



MANITOBA
RESearch
ALLIANCE

CED

IN THE NEW ECONOMY



Summary of Policy Issues Related to CED in the New Economy

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SUMMARY OF POLICY ISSUES RELATED TO CED IN THE NEW ECONOMY*

The Manitoba Research Alliance on Community Economic Development in the New Economy (referred to throughout this document as the Research Alliance or the MRA) is a three-year research project to examine how communities might overcome obstacles and share in the benefits created by the New Economy. We identified Community Economic Development (CED), a development strategy that emphasizes local self-sufficiency, local decision-making and local ownership, as a strategic response to assist communities in taking up the opportunities and meeting the challenges created by the transition to a New Economy.

The Research Alliance brings together academic researchers from the universities of Manitoba, Winnipeg and Brandon; senior government policy makers; and practitioners active in Manitoba's dynamic CED community (and elsewhere). The lead organization is the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives-Manitoba, a community-based research institute uniquely positioned to make such community-university connections. The team's Principal Investigator is Dr. John Loxley, Professor of Economics at the University of Manitoba. The Research Alliance was launched in late 2002, and it funded and oversaw more than 40 individual research projects chosen to help meet the larger project's overall goals. This research was conducted by academics, students, and community researchers, in many cases working in teams. These

projects have been successful, not only in their particular research findings, but also in providing opportunities for students and community researchers to receive practical research training. And they have bridged the gaps between academic disciplines, and between the university and the larger community. While focusing primarily on Manitoba, the composition of the Alliance has enabled it to draw on experiences from across Canada and beyond.

This publication is one of ten summary publications prepared by the Research Alliance. These publications, which we have come to call "kits," describe the results of our research, and the kits are organized by audience or by theme. It should be emphasized that we are not — nor could we be — comprehensive in addressing these themes. Rather, we have identified a wide range of research results based on the specific research projects that we undertook. The themes and audiences for the kits arose out of the research, as we think these themes are the most effective way to organize the results.

* We are pleased to acknowledge the generous financial support of the Initiative on the New Economy of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council; via the Manitoba Research Alliance on Community Economic Development in the New Economy. For further information please see: <http://www.manitobaresearchallianceced.ca>.

The complete list of kits is as follows:

1. Assessing the impacts of the New Economy
2. Evaluating the potential of Community Economic Development
3. Examining government policy regarding Community Economic Development and the New Economy
4. The role of gender in Community Economic Development and the New Economy
5. Aboriginal issues in Community Economic Development and the New Economy
6. Business issues in Community Economic Development and the New Economy
7. Education issues Community Economic Development and the New Economy (aimed at educators)
8. Urban issues in Community Economic Development and the New Economy
9. Rural issues in Community Economic Development and the New Economy
10. Northern issues in Community Economic Development and the New Economy

These kits, along with the rest of the publications prepared by or for the Research Alliance, can be downloaded for free from www.manitoba-researchallianceced.ca. Much of the research has also been published by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives — Manitoba (www.policy-alternatives.ca/mb).

A note on sources

This particular publication is informed by all of the research carried out, but in particular the information here has been drawn from the following individual projects:

- *Aboriginal Learners in Selected Adult Learning Centres in Manitoba*, by Jim Silver with Darlene Klyne and Freeman Simard

- *Government Policy Towards Community Economic Development in Manitoba*, by Lynne P. Fernandez
- *A Scan of Community Economic Development Organizations, Rural Communities and First Nations in Manitoba and their Participation in the New Economy* (A Masters Thesis), by Carly Duboff
- *Economics for CED Practitioners*, by John Loxley and Laura Lamb
- *CED Lens*, by Byron Sheldrick
- *Environment And Economic Development: Co-Managing A National Park While Stimulating Community Development In Churchill (MB)*, by Thibault Martin, Lisa Falvo, and Mike Chotka
- *Social Housing, Neighbourhood Revitalization and CED*, by Ian Skelton, Cheryl Selig, and Lawrence Deane
- *The Effect of Information Technologies on Aboriginal Employment in the Airlines and Banking Sectors*, by Kathleen Sexsmith and Aaron Pettman
- *State Policies to Enhance the New Economy: A Comparative Analysis*, by Michael Mackenzie, Jim Silver and Byron Sheldrick
- *Identifying Employment Opportunities for Low-Income People Within the Manitoba Innovation Framework*, by Garry Loewn, Jim Silver, Martine August, Patrick Bruning, Michael MacKenzie, and Shauna Meyerson
- *Internet Connectivity in a Northern Setting: A Churchill Case Study*, by Susannah Cameron, Robert Annis and John Everitt
- *An Analysis of Winnipeg's Information and Computer Technology Industry Within a Community Economic Development Framework*, by Melodie Friesen and Ian Hudson
- *CED-oriented Business Development Strategies for Winnipeg's North End*, by Brendan Reimer

Contents

- 7 **What is Community Economic Development?**
 - The State of Community Economic Development in Manitoba
- 9 **Government support for Community Economic Development**
- 10 **Business Planning and Development**
- 11 **Community Economic Development Policy in Manitoba**
 - Community Economic Development Program (CEDP)
 - Western Economic Diversification Canada
 - Provincial government CED policy
 - The CED Lens
 - What have provincial policies to support CED achieved in Manitoba?
- 17 **What is the New Economy?**
- 18 **Government Policy to support the New Economy**
 - Theorizing the New Economy and state policies
 - What do state policies to enhance the New Economy look like?
 - The Broadband Initiative
 - The Innovation Framework for Manitoba
- 23 **Recommendations**

SUMMARY OF POLICY ISSUES RELATED TO CED IN THE NEW ECONOMY

What is Community Economic Development?¹

Community Economic Development (CED) has been subject to an eclectic range of definitions. To some, CED covers any economic development initiative, be it private, public or community driven, taking place within some definition of 'community', usually a geographic one. According to this view, there is no necessary inconsistency between orthodox economics and CED. According to the more demanding definitions of CED now coming to dominate the literature, more radical departures from the orthodoxy seem called for.² These define CED as a social process in terms of decision taking; they replace the individual 'consumer' with the collective community; they see the meeting of collective 'needs' taking precedence over the satisfaction of individual consumer 'demands'; they take a long view of economic activities as opposed to that of short-term profit maximization and they see economic decisions as being inextricably linked to social, environmental, political and cultural considerations.

Within this more demanding view of CED, there are two schools of thought. The first, associated with a more radical, communal, tradition, sees

CED as an alternative form of social organization to capitalism. The second has a more limited vision, seeing CED as a desirable and workable approach to dealing with particular problems facing communities. These problems are a direct outcome of the way in which capitalism differentially and unevenly affects certain communities and CED is seen as a way to help fix them. Adherents to the first school are often found working alongside those of the latter.

The most complete set of CED principles are those underlying the Neechi model of CED. Neechi Foods Co-op Ltd. is an Aboriginal worker-owned cooperative retail store in inner-city Winnipeg. The idea of this approach is to build a strong, inward looking, self-reliant economy which is based on goods and services consumed by people who live or work in the community. In theoretical terms it is a "convergence" strategy of economic development.³ It favours cooperative ownership, small scale production and popular control over economic decision making. It is a holistic approach, in which the safety, health and self-respect of residents are of paramount importance.⁴ The principles on which it operates are as follows: production of goods and services for local use; use of local goods and services; local reinvestment of locally generated profits; long-term employment of local residents; local skill development; local decision making; improved public health; improved physical environment; neigh-

bourhood stability; human dignity and solidarity among communities and businesses following these principles.

Notwithstanding the ongoing debates about how to define CED, the Neechi principles have been widely adopted as a benchmark in Winnipeg's large and active CED community, and as a theoretical starting point by the MRA and most of the individual researchers working on projects under the MRA. Several researchers attempted to refine or re-state a definition of CED, but all of these re-definitions remained broadly consistent with the Neechi principles. For example, Friesen and

“The Neechi principles have been widely adopted as a benchmark in Winnipeg’s large and active CED community”

Hudson extracted components from a number of works to define CED as “placing the community at the centre of economic development — such that the community is both the beneficiary and the prime mover. By matching local resources with local needs, community members are able to realize their higher-order non-economic needs, as well as their basic material needs.”⁵ (This definition recognizes that “community” can take many forms, including geographic, ethnic, and interest-based, and communities are not usually homogenous.) Fernandez adopts a definition prepared by the BC Working Group on CED, which takes CED to be “a community-based and community-directed process that explicitly combines social and economic development and is directed towards fostering the economic, social, ecological and cultural well-being of communities.”⁶

The State of Community Economic Development in Manitoba

Many commentators have noted that Winnipeg is rapidly becoming a focal point in Canada for CED. In an address to the CED Gathering held in Winnipeg in 2003 on the theme of “Maintaining Momentum,” Loxley listed reasons for this: CED in Winnipeg is guided by a clear set of principles (the Neechi Principles); CED activists in Winnipeg have demonstrated a willingness to engage nationally in promoting the philosophy and practice of CED; there is a strong institutional base for CED in Winnipeg, with the Community Education Development Agency, Assiniboine Credit Union, and SEED Winnipeg, among many other institutions; government support for CED has improved markedly since 1999; charitable foundations have become more active in supporting CED; there is a supportive academic environment for CED.

Government / Policy

Support for CED⁷

CED initiatives are typically developed outside of the state by small, grass-roots organizations. Yet they are frequently dependent on state investment in order to be viable.

The communities in which CED strategies are employed are, almost by definition, under-resourced, and because CED is a non-market intervention, the role of government is crucial. (It should be noted that governments also support mainstream businesses in many different ways. For example, governments support New Economy initiatives in multiple ways, as described in detail later in this publication.)

Government supports for CED may take any number of forms, ranging from direct financing of CED enterprises or helping to secure third-party financing, through research, training and strategic planning, to comprehensive efforts such as the CED lens developed by the province of Manitoba.

“Most CED projects need some subsidization”

Underlying most approaches to CED is the philosophy of self-reliance and community independence. In reality, however, CED ventures have to compete with other, often monopoly producers, many of whom enjoy much larger scales of production and pay wages close to or below subsistence levels.

Therefore, in reality, few CED projects would be viable without some degree of subsidization. Their scale of production is usually very small, overhead costs are relatively high, wages paid have to be at socially acceptable levels, staff are often inexperienced and need training and they often face social problems not necessarily experienced by the general labour force. For all these reasons,

CED projects find it difficult to prosper. The subsidies may take the form of volunteer labour, “cross-subsidization,” in which members of a community choose to pay more for individual products in order to support jobs and income in the community, someone picking up the bottom-line losses of a project, a protected market for products at a higher than market price, physical assets at less than cost, cheap capital, a protective tariff or tax on competitors’ products, or help towards meeting overhead costs.

“The role of government is crucial”

What is the economic rationale for these various forms of subsidization? Usually one resorts to principles of cost-benefit analysis to justify subsidization. Projects that are commercially unviable may be socially viable if the market does not accurately capture the true costs and benefits to society of the project in question. Market prices do not normally capture the true *opportunity cost* of employing resources. Thus, it is argued, in a community experiencing widespread unemployment, the true social cost of employing labour is not the wage that would have to be paid to hire workers, but rather the loss of output to society of not offering these people a job. The state may choose to pay the project the difference between the market wage costs and the social wage cost, and the rationale for this subsidy is, therefore, one of job creation, with all the benefits, tangible and otherwise, that results when people are gainfully employed.

In reality, these calculations are often difficult to make and governments and politicians find them hard to follow. Where this is the case, another closely related approach may be pursued. This consists of measuring the *fiscal impact* of a project and gearing the amount of subsidy to the extent to which the project improves the fiscal position of government(s). Such improvement may come from a number of different sources. First,

if the project increases employment it may reduce either Employment Insurance (EI) claims (which are expenditures in the federal government budget) or social assistance payments (usually paid by provincial or municipal governments). Secondly, workers pay EI contributions which increase government revenue as well as income, sales and other taxes. Thirdly, if projects reduce social problems, by tackling them either directly or indirectly, e.g. by putting people to work, then government spending to address social problems will go down. In

“Governments are generally most sensitive to the fiscal benefits of subsidizing CED”

theory, it is possible to add up all these positive fiscal impacts and justify government subsidization accordingly. Politicians can relate more easily to this approach and find it more accessible than justifications based on cost-benefit analyses. One potential problem with the fiscal approach is that net fiscal benefits are spread among the different levels of government, and the level of government benefiting most may not be the one that has the most subsidy available.

In general, CED demonstrates how traditional accounting is too narrow; when the full social costs and benefits are considered, it often makes perfect sense for government to “pay more” to purchase from a CED supplier, or subsidize a CED initiative.

Business Planning and Development⁸

The business community and government have long been assumed to have primary responsibility for business development. However, in the last few decades, a third sector has emerged (particularly in communities from which traditional businesses have disinvested) that aims to address economic and social agendas in an integrated manner. This third sector often adopts, whether explicitly or not, the principles of CED.

Winnipeg contains a prime example of urban-community disinvestment. The northern section of the inner city, also known as the North End, was once a thriving hub of commercial and social activity. It is now characterized by poverty and a stagnant or even deteriorating business environment. At the same time, the North End has also embraced the emergence of CED as a development strategy as much as any other community in Manitoba. Therefore, the North End is a rich subject for investigation. A report prepared for the MRA by Reimer examined the various business development tools and strategies currently being employed in Winnipeg’s North End. The report was based in part on numerous interviews and focus groups with key informants.

“The ‘Third Sector’ aims to integrate economic and social goals, and often takes a CED approach”

The federal government does not deliver economic development strategies targeted at small geographic zones such as the North End. Western Economic Diversification does assist projects that may be accessible by North End business developers, but WED’s is a much broader geography and conceptual mandate. The Aboriginal community

in the North End may be able to take advantage of federal business development programs. However, according to one respondent, inter-governmental initiatives have tended to complicate development strategies, especially when it is up to small, grassroots businesses to determine jurisdictional responsibility.

The provincial government has taken real and important steps to support CED business development, both directly and indirectly. These are described in more detail below. However, most of the province's business development strategies appear to be geared toward large-scale investments in industry attraction, expansion, or retention. Hundreds of millions of dollars are invested in the creation or retention of hundreds of jobs resulting in a very high investment-dollars-per-job ratio. Additionally, none of these large-scale efforts benefit Winnipeg's North End. While the province would not realistically focus disproportionately on the North End, the fact that these

“Most of Manitoba’s business development strategies appear to be geared toward large-scale investments in industry attraction, expansion, or retention”

efforts omit Winnipeg's most disinvested community altogether is disconcerting. Respondents did acknowledge the province's Neighbourhoods Alive! program, which targets disinvested communities for CED. However, several respondents noted that, while Neighbourhoods Alive! did make a difference, it was “a far cry from the serious

money approach that the province takes for locations such as Winnipeg's downtown.”

The municipal government has supported, to some extent, business development in the North End. The city government facilitates Business Improvement Zone (BIZ) structures in which the businesses in a zone pay an additional business

“Governments need to participate in CED, without trying to control it”

levy to the BIZ that is spent as the BIZ sees fit. The BIZ idea has not been very successful in the North End, in part because the tax base is simply insufficient to sustain any significant strategies and initiatives.

In general, Reimer's respondents see the role of government to be key to business development, but as a facilitator and enabler of community-based efforts rather than as the top-down provider of services and programs. One respondent articulated this perspective by saying, “They need to be part of the conversation, but not direct it.”

CED Policy in Manitoba⁹

The federal government does not have policies or departments specifically targeted at CED. Nonetheless, there are a number of ways in which it supports CED.

Community Economic Development Program (CEDP)

In spite of the name of this program, it has much more to do with business development than with CED as understood by the MRA. The CEDP is meant to provide long-term development opportunities in employment and business. The CEDP continued the concept of the Community Economic Development ²⁶The Status Report referred to CED as ‘a relatively new way of looking at economic development. It is a bottom-up (community controlled) process of local and regional revitalization that makes the community the foremost player in its own growth and renewal. The CEDP is meant to allow First Nations communities access to the menu of programs offered by the federal government, such as the Resource Partnerships Program, the Major Business Project Program and the Procurement Strategy for Aboriginal Business. Various tools are available to participating communities and include: business plans, the National Aboriginal Capital Corporation Association, internet tools and information sheets. The program is somewhat more streamlined than previous programs offered by this department, however there is no indication that it can be considered an application of CED.

Western Economic Diversification Canada

Western Economic Diversification (WD) administers programs and services intended to advance innovation, entrepreneurship and sustainable

communities. In the fulfillment of its mandate, WD has been involved in CED programs, although it is not dedicated specifically to CED. Because WD offers its services to a variety of different types of initiatives, it can find itself supporting a CED-based program, and it will accept the CED definition adopted by the community.

WD sees itself as a facilitator of partnerships. It is able to partner with the province, other federal departments and with municipalities. As well as bringing partners to the table, WD can provide much needed funding to community projects. The closest that WD comes to a CED policy is through the administration of its Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs). Manitoba has 16 CFDCs, each one led by a local board of volunteer directors. Notwithstanding the lack of a real CED focus, the CFDCs are providing a valuable service to Manitoba communities and, in some cases, may be building CED strategies without being aware of it. Johnston points to WD’s support of grass-roots development in the province’s north. The Northern Diversification Centre Initiative in La Pas looks for alternatives to forestry and other resource-based, capital-intense development. Projects may include the gathering and processing of wild mushrooms or rice and the making of Christmas wreaths. CFDCs work together with the communities to market the products at the local level so that they can be shipped south for sale. Running parallel to WD’s support for community-driven projects is the growing tendency of both the federal and provincial governments to support community initiatives.

Provincial government CED policy¹⁰

Government has been engaged in CED since its inception and there is considerable archival material to document its involvement, beginning in Manitoba in the 1950s. The provincial government set up the Manitoba Community Development Services — in cooperation with the federal department of Indian Affairs — in 1958, and a central part of the Canadian community development

movement was born. In fact, other provinces used Manitoba as a training and recruitment base for community development officers. Government involvement with CED continued throughout the 1960s and 70s. On the provincial front, important policy was introduced by the NDP's Guidelines for the Seventies. A change in government prevented many policies from being implemented, but the Guidelines can still serve as an example of how government can produce coherent policy to address specific problems. The 1980s and 90s represented turbulent times for marginalised communities as the government began to deal with issues of Aboriginal self-government, the growth of the urban-Aboriginal population, environmental concerns and rapid inner-city decay, all the while under intense pressure to cut costs for social spending. The important theoretical progress made in the CED community in Canada was noticed by some in government, but rarely was it translated into policy action. At times government policy heavily favoured economic development to the exclusion of social concerns. Government was also criticised for its tendency to design top-down, one-size-fits-all programs that did not reflect the needs of individual communities nor embrace CED principles.

However, at the provincial level the government has participated in CED initiatives such as housing and physical improvements, employment and training, education and recreation, safety and crime prevention, affordable housing, and has supported CED organizations such as SEED Winnipeg, The Jubilee Fund, Community Ownership Solutions, and North End Community Renewal Corporation. It has also established a Community Enterprise Development Tax Credit that may become a significant tool for North End business development. This tax credit is a non-refundable, 30% personal income tax credit for resident investors in eligible community enterprise development projects. In 2001, a major step was taken with the adoption of the CED Lens, a comprehensive government-wide plan to integrate

and implement CED principles into its broader policy framework.

The CED Lens¹¹

After the election of the NDP in 1999 in Manitoba, a series of discussions developed between community groups and the government. Those discussions centered on the disjuncture between CED practitioners and their policy objectives and the policy framework of the bureaucracy. CED groups felt that the state agencies they dealt with did not understand CED, nor were they sympathetic or

“Starting in 1999 with the election of an NDP government, CED was being taken seriously at very senior levels of government”

supportive of how CED groups were organized and operated. Overall, the government's policy framework and approach to service delivery was considered antithetical to the achievement of CED's goals of enfranchising and empowering communities. The government's top-down approach to economic development provided little or no opportunity for local involvement and participation.

These discussions led to the development of a CED initiative that generated a number of changes to the structure of the state. Most notably was the creation of the Community and Economic Development Committee of cabinet (CEDC) in March 2000, along with a secretariat to provide administrative support. The Committee, as part of its work, has attempted to develop a policy framework that would support and encourage the development of CED principles throughout the bureaucracy. This framework, known as the CED lens, is intended to ensure that CED principles are applied to new policy developments

through the public sector. Moreover, the CEDC has explicitly adopted a very broad and participatory definition of CED.

For CED activists, these developments seemed like very good news. For the first time CED appeared to be taken seriously at very senior levels of governments and there appeared to be some political will to ensure the dissemination of CED values throughout the state and to restructure policy processes in a way that would be more sensitive and supportive of CED. The cabinet committee is chaired by the premier and includes 6 ministers: Industry Trade and Mines, Energy, Science and Technology, Advanced Education and Training, Culture, Heritage and Tourism, Agriculture and Food, and Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade.

“The initial optimism of community CED activists was soon replaced by a certain degree of frustration”

The initial optimism of community CED activists that the creation of the Cabinet Committee on Community and Economic Development would increase the visibility of inner city economic issues was soon replaced by a certain degree of frustration. In particular, the new Cabinet Committee, although it quickly assumed a central position in the governance framework and took a lead role on economic issues, did little to integrate community concerns with broader notions of economic development. In this regard it is important to note that the name of the cabinet committee is conjunctive: it is the Community *AND* Economic Development committee, not the Community Economic Development Committee. While it is possible to make too much of small details, nevertheless in this instance the name is important. The Committee is responsible for economic development issues generally, and CED is one priority among many.

There has, however, been some movement towards the integration of CED principles into a broader policy framework at the level of the CEDC Secretariat. The secretariat provides staff resources

“There has been some movement towards the integration of CED principles into a broader policy framework”

and assistance for the Cabinet Committee. It is divided into nine project areas. Of these, however, only two project managers and one policy analyst are charged with the Community Economic Development file, while the remainder deal with more traditional areas of economic concern. The individuals who work on these files were drawn from the community and together have extensive backgrounds working in CED organizations.

The CED lens is a policy tool intended to provide a framework, or a set of indicators, that departments could utilize to evaluate policy initiatives in order to ensure that they are consistent

“The CED Lens is a good policy tool, but in practice the integration of participatory approaches to economic development has been difficult”

with CED principles. The lens would also allow departments to identify policy areas where CED opportunities exist and could be developed.

The notion of a CED lens as a policy tool is a good one. However, the operationalization of the lens has proved to be more difficult. In particular, the integration of more participatory and locally

driven approaches to economic development into existing policy frameworks has been frustrated by the realities of bureaucratic organization.

The CED lens has not been used to bring community groups into that process. Consequently, while the need for the CED lens may have emerged out of a dialogue with community groups, since then discussions have primarily been internal. The background documents prepared by the committee have not been shared with CED groups and practitioners, nor are they publicly available. Rather, its materials are kept on a government intranet, accessible only by public servants. While the interdepartmental working group occasionally invites individuals from the community to make presentations to it, this has generally been rare. Moreover, these presentations are conceptualized as “information gathering” by the committee, rather than as an opportunity to involve community groups in the committee’s discussions and planning.

In a sense, what has happened is that community representation has been integrated into the structure of bureaucratic expertise. In other words, those involved in the interdepartmental commit-

“Community representation has been integrated into the structure of bureaucratic expertise”

tee and employed by the Secretariat have become the “state experts” on CED. The need for community involvement and consultation is thereby reduced or even eliminated. The CED lens has been utilized by some departments as a basis for

conducting an inventory of programmes. However, to date very few departments have conducted inventories. This reflects the fact that many participants in the working group do not understand or appreciate the relevance of the group’s work to the day-to-day activities of their departments. The promotion of CED has been seen as a significant gesture to the broader social justice ambitions of the government, but one that is ancillary to the primary economic agenda of the government.

“Community representation has been integrated into the structure of bureaucratic expertise”

xIn this regard it is interesting to note that only two departments, Aboriginal and Northern Affairs and Labour and Immigration have conducted CED inventories of their programmes. Those departments most embedded in traditional modes of economic development — Industry Trade and Mines and Energy, Science and Technology — have not conducted inventories. It is also important to note that Housing and Family Services has not conducted an audit of their services. This department is responsible for the operation of Manitoba Housing, which offers subsidized public housing to those living in poverty, child welfare agencies, and the welfare system. Housing and Family services, then, is deeply involved in the policing and regulation of poor communities. There might be tremendous scope to restructure its operations to integrate economic development into the operation of the welfare system and the housing bureaucracy. However, the genuine adoption of CED principles would greatly diminish the regulatory power of the department and provide welfare recipients and those living in poverty much greater input into the operation of social programmes.

Those departments that have conducted inventories, by contrast, include those where well-developed policy communities exist and there

has been a history of consultation and involvement of members of that community in the policy process.

What have provincial policies to support CED achieved in Manitoba?¹²

Fernandez interviewed many of the most active participants in Manitoba's CED community, and asked them to assess the government's role in supporting CED in the province. While there were a range of replies, everyone interviewed by Fernandez recognized the importance of government funding for CED. Interviewees pointed to the following list of positive changes:

- CED organizations like SEED Winnipeg, Community Ownership Solutions, are being funded by government (and Neighbourhoods Alive! in particular supports many community-based initiatives), and yet government has made a clear policy decision to let community-based enterprises design and run the programs.
- Changes to welfare legislation now allow a welfare recipient to borrow money to start a business.
- The new CED equity tax credit will help the startup of social enterprises.
- Pre-employment training in job skills, life skills, and addictions treatment have all been provided by government funding, channeled through community organizations.
- The government's adoption of the 10 principles in the CED Lens has been significant, if only because doing so has legitimized and popularized the principles.

The interviewees also listed several ongoing problems:

- The province has tended to emphasize projects, without establishing a sufficiently comprehen-

sive policy framework — although there has been improvement in this regard.

- Similarly, financing for CED initiatives tends to be too project-based; there is not enough made available for core funding.
- The CED equity tax credit requires a considerable amount of legal work, which may be considered too costly for a startup business when compared against the relatively small amounts of investments often needed.
- In general, there is a lot of paperwork and regulation required, even from very small organizations requesting small amounts of money.

What Is the New Economy?¹³

In recent years, a New Economy has emerged, one in which information and knowledge play a central role. The emergence of the New Economy has been credited with generating robust economic growth, new and challenging employment opportunities, new wealth creation possibilities, and the promise of greatly enhancing the productivity, and hence incomes, of people in the rest of the economy. Information technology also offers new opportunities for leisure, education, lifestyle and access to government services.

Some researchers have been quick to caution that the extent and “newness” of the New Economy should not be overstated. Historically all capitalist economies have experienced cycles of upturn and recession, with the upturns often the result of technological innovations. Information technology is no doubt a major innovation, but the fundamental elements of the economy remain in place. Evidence suggests that the only sectors that have experienced extraordinary economic growth

“The benefits of New Economy growth have not been distributed evenly”

in the New Economy are the computer-information technology based sectors.¹⁴ And since many businesses have already bought and incorporated the new technology, growth in these sectors will level off.¹⁵

There is also evidence that the benefits of New Economy growth have not been distributed evenly, and the New Economy may even have hurt the most vulnerable, creating permanent job insecurity. A “dual-segmented” labour force intensifies the split between high-paying, flexible jobs and

deskilled low-wage, non-unionized service-sector jobs.¹⁶

Not surprisingly, given that there is not even general agreement about whether and to what degree a “new economy” actually exists, there is no foolproof, touchstone definition for the term. However, a number of authors see it as being underpinned by three major structural changes: a rise in general education levels; the development and availability of new information technology; and the increase in “invisible” trade in services,

“The New Economy in Manitoba is small and growing slowly, and centred in Winnipeg”¹⁷

mergers and acquisitions, and the flow of information. This definition was adopted by the Manitoba Research Alliance as a starting point, and was used by many of the researchers on our team. Researchers also used a broad definition of the New Economy in which it is seen as being central to the structural economic changes associated with globalization and neo-liberalism — this definition underpins MRA research projects such as Heald’s investigation into the New Economy’s effects on a small rural community.

The New Economy is intimately linked with the information and computer technology (ICT) sector (in fact, it is often *defined as* the ICT sector, although in reality it is broader than just that). The New Economy in Canada is largely concentrated — or “clustered” — in a few large cities, primarily in Quebec and Ontario, and secondarily in British Columbia and Alberta. Relative to the rest of the country, the ICT sector in Manitoba is relatively small and growing relatively slowly. It is also located primarily in one urban center — Winnipeg.

Manitoba seems to have had the misfortune of missing out on the late-1990s New Economy boom, but the good luck of avoiding the bust. (This is not

at all unusual for Manitoba, a province with an open mixed economy not prone to the extremes of a boom and bust cycle).¹⁸

Government Policy to Support the New Economy¹⁹

For at least two decades, many jurisdictions have put greater emphasis within their economic policies on the development of New Economy industries. This policy reorientation is based on two broad assumptions: that New Economy initiatives are essential if a jurisdiction is to achieve global competitiveness; and that New Economy developments, either directly or indirectly, will replace the jobs lost through deindustrialization and the decline of manufacturing.

An examination of state policies aimed at promoting the New Economy reveals that the state plays an extremely active role in developing and supporting New Economy initiatives. This takes the form of policies designed to lure industries to locate in particular jurisdictions, as well as resources dedicated to supporting the capacities needed for New Economy firms to grow. In general, a significant conclusion to be drawn from

**“Governments have turned to
New Economy industries to
compete in a global economy
and make up for the decline
in manufacturing jobs”**

this is that the New Economy development has relied to a very great degree on state assistance and investment. A relatively limited and consistent set of state policy initiatives are being pursued across jurisdictions. A related significant conclusion is that there has been very little by way of state policy designed to direct New Economy development and jobs into disadvantaged commu-

nities. The New Economy and CED have not been connected.

“According to National Systems of Innovation theory, a country’s performance in the New Economy depends on the relationship between institutions”

Theorizing the New Economy and state policies

There is a growing body of academic literature conceptualizing the New Economy. Out of this, two theoretical approaches have gained particular prominence: National Systems of Innovation theory and cluster theory.

According to National Systems of Innovation theory, a country’s performance in the New Economy depends on the relationship between institutions operating at the level of research and information, and the ability of the population to make use of innovation. Three types of institutions are of particular importance: research-intensive firms; universities, and government labs. The connections and interactions between such institutions are what make up a nation’s system of innovation. In a robust system of innovation, knowledge and information are transferred between institutions in ways that allow the benefits of early-stage research and development to be realized in the form of growth in the New Economy.

“Many governments support the creation of New Economy ‘clusters’”

Recently researchers have examined innovations systems at the regional level, putting special emphasis on location. Some, but not all, regions

possess the full range of institutions — and the linkages between them — needed to make up a system of innovation.

Research on clusters of innovation stresses the importance of proximity in the process of innovation. Since the early 1990s, clusters have emerged as a widely influential public policy idea, and many governments have adopted formal attempts to foster clusters of innovation and New Economy development. A cluster is essentially a group of interconnected companies, suppliers, and institutions (such as universities) that both compete and cooperate in a field. They are all located in the same geographic area, which could be a city or a region (Silicon Valley, for example). The geographic concentration gives the area critical mass. Proponents of the cluster approach argue that clustering enhances competition, productivity, and innovation. Firms and supporting institutions in clusters are linked formally and informally. Firms within the cluster are privy to new research findings and technological developments.

“Cluster theory describes the New Economy in Canada”

Innovation is partly driven by competitive pressures — especially early in the life of a cluster — but over time collaboration between members increases as levels of trust are increased.

Cluster theory offers a way to understand the shape and character of the New Economy in Canada, as Canada’s knowledge-based economy is concentrated in four regional clusters: Montreal (biotechnology, computer telecommunications and aerospace); Ottawa (telecommunications); Toronto (software, computer hardware, biotechnology and internet applications); and Vancouver (computer software, biotechnology, and wireless communications). By one estimate these four clusters make up 80 percent of the country’s innovation capacity.²⁰ In short, it would seem that New Economy development in Canada has conformed, at least in broad terms, to cluster theory. And the

result of this has been that the major benefits have flowed to areas that were already relatively highly developed economically.

What do state policies to enhance the New Economy look like?

Most jurisdictions have established government ministries or offices dedicated to the promotion and advancement of knowledge, science, technology and innovation. New Economy policies in advanced industrial nations rarely explicitly integrate both social and economic objectives. In particular, there are remarkably few New Economy initiatives that incorporate any of the principles of Community Economic Development, or in any other way address the needs of disadvantaged communities.

“New Economy policies and initiatives can be divided into four categories”

1) The Innovation and Investment Environment

This includes the general environment created by government tax policies, trade agreements, and the system of regulatory policies to protect private and public interests. It also includes policies that are specifically aimed at innovation and investment in knowledge-based sectors. These include narrowly focused tax incentives such as Research & Development tax credits. Intellectual Property Rights and copyright policy frameworks are also intended to directly encourage technological innovation and growth in the knowledge-based economy. Lastly, this category includes any miscellaneous regulations that might affect technological development and innovation. Category 1 policies are broad-based and market-driven. They condition the general investment and business environment.

Governments in the last 20 years have reduced taxes in order to attract and retain investment and expertise. This is of particular concern in a knowledge-based economy characterized by mobile firms with few material assets. To attract and retain knowledge-based firms, governments also offer tax incentives specifically directed toward innovation, science, technology and research. The most common is the Research & Development (R&D) tax credit. Canada has one of the most favourable R&D credit programs in the OECD.

2) Direct Investment in Public Infrastructure and Expertise

This category includes all policies aimed at supporting and creating research facilities, research parks, higher education facilities, telecommunications infrastructure and public networks of expertise and knowledge sharing. These policies are broadly aimed at the creation of a highly skilled and educated workforce and the development of new public knowledge.

Education is a central component of public investment in the New Economy. Governments are building a remarkable number of new educational institutions dedicated to science, technology, engineering and innovation.

3) Public Support for Private Firms

Most industry support programs in most of the developed nations have been re-configured over the past two decades to be more broadly available and to contain a smaller element of explicit subsidy. There are, however, many ways in which governments provide direct support to New Economy firms. These include but are not limited to: repayable loans; grants; programs to ensure easy access to venture capital; incubation facilities to assist the development of new firms; information networks that provide public knowledge and technology transfers to private firms; training support or the provision of an already skilled workforce; government procurement contracts; and the fos-

tering of partnerships between the public and private sector to commercialize new technology products. Category 3 policies provide extensive services, expertise and capital to private firms and entrepreneurs, and are intended to help mitigate the uncertainties of high-risk knowledge-based ventures and investments.

Gaining easy access to venture capital is a concern for new, high-risk, knowledge-based enterprises. Governments have various means by which to ensure venture capital is available. Increasing the supply of venture capital is a priority of Canada's Innovation Strategy.

The Networks of Centres of Excellence program is a major initiative of the Canadian Government designed to develop partnerships between universities, government research institutes and industry. There are Centres of Excellence across the country doing research in areas ranging from language and literacy to engineering to sustainable energy to information and telecommunications technology to health sciences and biotechnology. One of the primary functions of these centres is to facilitate the commercialization of new ideas by bringing technological expertise, entrepreneurial skill and new sources of capital together. At the provincial level there are many smaller-scale centres dedicated to supporting research, start-up companies and commercialization.

There are also business incubators, designed to nurture enterprises during the earliest and most vulnerable stage of development. Incubators provide all the services available through government programs and business service centres, but most also provide subsidized office space and access to specialized facilities, such as research labs, that might otherwise be unavailable to new enterprises. Incubation has become a pervasive phenomenon. The rapid pace of technological development makes incubators a particularly useful device for knowledge-intensive firms. Survival and success rates for incubated companies are much higher than for non-incubated start-ups. Each incubator offers specialized services but the primary purpose and method is generally the same — incubators

provide extensive services and expertise to emerging and vulnerable enterprises. They 'incubate' or protect young companies from the market until they are mature and stable enough to go out on their own.

4) Marketing or Branding

This category includes those initiatives aimed at attracting new investment or expertise to a national or regional knowledge-based economy. These initiatives are not material in nature. Initiatives in this category include advertising campaigns or web-based portals that provide information about demographics, workforce quality, tax policies, expertise availability, infrastructure availability, the state of the existing knowledge-based economy and the general quality of life in the jurisdiction. Initiatives in this category are either externally or internally focused. Those that are externally focused attempt to attract foreign firms or investors. Those that are internally focused promote local entrepreneurship and attempt to encourage young people to enter high-tech or knowledge-based careers.

"Aboriginal people face high barriers to participation in the New Economy"

Aboriginal people live in some of the least well-connected rural and urban communities. The high barriers facing Aboriginal people in Canada must be addressed before they can fully

participate in the knowledge-based economy/society. This issue is not being completely ignored. One of the 12 demonstration 'Smart Communities' in Canada has been developed in a rural Aboriginal community. In general, however, there is no comprehensive effort, at either the provincial or national level, to increase the participation rates of those segments of the population who are disenfranchised from, and under-represented in, the New Economy.

"The Innovation Framework did not lay out strategies for drawing members of disadvantaged communities into key growth industries"

The Innovation Framework for Manitoba²¹

In 2004 the Province of Manitoba released An Innovation Framework for Manitoba, which outlined a strategy aimed at ensuring that Manitobans benefit from economic development in targeted industries expected to be future growth industries. Six clusters of industries were identified, with each supported by a coherent strategy for ensuring that Manitoba will become a player in these industries.

While the preamble to the document acknowledged the importance of drawing members of disadvantaged communities into the paid labour force of those industries, it did not lay out clear strategies for doing so. A report prepared for the MRA by Loewen et al argued that filling this gap should be an important priority for the province. The authors conclude that the government should partner with the business community, educational institutions, unions, and community-based organizations to create a workforce intermediary for advanced manufacturing industries in Winnipeg. Such an organization would be charged with bringing together diverse stakeholders from across the region, organizing, supporting planning, and overseeing

multiple partners and funding streams toward common goals.²² In particular, provincial government resources would be needed to enable the intermediary to become established, and then to perform the full range of employment development functions that are necessary.

The Broadband Initiative

The federal government has increased Internet access by two national initiatives: The Community Access Program and the Broadband Program. The Community Access Program (CAP), a program of Industry Canada, places public-access computers in locations throughout urban and rural Canada. For rural and remote locations that do not have the infrastructure to support broad-band Internet, there is the federal government's Broadband for Rural and Northern Development Pilot Program. The Broadband Initiative, as it has come to be known, was launched in 2000; it committed the federal government to providing all of Canada with access to Broadband Internet services by the year 2004. This commitment reflected the government's recognition of the importance of effective Internet access to rural and First Nations communities. Broadband has the ability to offer new opportunities in areas of health, education and

"Despite Federal efforts, 6 million Canadians cannot get access to broadband"

commerce, all of which contribute to an innovative and successful community. These opportunities are especially important for rural and First Nations communities, where distance and smaller populations make access a challenge.

According to Industry Canada (2005), 64% of Canadians, the percentage of the population that lives in or near major metropolitan areas, are able to access broadband through commercial network operators. Additionally, some rural and remote

residents are able to have access to broadband Internet via the Broadband Initiative. However, there are about 4200 Canadian communities (average population 1500) that do not have access to broadband.²³ Therefore, despite the federal government's efforts so far, a gap still exists for Canadians in towns and rural areas that have not been served by the Broadband Program and are not served by the commercial broadband market.

It should be noted that, in principle, remoteness should not be an issue in taking advantage of new technology. Once residents in rural or remote communities are connected, they should have more flexibility when it comes to choosing where to live and work.

Recommendations

The following recommendations regarding government programs and policies on Community Economic Development in the New Economy are drawn from the research commissioned and supervised by the MRA.

CED principles should be incorporated into policy initiatives designed to support the New Economy

While governments New Economy initiatives in many ways, they do not link them to CED. Much greater efforts must be made to address the goals of CED as part of New Economy policies.

Increase core funding for CED organizations

CED organizations need stable, predictable core funding to allow them to create plans and initiate applications. This is a major concern on the part of practitioners, and those in the voluntary sector.

More provincial government departments should use the CED lens

The lens is a good policy tool that must be more widely adopted. Priority departments to begin using this tool include Family Services and Housing, Industry Trade and Mines and Energy, Science and Technology.

Broadband deficiencies must be addressed

For many rural, remote, northern, and First Nations communities, the opportunities presented by the New Economy are really opportunities lost, because residents do not have adequate broadband access. Current federal-government initiatives have been effective but insufficient.

Support the Creation of a Workforce Intermediary in Winnipeg

The provincial government should partner with the business community, educational institutions, unions, and community-based organizations to create a workforce intermediary for advanced manufacturing industries in Winnipeg, in order to move low-income people from disadvantaged communities into good jobs — jobs that pay a living wage, and include benefits and opportunities for advancement.

Establish and support urban business revitalization tools

- Inner-city “tax holidays” (may or may not include the urban reserve concept), or tax credits. The successful New Hampshire model gives up to a 75% tax credit to corporations that invest in CED activities.
- CentreVenture has helped reinvigorate downtown Winnipeg. A version could also work in the North End, Spence, or West Broadway neighbourhoods. Such a program would provide publicly owned buildings to a CED enterprise.
- Create an urban Grow Bonds venture capital program similar to the current programs available in rural municipalities. Under this program the premium is guaranteed by the government. An individual investor may make a return, but if not, their initial investment is not at risk.
- The province could hand over the ability to issue grow bonds to CED organizations, who could then raise the capital.
- Business development centres operating as one-stop-shops to provide business planning and counseling, financing or financing facilitation, networking opportunities, and other such resources and technical assistance.

- Establish community development corporations in targeted communities.
- Locate more government office space in targeted communities.

Government should support useful and effective programs even if it did not initiate them

Some of the organizations and program that support CED emerged in unplanned ways, without direct government policy supports. One important example of this phenomenon is Adult Learning Centres, which began offering Manitoba high-school credits in 1996–97. The ALCs appear to have emerged organically in response to community needs, and there was no central model or concept for the centres.²⁴

Social Housing should be a priority area for the adoption of CED

The provincial department of Family Services and Housing is one of the departments that has not conducted an audit of its programs using the CED Lens. In addition, training in CED should be provided through the department. There is great potential that could be realized if CED were to become a guiding principle in the provision of social housing.²⁵

Training in the North

Many northern communities want to have access to basic skills training within their own community. It is recommended that government continue to develop partnerships with community colleges and community-based organizations for additional community-delivered programs aimed at young adults and adults, in communities not currently serviced. These programs should include basic literacy and numeracy skills, academic upgrading, employment/job readiness skills, testing and assessment programs, technical training directly

linking high-demand occupations and local employment opportunities. Similarly, it is recommended that government work with industry to design training programs and encourage industry partnership in these programs.²⁶

Notes

- 1 This section draws most on Loxley and Lamb, Friesen and Hudson, and Fernandez.
- 2 See, for instance, Canadian CED Network, 2004; Loxley, 1986.
- 3 Thomas, 1974, cited in Loxley and Lamb, p. 2.
- 4 Loxley, 2002, cited in Loxley and Lamb, p. 2.
- 5 P. 4.
- 6 P. 1.
- 7 This section is based on Loxley and Lamb, and Fernandez.
- 8 This section is based primarily on Reimer.
- 9 This section is based on Fernandez.
- 10 This section is based on Sheldrick, and Fernandez.
- 11 This section based on Sheldrick.
- 12 This section is based on Fernandez.
- 13 This section draws most heavily on Graydon and Duboff.
- 14 Bobe 2002, Tabb, 2001, cited in Graydon, p. 16.
- 15 Delong 2002; Tabb, 2001, cited in Graydon, p. 17.
- 16 Hudson, 2001; Yates, 2001, cited in Graydon 16.
- 17 This section is based primarily on Friesen and Hudson.
- 18 Calculated from Statistics Canada, Trends in Provincial and Territorial Economic Statistics: 1981–2002, Table 1, p. 21.
- 19 This section is based on MacKenzie, Sheldrick, and Silver.

20 Niosi 2002.

21 This section is based on Loewen et al.

22 For a longer discussion, see Loewen et al, p. 17.

23 <http://broadband.gc.ca/pub/faqs/index.html>

24 Silver with Klyne and Simard p. 6.

25 See Skelton, Selig, and Deane for a discussion of social housing and CED.

26 LeBlond and Brown ii.

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