

## *Review Essay/Revue critique de la littérature*

### **Local Development: A Selected Review of the Literature**

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Since the late 1980s and early 1990s, there has been a growing interest in Canada in promoting the economic and social development of small towns, rural areas and poor neighbourhoods of the larger towns and cities. The economic crises of 1981-82 and 1990-92 are largely responsible for the malaise engendered in the smaller urban centres of Canada. Undoubtedly, the most compelling cause of the growing interest in community development has been the necessity to cope with job losses in towns where the main industry was forced to close down (Leana and Feldman 1992).

The tremendous hardship that hangs over several hundred small towns and fishing villages in Atlantic Canada, as a result of the total collapse of the cod fishing industry, has also played a role in bringing the political and planning authorities in Canada to launch a massive effort in retraining programs to save these communities from economic disaster and social unrest. However, the financial restraints imposed on spending from large budget deficits are preventing governments from addressing the problem through make-work projects. The planning community is being called upon to devise new approaches to community development. This can only be achieved through an adequate understanding of the community development processes. The first step must be a comprehensive review of the literature on local development efforts in Canada and abroad.

There are several ways to approach a review of the literature on a given subject and, more often than not, a chronological order is followed. However, this review is organized on a thematic basis for two reasons. First, research on

local development is still too fragmented to form a unified field. Second, within the literature on local development one finds a wide variation in the objectives pursued and the approaches taken.

We have identified three main streams of research on local development in operation over the period 1950-1990 and our review will be structured accordingly. The first stream is, in some ways, only an extension of regional development concepts, theories and practices created in the 1950s for the development of large regions. The second stream, the most significant in terms of the number of publications, finds its origin in the sociological literature of the 1960s and 1970s. This approach emerged from a desire to help the disenfranchised communities from remaining totally helpless in the face of the massive economic transformations that began in the 1950s and have since accelerated. The third stream is a collection of disparate approaches that have found some resonance in a few segments of the planning community such as studies on multi-community development, local empowerment, and the special case of fishing communities.

It is quite understandable that one finds a variety of approaches to local development whenever small centres are faced with unusual hardships and stress. Small centres are often dependent on a single industry, most are resource-oriented and many have extremely limited entrepreneurial capabilities. One finds a few instances where the smaller communities have demonstrated a measure of control over their own development, but most are totally dependent on decision-making processes beyond their control. Community responses have varied according to the perception of the cause of the stress and the leadership capability within the town.

Although economic change provides new opportunities, it also causes stress. The industrialized world has undergone several waves of transformations in the twentieth century and the smaller communities have been hit very hard by these changes. At each major upheaval we have witnessed a resurgence of local development planning activity. Although this review is concerned only with the published works that date from the 1960s, it is still quite instructive to spend a few moments discussing the main waves of economic events that created the demand for local development planning in the first place.

## A Brief History

### The 1950s

The 1950s were years of great innovation in the pursuit of economic development throughout the world. The many reasons that account for the interest in regional development during this period are well documented (see Higgins and Savoie 1988; Hansen, Higgins and Savoie 1990). The research effort was so extensive and profound that the outcome was a bona fide new discipline with

its own theories and planning practices (Isard 1956; Savoie and Higgins 1995). However, there does not seem to have been much interest manifested in local development theory in the 1950s. One assumes that planners felt that growth in the larger regional centres would somehow trickle down into the smaller centres.

### The 1960s

The U.S. experienced great social turmoil and violence during the 1960s that originated in the poorer sections of the large metropolitan centres of the country. In addition to other factors, such as the dissatisfaction over the Vietnam war, the trickle-down theory had not worked as economists and regional scientists had hoped and community leaders in the ghettos set up their own planning programs.

Thus, the 1960s witnessed the birth in the U.S. of the second stream of local development efforts referred to earlier. Proponents of this second stream sought to replace the economic approach of the regional scientists with one based on sociological principles and methods.

### The 1970s

The 1970s saw the rise of the multinationals, the trend towards globalization and the birth of the information economy. The oil crises and the subsequent rise in interest rates, among other factors, deprived governments of much of their ability to sustain social programs. The multinationals relied less on capitalizing on regional development initiatives and often preferred to relocate their production units in other countries where costs were lower. The smaller local communities in Canada were left to fend for themselves and they followed the American lead in turning to a new form of local planning based on sociological principles.

### The 1980s and 1990s

Major efforts were made in Canada during the 1980s and the early part of the 1990s to revitalize regional development theory (Savoie 1986). The Canadian Government created a number of agencies to promote regional development such as the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), the Western Diversification Program (WD), the Federal Economic Development Northern Ontario (FEDNOR) and Le bureau fédéral du développement régional in Québec (FORD-Q).

However, these regional development efforts did not deter communities



from exploring their own path to development and trying their hand at planning. There are two main reasons that might explain the nervousness of local communities when looking to their future. First, economic development was no longer nationally based but globally oriented, and second, governments had few funds to invest in regional planning. A third reason might also be found in the fact that governments (or at least influential observers of public policy, such as the *Globe and Mail*, the *Financial Post* and the C.D. Howe Institute) began to doubt the effectiveness of past regional development programs. However, there are some indications that past efforts at regional development were effective in some ways in preparing peripheral regions for the new economy of the 1990s. In part, regional scientists are to blame for the perception of the failure of past efforts. Since they had failed to devise adequate growth indicators for measuring regional change, relying instead on the two broad indicators of average earned income and unemployment rates suggested, in the mid 1960s, by the Economic Council of Canada (ECC 1965). Although these two indicators were faulted from the outset, because they were too broad in scope and failed to take into account such factors as occupational restructuring (Lamarche and Beaudin 1994) and economic diversification (Milne and Murrell 1994), they remained the basis on which to judge regional programs. Consequently, the national and regional approaches were supplanted in many communities by a more locally controlled and sociologically inspired approach.

The federal and provincial governments became increasingly interested in supporting local development efforts. In the last few years, expenditures for local programs exceeded two hundred million dollars annually (Brodhead et al. 1990). In the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the Economic Council of Canada had also responded by initiating a series of studies on local development. From the reports put out by the Council, it seems that the Council, although very sensitive to the plight of the smaller communities, was not totally convinced that the local development approach would be the panacea that its proponents were claiming. Consequently, our evaluation of community projects should be particularly prudent (Perry and Lewis 1994).

### **Regional Development at the Local Scale: A Market Approach**

Regional scientists did not formally define local planning as part of regional development until well into the 1980s (Coffey and Polèse 1985; Tremblay and Fontan 1994). They found it difficult to adjust regional development concepts, such as the neoclassical, growth-centre, export-base, and staples models, to suit local economies. Secondly, economic conditions had drastically changed during the 1970s and 1980s and regional scientists were still in a quandary

over how the new economic processes were impacting the larger peripheral regions, let alone the smaller towns (Hansen 1988).

It is important to point out that there was some justification for regional scientists not getting directly involved in local planning. Many regional scientists view regional development as a two-pronged process: the scientists or the policy specialists develop concepts and strategies and government agencies implement programs. For the most part this approach involved a good deal of local consultations. Savoie and Higgins (1995) view regional planning as a clinical exercise in which an understanding of local conditions and the involvement of community authorities were two of the most important factors in the success or failure of a project.

A few regional scientists did get involved in local planning in the early 1960s. Tiebout (1962) attempted to apply the economic base model to local communities. Friedmann and Miller (1965) developed the concept of the urban field when it became evident that small urban centres located in the inter-metropolitan periphery were in decline. Friedmann and Weaver (1979) and Stohr and Taylor (1981) proposed planning approaches that called for greater community control of the economic processes in a given urban field.

The crisis of 1981-82 prompted the French economist Aydalot (1983) to call for renewed efforts at devising regional and local development strategies. He was convinced that this crisis, and the global economy that ensued, were transforming the spatial distribution of economic activity, particularly in advanced economies. He, too, believed that local involvement was a condition of success.

Because Perroux's growth pole concept had been the corner stone of so many local development projects in the mid-1960s and early 1970s, it seems appropriate to discuss it briefly here. Perroux (1988) was more interested in creating a general theory of economic growth that would challenge the neoclassical theory than on building applicable models. Higgins and Savoie (1995) in their discussion on *Growth Poles and Central Places* explain that the first never did work as a development tool and that the second was never intended to be used for such a purpose. In Canada, after a few attempts at growth pole building the approach was abandoned in 1972 (Savoie 1992).

One of the most interesting collections of papers on the subject of local development applicable in a market economy, produced by regional scientists, was published by Planque (1983). The studies in the first section of the volume outline the principal reasons why local communities had to be major participants in the planning process if development at the regional level was to be successful. The papers in the second part of Planque's volume put forward a number of concepts specific to local development and the third section reports on a few of the experiences that were conducted in France for the specific purpose of promoting growth in the smaller urban centres.

A second important collection of papers on the subject of regional development from the local perspective can be found in Bergman (1986). Although the

authors of the papers are mostly concerned with growth processes as it occurs in metropolitan centres, their work sheds some light on how to approach development studies at the small town level.

A study of major importance in regional planning and local development was published by Hansen (1988). Hansen stresses the necessity of examining the inter-relationships between workplace, business organizations and spatial systems rather than the traditional approach followed by most economists. The paper is particularly important in that it demonstrates that the occupational structure of a large centre is an evolving entity. The distribution patterns change because of the migration of certain types of occupations which, depending on changes in technology, can find it more opportune to reside in the metropolis rather than in the surrounding smaller centres or vice-versa. These reversing flows are major players in the development process of smaller centres.

One can also find a number of good studies on local development from the economic or market approach in the journal *Revue d'Économie Régionale et Urbaine*. French economists have had an interest in regional development theory ever since Perroux started publishing his studies on growth pole theory. Many of the articles in the journal in recent years have dealt with local development because the integration of Europe and the gradual elimination of tariffs were forcing each individual region of Western Europe to compete directly with all the other regions. De Gaudemar (1989) outlines the two main constraints facing those who would devise political strategies for local development: an economic crisis brought on by economic change and a political one caused by European integration. Soulage (1987) points out the possibilities and limits of the local approach. In his view, the endogenous development concept might be an enticing one but because its aim is to give each locality a measure of economic control the possibilities are extremely limited in a global market place. Lacour (1989) shows that economic analysis and local planning are related and that local development policies that did not take into account modernity, long and short term waves and industrial and spatial fields would surely be flawed.

But what about local development from a market perspective in Canada? In Canada, it is the responsibility of the provincial authorities to create and direct local planning commissions. Federal authorities have intervened only indirectly, mostly through assistance in infrastructure or plant subsidizations. However, since the mid-1980s the difficulties in numerous small towns have been so great as to prompt the Economic Council of Canada to put out a number of studies on local development (see, for example ECC 1990).

Statistics Canada, through its Analytical Studies Branch, has also devoted some energy to the study of small towns and villages. Picot and Heath (1991) argue that industrial structure and size are two important elements of growth and that there is interaction between the two. This study confirms the ECC findings and strengthens the market approach taken by regional scientists.

The Atlantic Provinces Economic Council (APEC 1988) has also investigated the dynamics of community development from a market approach. It also shares the view that the growth of a community is dependent on its capacity to compete in the world market. Through a series of case studies, researchers at APEC attempt to identify those characteristics that might explain the success of some communities and the failure of others.

### Successful Planning Efforts at the Community Level

Because local development planning is a relatively recent phenomenon the literature reporting on the success or failure of these efforts is limited, but instructive nonetheless. There are only a few dozen such programs that have been in existence long enough to provide data on the success or failure of community programs based on the market approach. In this section, we review three reports which describe the successful outcome of local planning undertaken in a market perspective. They provide some understanding regarding the processes of growth in local communities and some guidance in applying local development efforts.

The first major study considered in this review was produced by the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council (APEC 1988). The study covers fourteen communities in Atlantic Canada. The researchers first prepared profiles of the areas then interviewed municipal, regional and provincial leaders and gathered statistics on seven characteristics considered to be vital for sustainable growth: natural endowments and location, diversity of the local economic base, infrastructure, community cohesion, motivation of leadership, access to assistance and entrepreneurial spirit.

Of the fourteen communities, six were located in areas of growth and eight in areas of decline. Although the researchers found that all fourteen communities had a few characteristics in common, there were major differences between growing and declining regions. All the communities in growing areas were graded high on the following three characteristics: natural resource endowment or location, diversity of the economic base and entrepreneurial spirit, while all declining areas fared poorly on these three important growth factors. The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), which had commissioned the report, subsequently invested heavily in promoting a resurgence of entrepreneurial spirit and assisted communities in diversifying their economies throughout Atlantic Canada.

A second important study on the subject of community development within the context of a market approach was undertaken by Young and Charland (1991). Eight single-industry towns from across Canada were the focus of this study.

The authors consider the key elements of success to be strong leadership, short and long-term strategy development, community support and the develop-



ment of an entrepreneurial pool. One other significant element which the authors included (but do not comment on) is the economic background of the leadership responsible for the success of projects. In most instances, the leadership role was assumed by organizations with an economic background and outlook such as a cooperative, a chamber of commerce, a local entrepreneur, an economic development committee or the mayor. There are no instances where the leadership came from social groups whose primary goal was fulfilling the basic needs of the town residents. The approach taken by the leadership seems to have been that if the community could participate in the market place, jobs would follow and basic needs would be fulfilled.

A third study, which drew considerable attention from regional scientists attending the annual meeting of the Learned Societies held in Montreal in 1994, reports on community development activity in the province of Quebec following the introduction of a policy aimed at reforming regional development programs (Sabourin 1994). Although only four regions were included in the study, each region comprised a number of communities within it. Sabourin interviewed a number of community leaders and found that he could classify regions and their communities into one of three categories. The first category, the "mobilized" region, had strong leadership capable of imposing one comprehensive strategy for all the communities in the region. The leaders within this type of region were able to persuade individual community participants to drop their own agendas in favour of an overall regional development plan which would eventually benefit all communities.

Sabourin found a second group of regions in which the local leaders did not want to abandon their own agendas. The end result was a squandering of the development funds that had been made available. In the third category, the municipal leaders were not interested in development strategies at all; they wanted nothing more than to apply for grants made available under the new reform measures and use them as they saw fit. The regions and the communities in this third category showed little economic vitality and no entrepreneurial spirit. One would expect government agencies to avoid supporting projects under scenarios two and three but, in practice, this has not been the case probably for political reasons.

There are not many articles on local development in the *Canadian Journal of Regional Science*, but of those that are published, several are quite important. Martin (1992) discusses the effects of the North-American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on regions and local communities and concludes that NAFTA will force all urban centres in North America to compete on the open market. Some communities are going to have great difficulty in dealing with this open competition. Fr  chette et al. (1992) propose a technique for evaluating the impact of a major university on its surroundings, a technique which could be applied to other institutions. Conklin (1993) discusses cumulative effects analysis on local sustainable development and Julien (1987) examines the role of small entrepreneurs on local development. A special issue of the

*Journal* (XV:3) is also noteworthy with regards to community development. Three articles in particular are of interest: the first outlines new strategies of development (Andrew et al. 1992), the second suggests new activities for small communities (Fourcade 1992) and the third discusses partnerships in local planning (Klein 1992). From these papers, it seems that some regional scientists feel that recent international agreements are going to have a considerable impact on local economies and are attempting to adapt regional concepts, models and techniques to the solution of new problems that will arise at the community level.

The volume edited by De Benedetti and Lamarche (1994) examines how five medium-sized communities in the Maritime Provinces are adjusting to the three most powerful economic shocks to hit the region in the last decade, namely: globalization, the information economy and reduction in public spending. In the volume, Higgins describes how fragile Halifax's equilibrium remains and how the demise of Sydney's (N.S.) coal and steel industries has devastated this city. In another chapter, De Benedetti demonstrates how the very strengths that have ensured the growth of Saint John in the past can become its glaring weaknesses for the future. Savoie and Bourgeois, in another paper in the volume, describe the importance of good location and an energetic entrepreneurial pool in Moncton to ensure a smooth transition to the new economy. Fredericton is shown to be in the process of becoming an information city by building on its intellectual base (De Benedetti and Weiss).

In times of difficulty, single-industry towns often try to diversify their activities. Can towns that had previously been dependent solely on fishing, forestry or mining diversify effectively? Clemenson (1992) examined changes in employment rates for the period 1976 to 1986 for 38 fishing communities, 54 mining towns and 80 small forest-industry towns. He reports that mining and forestry towns were more successful in diversifying than the fishing communities. There is some indication that the isolation and the small size of most fishing communities are important factors in preventing or hampering the diversification process. In addition, the high ratio of part-time workers in the fishing industry could also be of some importance.

There is a school of local planning that combines the market and basic-needs approaches and some of the most interesting research in this regard has been done at St. Francis Xavier University which has been a major factor in the development of cooperative movements in Atlantic Canada. Cooperatives have to compete on the open market, but they are also deeply interested in promoting the social development of the communities in which they are set up. Pursuing both goals simultaneously is difficult as one might construe. MacNeil (1994), who has done considerable research on local development and cooperative movements, explains how social and cultural activities interact with economic processes in small communities and how the community economic development strategies are transformed by this interaction.

## Satisfying Basic Needs: A Sociological Perspective on Local Development

There is an extensive body of literature on local development from a basic-needs perspective. The writers from this school believe that the first priority in local development should be to promote primarily a revitalization of the housing and service infrastructure of a community. The violent uprisings of the 1960s in the United States required an immediate response. Many communities were ill equipped to face these problems and few firms were willing to settle in areas prone to violence. These problems could be alleviated, some contended, by a local planning commission adhering to a few basic principles (Lauer 1993). Still other authors believed that local problems are the result of exploitation by large companies. None of the authors in this second stream believed, in spite of the ECC's warnings, that some communities do not have the necessary dynamics to adapt to the new economic reality of the 1990s (ECC 1990).

How different is the basic-needs approach from the market approach? Nowhere are the fundamental differences more clearly expressed than in Brodhead et al. (1990). In this paper, local development organizations (LDOs) are defined as umbrella organizations that are open to all forms of community organisations. Although these authors judge that the participation of such organizations such as chambers of commerce, cooperatives and industrial commissions are helpful, they do not find them to be essential. This is rather surprising because these organisations are usually the most experienced and most capable of insuring the success of such endeavours. These writers are, in effect, viewing community development from the reverse angle from which it is perceived by the market authors. The basic-needs group contend that if the socio-economic environment in the town is good, the economic situation will improve, firms will be drawn to it, and the community will grow.

The basic-needs approach of local development was also important through the impact it had on government policies. The federal and provincial governments, in response, established a number of programs in support of local development organizations and created a number of employment programs controlled locally such as the Opportunities for Youth, Canada Works, and Community Employment Strategy programs. It was also instrumental in the establishment of a few research programs such as the Small Town Research and Studies Programme based at Mount Allison University in New Brunswick and the Centre for Community Enterprise in British Columbia. The researchers from these institutes often serve as advisors to town councils and have published numerous papers on local development in response to specific needs.

Perry (1987) considers the basic-needs approach to local development by describing how the disturbances of the 1960s in the U.S. led to the creation of

Community Development Corporations (CDCs). As the CDCs increased in size and numbers and as governments began requiring better accounting practices, CDCs began to hire experienced managers and professional accountants, forcing a drastic change in the climate in which the CDCs had been operating.

Perry describes methods by which one can evaluate the impact of CDCs on a community and the chances of it eventually evolving into a mature economic entity. He also draws attention to a number of mistaken strategies made by the first generation of CDCs. Perry establishes the most compelling argument for a CDC approach to local development: most local communities do not have the social tools to effect the required changes on their own and any approach which does not bring the whole community together is not likely to succeed. Perry (1989) also addressed the question of accountability, one of the major difficulties in operating LDOs. Government authorities are very hesitant to provide funds when they cannot exercise control over the projects LDOs want to promote. Even though many proponents of local development projects find that CDCs are more efficient when they are autonomous, accountability remains paramount for the government agencies providing the funds. When government subsidies are cut for lack of accountability or through budgetary restraints, there are various strategies that might be employed to finance local development through public-private arrangements (Sagalyn 1990).

In a volume edited by Bruce and Whitla (1993), Stacey and Needham describe the influence of culture on local development. A seemingly good development program may fail to produce the desired effects because too little attention has been paid to the cultural particularities of a community. This chapter gives some insight on how to proceed. In the same volume, Davis demonstrates the need to create innovative services in small communities. Discovering the right services and the manner in which to implement them can be challenging and this chapter is helpful in this regard.

The strengths and weaknesses of the LDO approach are discussed by Brodhead et al. (1990). The authors view the modern LDOs as profit-making organizations, "a step toward community entrepreneurship". Since it is difficult enough for co-operatives and credit unions to compete in the market place while adhering to their social goals, one finds it hard to believe that whole communities could be made to work effectively as private enterprises. In any event, the authors find that there are more benefits than losses to the LDO approach and that there are often no other options available.

Also in Brodhead et al., there are at least ten case studies of attempts at community development. Some communities were in such dire straits that it is a wonder that any such community even found within itself the leadership needed to develop a plan. In many of the case studies, the LDO was probably the only avenue open to the community. The government agencies who supplied the needed support are to be commended even if, at the outset, these efforts seemed doomed and the expenditures ineffective. The collection also describes a few attempts at diversifying the economic activity of the commun-

ities. The smaller the community the more difficult the process. There are also a few papers on the question of financing the LDOs and the question of accountability resurfaces here.

In short, the papers in this collection are helpful and instructive. However, because the question regarding the integration of these communities into the national economy remains largely unanswered, one gets the feeling that the efforts at local development described in these working papers could be short-lived if the driving force of a LDO, often one person in a small community, were to drop out of the project (McKinnon and Peirce 1989). The studies in this collection are valuable in spite of these limitations and they do, whenever possible, consider the implications of the market economy.

In addition to these papers, Cossey (1990) examines cooperative strategies for sustainable communities and Dykeman (1989) studies incubators for small home-based businesses in small towns. The volume edited by Ashton (1993) covers a number of important issues pertaining to rural development, from preserving farmland to coping with cottage industries, to the challenges posed by a conservation authority.

Local development can be enhanced through partnerships and different regions in Canada and France have gone about it in various ways (Klein 1991). Klein shows that the regions that have had the most success are those with strong regional cultural links and greater measures of financial and jurisdictional authority. Bonniel and Raveaud (1990) believe that when government policies are implemented locally, the main purpose is not to harmonize territorial and sectorial activities, but to build new infrastructures in the hope that they will promote innovation.

### **A Mixed Bag Approach to Local Development: Searching for Social Change and Economic Stability**

The papers reviewed in this section differ from those discussed in the previous sections either in their approaches or in their objectives.

We first examine papers that have taken the very different approach of considering local development from the perspective of empowerment and social engineering. For the writers in this category, the starting point to local development consists in, first, building a certain cohesiveness and sense of power within the community. The reason we draw attention to this approach stems from the fact that a fair number of sociologists and social workers in Quebec seem to lean towards this approach. What is also interesting about this literature, is that there seems to be a certain level of isolationism involved in this view, isolationism from the market place and even from the government agencies which are simply regarded, in many instances, as nothing more than providers of funds. The question of accountability is completely ignored. One

can find several examples of this approach in the summaries of the seminar on regional development entitled "Et les régions qui perdent" of the proceedings of the 62e congrès de l'ACFAS held in Montreal in 1994 (ACFAS 1994).

This approach is followed in the volume edited by Shragge (1993). Shragge's own chapter deals with the necessity of ensuring social change for the empowerment of the community through political pressures. Nozick, in the same volume, describes social change as a means to sustainable community development. This chapter tries to countervail the notion that nothing can prevent the disintegration of local communities once their original economic functions have run their course. Empowerment is also the main theme in the volume edited by Duvernay (1989). The authors of papers in this volume also discuss the use of partnerships and techniques for evaluating local development efforts.

A number of publications by the GRIDEQ group based at the Université du Québec à Rimouski concern local and rural development issues, mainly one can presume, because the Gaspé peninsula has been so badly battered in the last decade. Some of the studies published are case studies but several others extol the virtues of the empowerment approach.

Another theme of rural development deals with groups of rural communities acting together. Because rural areas are loosely structured, it is often difficult for each individual community to devise strategies and exert political pressures as a means of maintaining a level of development sufficient to meet their needs. The conference proceedings edited by Korsching et al. (1992) provide examples of multi-community collaboration, discussions on theoretical and practical issues, and an outlook on future directions for this approach.

Also, one can find discussions on the subject of rural spaces, practical development applications and the impact of new participants on the rural scene in the French journal *La Revue internationale d'action communautaire: de l'espace pour le local* (La Revue internationale d'action communautaire, 22/62 1989). Small towns whose economies are entirely based on the forestry sector can be faced with stagnation or extinction once the resource has run out. One of the first steps in planning local development should be to create the economic and demographic profiles of the community the researcher is trying to assist. For example, Pharand (1988) provides demographic profiles of 105 Canadian towns dependent on the forest industries.

Economic development is also a matter of grave concern to the aboriginal communities in Atlantic Canada. Because these communities are small and isolated, it is difficult to propose development strategies that could work. However, the fact that the leadership in some of these communities base the success of their development on the emergence of an entrepreneurial pool and the fact that they have developed an infrastructure -- the Micmac Maliseet Development Corporation -- to promote these new businesses seems promising.

Few communities as a group in Canada have suffered more than the fishing villages of Newfoundland and Labrador which are dependent on cod stocks



for their survival. For this reason, we have decided to draw the attention of the reader to their plight by reviewing a number of publications which show the difficulties of planning in this environment. A quick perusal of these works is sufficient to convince the reader that local development under these circumstances are unusually difficult and that government agencies and the public in general should be supportive of these efforts even if success is still a distant prospect.

Fishing communities are different. A researcher whose function would be to propose local development strategies would be well advised to the volume edited by Andersen (1979). Three chapters are particularly relevant to local development. Britan demonstrates that it has been possible in the past to restructure the economy of a fishing village under certain conditions. Antler and Faris, in another paper in the volume, provide a case study of Cat Harbour in Newfoundland. The authors discuss the impact of changes in technology and government policy on a fishing community.

Another major study on the fishing industry in Canada was done under the direction of Marchak, Guppy and McMullan (1987). Although the studies deal with the British Columbia fishing industry, there is a chapter that is significant to community development in any fishing village. Pinkerton and Warriner, in separate papers in the volume, discuss the problems associated with a dependency on a single resource and the few opportunities for diversification in most fishing communities.

In the volume edited by Hanson and Lamson (1984), one finds a number of case studies on the fishing industry in Atlantic Canada. The whole book deals with the difficulties associated with the decision-making process in the industry. The authors discuss the problems of dependency created by the presence of a single resource and the difficulties associated with decision-making on the exploitation of a resource that is in effect largely beyond the immediate control of the community. The chapter by Hanson and Lamson indicates how intricate the fishing industry regulations have become and how they hinder to a certain extent the creation of effective local development strategies.

A study group put together by the federal government has proposed a number of recommendations to help solve the problems facing the fishing villages of Atlantic Canada (Ministère des Pêches et Océans 1993). The report suggests rationalization of the industry and some form of fixed income for the population in the communities where economic revitalization seems practically impossible, at least in the short term.

Dealing with the problems of fishing communities in Atlantic Canada is proving to be a daunting one. Savoie (1995) provides a number of guidelines that the Canadian federal government could adopt to deal with community development in these communities. The paper argues that the Atlantic fishing communities can be categorized into three groups: communities with a solid administrative infrastructure and some economic diversity, communities with some promise of economic diversity and some administrative infrastructure,

and communities totally reliant on the fishery and no administrative infrastructure and it describes the capabilities and weakness specific to each category best to deal with each category. The author also sets up a framework that would allow the federal government to invest in the rebuilding of the economies of the fishing communities whenever feasible and to provide assistance to the others in an effective and rational way. What is most interesting about the paper is that it is, in effect, a strategy for extending regional development expertise to the community level -- no small feat. In support of his thesis, the author also provides a number of examples where development strategies have worked well at the community and small region levels. It is undoubtedly this type of approach that will allow the federal and provincial governments to deal with community adjustment problems while still ensuring a high measure of accountability.

## Conclusion

What have we learned from this considerable literature on local development efforts in Canada and abroad? The studies demonstrate how difficult it is to help communities create a long term development strategy when the world economy is itself undergoing far reaching change as a result of globalization. It is also extremely difficult to develop some theoretical body of literature to guide researchers and planners when local economies are so varied that even calculating an average growth rate for small towns in Canada is meaningless so great is the standard deviation. To outline a theory of development requires some generalizations and the variety of economic circumstances in the various communities would suggest that to generalize is to over simplify. To the extent that we can come up with theories, they will be so general that they will actually offer nothing in the way of solutions.

Because regional scientists have been unwilling, or generally unable, to devise strategies for local development, government planners have had difficulty in setting up programs that could work assuming for a moment that they were given sufficient time and guidance to accomplish this. Sociologists interested in local development have been all too often preoccupied with reducing existing levels of community stress to create strategies acceptable to the research community as a whole.

That said, there have been some successes in local development planning, as this review has shown. In practically every instance, success has come when leaders have been able to secure a consensus on at least two points: a single set of goals for the entire community, and the involvement of groups that see the market approach as the only long-term viable strategy for the community.



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