Although the survey provided an important initial description of comprehensive, community-based initiatives across Canada, it did not convey the individual realities and stories of these

projects: how they came about, what they have accomplished, and what were the key factors of their success. The case studies were designed to tell those stories, allowing practitioners, policy makers and others to learn from some successful experiences across the country.

The objectives of the case studies were:

- to better understand the stories of some of the most effective comprehensive community-based initiatives and how they have contributed to social inclusion, and build the evidence base for this type of intervention from a wide range of settings;

- to offer practitioners and interested citizens models and ideas of how social inclusion can be strengthened in their own communities;

- to illustrate policy and programmatic changes that have either demonstrated results or are needed to support community-based initiatives strengthening social inclusion.

In order to include a wide range of experiences, 18 cases were identified, with efforts being made to ensure representative participation from all regions of the country, and a mix of rural/urban/remote territories and different populations served.

The initiatives profiled in the case studies are:

Case	Province	Setting, Focus
Affirmative Industries	Nova Scotia	Urban, People with disabilities
CALDECH	Ontario	Small urban and rural, Francophones (linguistic minority)
Central Labrador Economic Development Board	Newfoundland & Labrador	Rural, remote
Community Opportunities Innovation Network (COIN)	Ontario	Small urban and rural
Compagnie - F	Québec	Urban, Women
Core Neighbourhood Youth Coop	Saskatchewan	Urban, Youth
Corporation de développement communautaire des Bois-Francs	Québec	Small-urban
Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers	Alberta	Urban, Immigrants
Eva's Initiatives	Ontario	Urban, Homeless, at-risk youth
Greater Trail Community Skills Centre	British Columbia	Rural
Learning Enrichment Foundation	Ontario	Urban, Immigrants
Lennox Island First Nation	Prince Edward Island	Rural, Aboriginal
Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre	Manitoba	Urban, Aboriginal
Mennonite Central Committee of BC Employment & Community Development	British Columbia	Urban
Saint John Community Loan Fund	New Brunswick	Urban

Case	Province	Setting, Focus
Santropol roulant	Québec	Urban, Elderly, youth
Storyteller's Foundation	British Columbia	Rural, Aboriginal, Remote
Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corp	Manitoba	Small Urban

The cases apply a common framework to each of the initiatives, highlighting the participatory and comprehensive analysis taken, the approach taken to evaluating outcomes, and success factors and policy lessons.

Participatory and Comprehensive Analyses

Cases illustrate participatory and comprehensive analyses established by local initiatives. Taking a comprehensive approach impacts both the way services to individuals are conceived and offered, and the way community partners are engaged.

An good illustration of how this approach works on an individual level is provided by the Learning Enrichment Foundation in Toronto, which has structured its services in order to be able to **meet the range needs clients present**. Their comprehensive approach is based on:

- Multi-faceted programming: creating flexibility and capacity by combining programs and services
- Encouraging human capital development, labour force participation and labor market inclusion
- Commitment to early childhood education
- Providing universal access to programs and services
- Watching/Monitoring trends within clientele to have programs and services evolve and respond to clients' evolving needs
- A flexible structure that isn't disrupted by programming changes imposed upon LEF by funders
- Using an innovations committee, along with department managers and the executive director, that evaluates programs, sets long-term goals and suggests innovative solutions every 3 months

Working with homeless and at-risk youth in Toronto, Eva's Initiatives understands the need for a comprehensive approach at the individual level. Their experience is that unless all aspects of a youth's life that are integral to achieving and maintaining self-sufficiency are be addressed, any job and shelter obtained will remain unstable. They use an increasingly popular model called '**Sustainable Livelihoods**' that takes into account the financial, social, personal, physical and human assets of the youth they work with, allowing for a balanced intervention that not only identifies weaknesses, but also builds on strengths.

Another example of this integrated, client-centred vision is a framework for **'Holistic Integrated Practice'** that guides the organizational structure and approach of the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN). Jim Gurnett, EMCN's Executive Director, summarizes the rationale and benefits of the framework:

> "We believe that this simply is the just way to work with human beings. There are so many more positive comments and compliments; it is such a great relief

for newcomers to be able to come to one place and all sorts of other things also start happening. Rather than stumbling through the community looking for help, now many solutions come from one place. People are saying 'I can't believe how good it was for my family to come here, I just came here for a job, now my wife is in ESL, my teens in programs, and my younger children are in an early childhood program.'"

At the community level, the case study on COIN in Peterborough, Ontario, offers a good example of the **comprehensive, capacity building and partnership-based approach** taken by many research participants. COIN's work is guided by the following principles:

- The most effective local approaches are multi-functional and holistic
- Diversified programs and opportunities as well as funding sources contributes to flexibility and client-centred focus
- The social enterprise model offers greater sustainability and potential for client focus
- A sustainable approach to programming requires community capacity building work: volunteer and organizational development
- Community partnerships and collaboration are essential

Comprehensive analyses often emerge from the limitations of more focused interventions. For Affirmative Industries in Halifax, the first model used to help individuals with disabilities was supported employment. Over time, the model grew to a broader community economic development strategy that recognized the interconnectedness of housing, transportation, employment, income and accessibility.

Participatory and comprehensive analyses are articulated differently in each of the case studies, with variations in language, conceptualisation and emphasis that reflect the understanding of the problem, the priorities and the resources available in a specific setting. But each one recognizes the links between social and economic development, and understands the need for a holistic, participatory, and inclusive approach at both the individual and community levels.

Evaluating Outcomes

The literature review had identified that the most successful community initiatives include a focus on long-term outcomes. Using a participatory process to identify, set and track progress against long term objectives is a challenging task in any situation. But it is made nearly impossible when organizations are faced with the instability and transition created by short-term project funding, multiple evaluation criteria, and an overall lack of organizational capacity due to under-funding.

The cases look at how, despite these adverse conditions, some organizations are able to evaluate the outcomes of their comprehensive efforts. A range of practices are used, from tracking services delivered and the impacts on participants, to changes in community indicators measured against benchmarks.

The Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN), for example, developed **a 5-year strategic plan** that articulated their vision, mission, goals, strategies, rationale, and action items. The strategies include: facilitation, evaluation, communication, collaboration, coordination, advocacy, incubation, revenue generation, and accountability. The organization

then develops logic models with outcome indicators for each activity or service. As stated in their framework for Holistic Integrated Practice, "All staff should be able to describe work so that goals, activities, outputs and outcomes (short, medium and long term) are distinct and clearly presented, and to maintain records that enable progress in all these areas to be evaluated."

The Storytellers' Foundation started with a community visioning session to guide their plans that they anticipate will follow **a ten-year visioning cycle**. Based on this vision, annual plans set immediate, mid-term and long-term outcomes. Every three months staff conduct a quarterly evaluation that uses the analysis framework to assess how programming activities have helped them learn more about context, content and capacity. Within each program activity, participatory evaluation methods are used to measure project successes, challenges and discoveries, following a standard participatory evaluation process. The evaluation from each program activity is then fed in to the analysis feedback loop. At an annual staff focus session, the organization charts how programming evaluation is impacting the immediate, mid-term and long-term outcomes and this information is used in an analysis to inform goals for the next year. The comprehensive analysis is crucial to this entire process. According to Anne Docherty, Storytellers' director for community learning, "Without applying a comprehensive analysis, we would probably have continued to deliver programming that had immediate success, but we would not be addressing the underpinning issues at both the local level (capacity, relationship building, value-based practice) and at the macro level (policy, systems change, awareness)."

Success Factors and Policy Lessons

Finally, key success factors and policy lessons are identified in each case. For Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre in Winnipeg, key examples of **interdepartmental and inter-governmental collaboration** such as the Winnipeg Partnership Agreement and the Urban Aboriginal Strategy were significant in allowing Ma Mawi to innovate in its structure and interventions.

Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation benefits from the Manitoba Government's **Neighbourhoods Alive!** program, a long-term, community-based, social and economic development program that supports and encourages community-driven revitalization efforts focusing on key areas such as housing and physical improvements, employment and training, education and recreation, safety and crime prevention. The program provides core funding in 5-year cycles for locally-governed Community Renewal Corporations whose mandate is to coordinate and support programs and services that assist community efforts to rebuild and revitalize neighbourhoods experiencing significant social, economic and physical decline. This model of long-term, core funding for community-led, multifaceted initiatives is the envy of many other communities in Canada.

Below is a brief description of all 17 case studies. Each one was chosen as an example of effective community-based practice to improve social inclusion in its specific setting and focus of activities.

Affirmative Industries, Dartmouth, NS

> The mission of Affirmative Industries is to facilitate the economic independence of people with disabilities in Nova Scotia, through an employment training platform, a residence for : mental health consumers starting on the path back to employment, and the Andrew Peacock Fund which provides capital for entrepreneurs with disabilities. Affirmative

Industries is using a range of CED tools to create opportunities with people with disabilities, whose barriers to inclusion require specific attention.

CALDECH, Penetanguishene, ON

The goal of the Centre d'avancement et de leadership en développement économique communautaire de la Huronie (CALDECH) is to promote job creation, to contribute to local enterprise startups, to ensure francophone participation in the economy, to strengthen our community's ability to be self-financing and to offer training and consulting services. CALDECH is one of the few francophone organizations in Ontario that focuses on CED. It is also a good example of CED in a rural setting. Their work has evolved to address cultural issues, as well as social and other issues of the community through CED.

Central Labrador Economic Development Board, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL

The Central Labrador Economic Development Board's mission is to create self-sustaining economic communities which will strengthen the ability to produce and export goods and services, while appreciating cultural diversity, striving for equal opportunity, and preserving of their pristine environment and community lifestyle. The CLEDB, despite being part of a fairly traditional economic development board network, is using innovative ways to create bridges between peoples in it's northern and fairly isolated region.

Community Opportunities Innovation Network (COIN), Peterborough, ON

COIN is a community-focussed organization that promotes empowerment, equality and wellness through innovative and sustainable CED. It is a good example of a traditional community economic development organization that has developed independent of CED-specific funding, but it's story is not well known.

Compagnie F, Montréal, QC

Compagnie F offers to its clients a space for reflection, experimentation and action, focused on their business development projects. Different services available allow them to access training, to work, to discuss and reduce isolation that is occasionally felt. Managed by women for women, Compagnie F is a resource serving the Montréal region offering a bridge between the community and business worlds. Since its creation, Compagnie F has helped more than 500 women to create their business or reorient their career. This case highlights the strengths of women-centred CED and social inclusion, particularly women with barriers to employment, using the Sustainable Livelihoods framework.

Core Neighbourhood Youth Coop, Saskatoon, SK

The Core Neighbourhood Youth Co-op is a community centre where youth from Saskatoon's core neighbourhoods have the opportunity to become involved in economic ventures with co-operative and environmental themes. The youth are involved in a working co-operative in which their ideas provide the inspiration for work projects and they share the profits earned by these projects.

Corporation de développement communautaire des Bois-Francs, Victoriaville, QC

The mission of the CDCBF is to ensure the active participation of the community and popular movement in the socio-economic development of the area. The CDCBF was the first Community Development Corporation in Québec, of which there are now over 30. the CDCs are local associations of community organizations that serve as representative bodies, sites for strengthening the community sector, and offering collective services. The CDCBF,also owns a building rented to community organizations.

Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, Edmonton, AB

The Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers helps immigrants and refugees from diverse cultural, political, and religious backgrounds achieve full participation in the community, strengthening and enriching Canadian society. They have recently developed and implemented a framework for Holistic Integrated Practice that directs the structure and operations of the organization – a valuable model for integrated organizational development.

Eva's Initiatives, Toronto, ON

Works collaboratively with homeless and at risk youth, to actualize their potential to lead productive, self-sufficient and healthy lives by providing safe shelter and a range of services. We create long-term solutions by developing and implementing pro-active and progressive services. Eva's uses the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, which was an important model identified by the survey for designing comprehensive approaches.

Greater Trail Community Skills Centre, Trail, BC

The Skills Centre is a community leader in social economic development and learning that strives to actively support each individual in working towards achieving their full potential, offer equity of access to opportunities for learning and skills development, serve the diverse needs of the community with respect, integrity and fairness, and provide leadership to facilitate mutually beneficial results with our clients and partners.

Learning Enrichment Foundation, Toronto, ON

LEF's mission is to provide community responsive programs and services which enable individuals to become valued contributors to their community's social and economic development. LEF is one of the oldest CED organizations in Ontario, with a number of social enterprises which respond to the needs of New Canadians. It has also become a model for developing multi-faceted and comprehensive services to the communities they work with.

Lennox Island First Nation, Lennox Island, PE

This is a department of the First Nation government whose goal is to provide a full spectrum of opportunities for community citizens. Lennox Island First Nation provides a great example of an innovative aboriginal community, taking a comprehensive approach and on the cutting edge of planning and development. They are working towards a vision of self-reliance and being a SMART and GREEN community.

Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre, Winnipeg, MB

The Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre was established in 1984 by the Aboriginal community to serve the Aboriginal community living in Winnipeg. The Centre has invested in a neighbourhood based practice model aimed at identifying innovative policy and practice initiatives to create and sustain family-supported neighbourhoods. This approach is based on principles that emphasize the return of capacity to the community to care for its members, through neighbourhood networks, skills sharing and coordinating neighbourhood resources. Their Aboriginal, holistic framework and strategic plan, focusing on inclusion, are a key model of effective practice.

Mennonite Central Committee of BC Employment & Community Development, Abbotsford, BC

MCCBC Employment and Community Development seeks to enable people and communities to discover their gifts, develop their abilities and mobilize resources to become economically self-sufficient. With a grassroots, comprehensive CED approach that addresses multiple dimensions of inclusion simultaneously, this organization is a useful model of a mature community-based organization with a broad, territorial focus.

Saint John Community Loan Fund, St. John, NB

St. John Community Loan Fund seeks to improve social conditions for people living in Saint John, by fuelling entrepreneurship - helping individuals create income, build assets, and attain greater self-reliance. The Loan Fund provides a look at a small investment vehicle that is growing more and more into a community development corporation. It started out with business loans and has added shelter and employment loans. It now offers financial literacy training and is looking to build a multi-use affordable housing complex. It remains a very small organization in a city with a poverty rate of 22%.

Santropol roulant, Montréal, QC

Santropol Roulant combats social and economic isolation between generations by using food as a vehicle for ideas and actions towards a healthy and vibrant community. They bring a variety of people to play an active role in their community via initiative that seek to reduce problems related to food, loss of autonomy or health. Santropol takes an Innovative inter-generational approach. Originally founded as an inter-generational meals-on-wheels service, it has branched out into food-security, urban agriculture, community engagement, becoming an important player in its neighbourhood's revitalization.

Storyteller's Foundation, Hazelton, BC

The Storyteller's Foundation's mission is to foster personal and political mobilization through the development of an active citizenry so that the Upper Skeena and Gitxsan Nation can further define its social and economic destiny. In a remote location with extreme poverty and enormous socio-economic challenges, the Storyteller's Foundation has had to create new approaches that are culturally appropriate and both meet the pressing immediate needs of the population while attempting to break the cycle of violence and despair.

Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation, Thompson, MB

Thompson Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation's (TNCRC) mission is to coordinate and support programs and services that assist community efforts to rebuild and revitalize neighbourhoods experiencing significant social, economic and physical decline within the City of Thompson. Supported through the Neighbourhoods Alive! program of the Manitoba government, TNCRC demonstrates what can be done with a comprehensive and detailed outcome evaluation plan, and the core funding to support it.

4. Policy Recommendations

The research undertaken through this project has highlighted important strategies being used by community organizations to address inter-related and inter-dependent social and economic needs in Canadian communities. Literature reviews, peer learning activities and analysis of public policy initiatives in Canada and other jurisdictions have all contributed to an understanding of the importance of comprehensive approaches to community development that address the social, cultural and economic components of social inclusion.

This understanding builds on existing research and development activities in the community economic development (CED) field, and related subjects in social policy development, from the "social economy" to sustainable community development, from place-based approaches to poverty reduction to health promotion and crime prevention. The common element to these areas of social policy and program development are the search for an integrating social policy paradigm that addresses the root causes of poverty and social exclusion, and a means of supporting communities in enacting that paradigm in practical ways.

Our research has clearly shown that many communities are already working within that integrated paradigm and developing leadership, skills and resources that meet their particular circumstances in rural, urban, northern and Aboriginal settings. The issue is not local leadership, understanding, determination or infrastructure. All of these clearly exist in many communities throughout Canada. The common issue however is the lack of an enabling policy and program environment that supports, strengthens, grows and provides resources for the community infrastructure that already exists, while helping in its adaptation and replication in other communities where it has not yet been developed.

The role of local, tailored, place-based action in conjunction with universal policies (such as income transfers, health, education, etc.) is increasingly recognized by a growing body of research and analysis as a critical ingredient in an effective policy mix. Most recently, the External Advisory Committee on Cities and Communities (2006) recommended that all governments in Canada adopt a place-based approach to policy-making, which would allow them to foster better capacities to understand, develop and manage Canada's places in ways that take into account the economic and social diversity that define them. Specifically, the Committee recommended "that the leadership role of the federal government be one of facilitation and partnership with other orders of government and civil society, to deliver locally appropriate solutions to issues of national consequence playing out at a local level." (p. 18)

From a focus on Canada's most at-risk population groups[2], Burstein (2005), identifies a number of strategic considerations for the development of poverty and social exclusion policies:

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[2] The five groups that were the focus of Burstien's paper were lone parents, unattached individuals aged 45-64, Aboriginal individuals living off-reserve, recent immigrants and persons with work-limiting disabilities

- Successful strategies to address poverty and exclusion require sustained investments that target not just income and employment but abilities, assets, attitudes, and aspirations. The last three are relatively new on the policy scene.
- Neither the problems nor the remedies are simple. Once the focus moves beyond income to exclusion, complexity enters in the form of wider goals, a correspondingly broader range of interventions, overlapping jurisdictions, and scientific uncertainty regarding causes, effects, and mediating variables.
- Objectives will need to be framed carefully (not just in terms of outcomes) to accommodate varying perspectives and avoid engineering singular, middle-class appreciations of what constitutes the good life.
- No matter what clever new policies are devised, income supports will continue to play a crucial role in alleviating deprivation and poverty. Research shows that transfers produce sizable reductions in long-term poverty among all five at-risk groups
- Universality in the form of tax relief, national child benefits and (passive) information/ education strategies, needs to be complemented by active policies targeting individual circumstance and focusing on at-risk groups.
- Community-based policies may be appropriate for some at-risk groups. The utility of such policies will depend on the spatial concentration of the target group, on the extent to which group members behave as a community, and on the resources available to the group.
- Different at-risk groups require different policies. These policies engage different levels of government, different public agencies, and different civil groups. As a result, consultation, co-ordination, and delivery strategies will also differ.
- Poverty reinforces and reproduces itself, scarring individuals and families. Because of this, early intervention constitutes an essential policy response.
- Because of complexity, uncertainty, and the need for holistic solutions, research, measurement, and experimentation prove especially important in designing and testing policies to combat social exclusion.

Building on these analyses and our own research, the following policy recommendations are made to help create and strengthen public policy and program tools and environments that support community action on social inclusion.

i) Make Social Inclusion and the Social Economy an Overarching Federal Policy Objective

Several major new social policy initiatives have been undertaken by the Federal Government, from investments in combating homelessness to place-based approaches to poverty reduction. The "Social Inclusion" framework provides an overarching policy lens by which to focus these and other policies across departments to address the inter-related causes of social exclusion, and to integrate policy objectives to maximise integrated outcomes. The "Social Economy" initiative of government provides a related approach to integrating the social and economic aspects of social inclusion in an action oriented framework. Several of our case studies illustrate

the need for these approaches. They are initiatives that deal with multiple disadvantage in urban communities where people lack adequate housing, access to training and employment, are on low income, and have to deal with addictions and/or health challenges. Policy objectives and initiatives of government departments fail to address these multiple social issues. They are siloed into interventions that deal with individual departmental mandates (such as homelessness, drug addiction, or the need for pre-employment training). Yet for many of those who are most disadvantaged in Canadian society, it is the presence of these multiple and inter-related social conditions that has caused their relative disadvantage. **We recommend that government adopt a Social Inclusion Policy Framework or Lens for government policy and a Social Economy Strategy to support it.** This policy lens, similar to the CED lens which has been adopted in Manitoba and Nunavut, would require government departments to examine how they can maximise multiple social and economic benefits for communities by their activities and policies, and the social economy strategy would present specific opportunities to support and invest (through procurement for example) in community economic and social development infrastructure. Such an approach would emulate aspects of social inclusion policy in European jurisdictions, which have also led to related social economy initiatives to operationalize a new paradigm of integrated social and economic policies and programs, particularly targeted to those communities and populations that are most "socially excluded." "Joined up solutions to joined up problems" as the strategy has been called by the UK Government. **We also recommend that an advisory structure be created made up of representatives of community economic development and social economy organizations, policy institutes, and others to advise the government from a practitioner and community perspective on how a social inclusion policy framework/lens should be developed.**

ii) Create New Horizontal Program Supports for Comprehensive Community Development

In addition to the need for a new integrating policy lens there is a need to provide long term, outcome-based funding for comprehensive community development models to engage in their long term task of transforming social and economic conditions. A new Community Investment Task Force has recently been struck across federal departments to look at funding models to support communities. There have also been recent innovations in funding instruments for Place Based Poverty Reduction, for support to "Action for Neighbourhood Change", Rural Community Development, and Co-operative Development, as well as improvements to the terms and conditions of Employment Programs by Service Canada. These have all involved multi-year funding agreements with some focus on outcome-based evaluation as opposed to excessive output and input accounting. The Cities and Communities Agenda of the Government has also involved (as a condition of "gas tax funds") a requirement on municipalities to develop "sustainability" plans for their communities inclusive of social, economic and environmental issues. However none of these initiatives provide targeted, long-term support for community social and economic development by non-profit community organizations and the pressing need of participants in this research is to have new sources of funding to sustain and develop their work over several years. **We recommend that the Government build on innovative program design that is already underway and create a new program of funding**

community economic and social development (including the possibility of horizontally pooled funds from across appropriate departments) with flexible, multi-year terms and conditions to support comprehensive community development activities and organizations that address multiple federal policy and program concerns relevant to social inclusion.

In many regions of the country, regional offices and agencies are significant to multiple and related issues of social and economic development in communities. Yet currently there is no mechanism to engage federal officials, programs and agencies in horizontal support to community development. The Rural Secretariat of Agriculture Canada has succeeded in establishing "rural teams" of federal and provincial agency representatives that consider rural community development issues, however these have limited priority in the federal hierarchy. **We recommend that an initiative be created to strengthen regional horizontal co-operation amongst federal departments in each province and territory to support community social and economic development.**

iii) Support Education on the New Paradigm of Integrated Social and Economic Development

This research, other research on social inclusion, and research under the auspices of SSHRC's Social Economy Suite, will generate new knowledge and information on the dynamic work of community organizations to address social and economic development needs in innovative and effective ways. However, none of these discreet research projects have the funds to invest in extensive communication, knowledge mobilization and education activities. Similarly, community organizations have little or no funds as part of their project funding agreements to undertake these kinds of activities, or engage in long term evaluation activities at the local level that could generate information for public education on their outcomes over time. Yet the new paradigm of integrated approaches to social and economic development, new forms of social enterprise, research on the multiple benefits and outcomes of community economic development models, the return on government program expenditure from new forms of social innovation, are all important pieces of information and evidence that should be available to the public, to policy makers and to inform practice by people and organizations interested in learning from others. **We therefore recommend that the government invest in a long-term education strategy on what community organizations are achieving with comprehensive approaches to community development and why, within the federal government itself, with other levels of governments, other funders and investors (e.g. foundations and corporate social investment interests), the broader voluntary sector, and the public.**

iv) Invest in Sector Strengthening

Peer Learning and Networking

Many of the community organizations that participated in this research have come to their current work from positions of both weakness and strength. They have faced crises with their communities, and often with the survival of their own organizations. They have had to develop vision and leadership for change in sometimes grim circumstances. They have had to develop new skills, approaches, models, resources, often from scratch. They have also had tremendous investments of time and energy from their own members, volunteers, participants, community supporters. In many cases they have been working on their own in isolation. When they do have time to share and learn with others facing similar challenges, working on similar strategies those instances have been valued. CCEDNet's own experience as an association of community development organizations and practitioners, including this research project, strongly supports the importance of peer learning and networking to strengthening practice as well as informing policy. The most important priority for these organizations is stable long term funding to support their own work in communities of course. However it is also important that practice is informed by sharing and learning, and that policy development is also informed by that peer learning. **We therefore recommend that the government create specific support for peer learning and networking amongst community development practitioners engaged in comprehensive community development work.**

Action Research and Evaluation

Linked to that peer learning support is the need for action research funding that goes beyond current community university research alliances as modelled by SSHRC. These alliances (including the current Social Economy Suite) do help resource useful research on social issues in communities, many relevant to comprehensive community development approaches to social inclusion. However, the definition and control of the research is still led by the academic partners. In our experience, with the case studies in this research for example, practitioners working in the field need to be resourced as part of a Participatory Action Research approach to define and lead the research, with community participants involved. That kind of research can also generate longitudinal outcome evidence that informs practice (what works and why) as well as policy. **We therefore recommend a "Social Inclusion" Action Research Program targeted to community development organizations and partners that they choose to support Participatory Action Research on their work and its outcomes.**

Private Investment

Many of the organizations involved in this research demonstrate a high degree of entrepreneurship and have diversified sources of funds, even in the relatively low income communities that they are part of. They are keen to attract private capital to support, for example, "social enterprises" that are a major part of the fabric of innovative community development organizations in Canada and contribute to the new paradigm of integrated social and economic development. However the mechanisms to attract private investment (whether from individuals or private businesses) are limited. These barriers to investment limit the capacity of community development organizations to create new initiatives and assets and become more self sufficient. **We recommend that the Government urgently address the recommendations of the Canadian Community Economic Development Network, le Chantier de l'economie sociale, and the Canadian Community Investment Network to introduce tax incentives and other regulatory measures to enable private investment in community investment funds and social enterprises.**

Leadership and Practitioner Development

Leadership is a major factor in many of the community organizations involved in this research. Leadership has come from both within staff and the member/citizen participants in the examples outlined in this report. That leadership has sometimes been the start of an initiative, as a result of vision of new possibilities, and sometimes it has come because there has been no other choice, the community has had its back to the wall and has had to produce leadership to deal with crisis. In the evidence of this research, leadership for transformative community development is critical and it comes from all parts of the community and the organization. It is very much about leading with, and in the process transferring skills and ultimately power to others. Unfortunately the opportunities to develop that kind of leadership skill, and to develop other practitioner skills related to community development are very limited. The new paradigm of social and economic development, combining social program and business skills in social entrepreneurship for example, has no training or education centres other than the community economic development workplace. However in other jurisdictions (e.g. USA and Europe) major programs are under way to develop the kinds of skills necessary for people to lead community social and economic development initiatives. CCEDNet itself supports an Emerging Leaders Committee that is youth-led and is developing opportunities for youth leadership development, including an internship program recently funded by Service Canada. However more intensive efforts are needed in practitioner and leadership development if the skills necessary for new approaches to community social and economic development are going to be created. **We therefore recommend that a long term Skills Development Initiative be created to address the long term human resource development needs for community development organizations across Canada.**

5. Appendices

Research Team

The project was carried out by a staff team that includes the Executive Director of the Canadian CED Network, Rupert Downing; Community Learning Program Director, Michael Toye; and five Regional Coordinators: Ellie Langford Parks (BC/Yukon); Brendan Reimer (Prairies & Northern Territories); Monique Beaudoin (Ontario); Daniel Champagne (Québec); and Seth Asimakos (Atlantic). A Project Advisory Committee, whose members are drawn from organizations involved in community initiatives to increase social inclusion from across the country, provided input on project design and implementation, as well as feedback on a draft version of this report. A list of Project Advisory Committee members can be found below.

Project Advisory Committee Members *(as of January 2006)*

Individual	Organization
Larry Casper	Central Interior First Nations CFDC, Kamloops, BC
Anne Docherty	Storytellers Foundation, Hazelton, BC
Norman Greenberg	Affirmative Industry Association of Nova Scotia, Dartmouth, NS
Claude Jourdain	Centre local de développement Ouest-de-l'Île, Pointe-Claire, QC
Rosalind Lockyer	PARO Centre for Women's Enterprise, Thunder Bay, ON
Nanette McKay	North End Community Renewal Corporation, Winnipeg, MB
André Routhier	RDÉE-TNO / Conseil de développement économique des Territoires du Nord-Ouest
Jenny Saarinen	MCC Alberta Employment Development, Calgary, AB
Len Usiskin	Quint Development Corporation, Saskatoon, SK
Joe Valvasori	Learning Enrichment Foundation, Toronto, ON
Gail Zboch	Community Economic Development Technical Assistance Program, Ottawa, ON
Cathie Dunlop	Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, BC

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