



CUISR:

Community – University Institute for Social Research

*Community Resilience, Community
Economic Development, and
Saskatchewan Economic Developers*

by Karla Radloff



Building Healthy Sustainable Communities

Community-University Institute for Social Research

CUISR is a partnership between a set of community-based organizations (including Saskatoon District Health, the City of Saskatoon, Quint Development Corporation, the Saskatoon Regional Intersectoral Committee on Human Services) and a large number of faculty and graduate students from the University of Saskatchewan. CUISR's mission is "to serve as a focal point for community-based research and to integrate the various social research needs and experiential knowledge of the community-based organizations with the technical expertise available at the University. It promotes, undertakes, and critically evaluates applied social research for community-based organizations, and serves as a data clearinghouse for applied and community-based social research. The overall goal of CUISR is to build the capacity of researchers, community-based organizations and citizenry to enhance community quality of life."

This mission is reflected in the following objectives: (1) to build capacity within CBOs to conduct their own applied social research and write grant proposals; (2) to serve as a conduit for the transfer of experientially-based knowledge from the community to the University classroom, and transfer technical expertise from the University to the community and CBOs; (3) to provide CBOs with assistance in the areas of survey sample design, estimation and data analysis, or, where necessary, to undertake survey research that is timely, accurate and reliable; (4) to serve as a central clearinghouse, or data warehouse, for community-based and applied social research findings; and (5) to allow members of the University and CBOs to access a broad range of data over a long time period.

As a starting point, CUISR has established three focused research modules in the areas of Community Health Determinants and Health Policy, Community Economic Development, and Quality of Life Indicators. The three-pronged research thrust underlying the proposed Institute is, in operational terms, highly integrated. The central questions in the three modules—community quality of life, health, and economy—are so interdependent that many of the projects and partners already span and work in more than one module. All of this research is focused on creating and maintaining healthy, sustainable communities.

Research is the driving force that cements the partnership between universities, CBOs, and government in acquiring, transferring, and applying knowledge in the form of policy and programs. Researchers within each of the modules examine these dimensions from their particular perspective, and the results are integrated at the level of the Institute, thus providing a rich, multi-faceted analysis of the common social and economic issues. The integrated results are then communicated to the Community and the University in a number of ways to ensure that research makes a difference in the development of services, implementation of policy, and lives of the people of Saskatoon and Saskatchewan.

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ABSTRACT

The Saskatchewan Economic Developers Association conducted a survey with Saskatchewan economic developers in the summer of 2003. The survey was based on the Community Resilience Model, a community economic development (CED) approach. The results of the survey fit into three themes: economic developers' responsibilities, economic development organizations' planning habits, and economic development organizations' partnerships. The findings show that although Saskatchewan economic developers may not be aware of community resilience as a CED approach, they are already including some aspects of it in their CED work. However, greater education is required before this model can be fully integrated into the activities of Saskatchewan CED organizations.

INTRODUCTION

The Centre for Community Enterprise in British Columbia developed the Community Resilience Model (CRM) in 2000 so that communities could assess their resilience. Community Resilience takes a holistic view to a community's needs and make-up in dealing with mobilization and bringing priorities for action into focus. Resilience acknowledges that a community is comprised of and encompasses a number of interconnected elements. Community Resilience has four dimensions: People; Organizations; Resources; and Community Process (The Centre for Community Enterprise, 2000: 11-12). The Community Resilience concept is not in conflict with the widely accepted principles of community economic development (CED), but rather is an approach to CED.

The Community Resilience Model was first introduced to Saskatchewan economic developers in February, 2003 at the fourth Connectivity conference, entitled "Building Community Resilience." Connectivity is an annual conference organized mainly by the Saskatchewan Economic Developers Association (SEDA) and the Community Futures Partners of Saskatchewan for the benefit of professionals and volunteers working in CED in Saskatchewan. It was the hope of the conference's planning partners that participants would gain an appreciation for CR and desire to both learn more and possibly begin integrating this CED approach into their responsibilities as economic developers. Following the conference, those working with SEDA decided that a better foundation needed to be established among Saskatchewan economic developers before this model could be feasibly adopted on a large scale across the province. They wanted to identify what economic developers currently view as their responsibilities within their communities and to assess the readiness of economic development (ED) organizations to adopt CRM. Thus, SEDA conducted surveys with Saskatchewan economic developers to gain a better understanding of these issues with a hope that it lead to greater interest in ideas of resilience and eventually result in Saskatchewan ED organizations integrating CRM into their CED activities.

Three themes emerged from the survey and will guide the report's format: economic developers' responsibilities, economic development organizations' planning habits, and economic development organizations' partnerships. This report addresses each theme independently within the context of the survey results. Using the findings from the survey interviews, this report also discusses CR's four dimensions and, where applicable, illustrates some of the strengths and weaknesses among Saskatchewan economic development organizations with regard to these dimensions.

This report seeks to help Saskatchewan economic developers gain a better understanding of CRM and its usefulness as a CED approach. Moreover, it illuminates the similarities between CED and community resilience and shows economic developers that, in some ways, they are already assessing their communities' resilience. This report

also brings to light the different responsibilities that economic developers are currently involved in and identify as priorities. It is hoped that readers will be creative and receptive when it comes to their CED activities and see that there is more than one acceptable approach to CED.

METHODOLOGY

This report's data source was a telephone survey conducted by SEDA's 2003 summer intern. The survey consisted of approximately thirty questions, the majority of which were quantitative in nature (see **Appendix A** for the full survey and results). Survey questions were designed for economic developers and conducted with paid employees or volunteers of organizations that work in the area of economic development. Examples of such organizations include: Regional Economic Development Authorities (REDA), Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDC), town or village economic development committees, Aboriginal economic development associations, chambers of commerce, neighbourhood development organizations, and Small Business Loans Associations (SBLA).

The survey was conducted in four stages. The first group of interviews was conducted with ten of SEDA's Board of Directors, who offered suggestions about possible changes to the survey before proceeding to subsequent rounds of interviews. Most suggestions involved making the survey more structured and quantitative, allowing results to be evaluated more effectively. Findings from these first stage surveys are not included in this report's results.

In the second stage, the revised telephone survey was conducted with a select number of SEDA's general membership. This group of participants consisted of approximately fifty Saskatchewan economic developers. The third round of interviews was with some participants at the 2003 Connectivity conference. The final stage surveyed economic developers who are neither members of SEDA nor Connectivity 2003 attendees, but have shared interests with the organization. These participants are representatives of organizations working at municipal and regional levels and leaders in CED initiatives. The findings presented here are based on information gathered in the second, third, and fourth stages of the survey interviews. Most data collected during the survey process are quantitative and presented in **Appendix A**.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPERS

Economic developers have many responsibilities within their communities. Part of the survey's purpose was to identify the responsibilities that economic developers consider priorities. Seven of the questions concerned ED organizations responsibilities.

The first of these questions concerned improving attitudes and optimism within their community. Almost 85% of respondents affirmed that their organization undertakes specific initiatives to improve attitudes and create optimism. This indicates that a large majority of respondents saw a role for their organization in creating positive dialogue within their community.

Respondents clearly viewed capacity-building as an ED organization responsibility. Roughly 96% of respondents stated that their organizations supported education and training efforts within the community. This suggests that Saskatchewan ED organizations have established that education and capacity-building is a priority for creating stable and growing communities.

Another survey question concerned development of a strategic plan for establishing and taking action on economic and community development priorities. Slightly more than 92% of respondents confirmed that their organizations have created and instituted a strategic plan. The significance of this overwhelming majority is that Saskatchewan ED organizations view planning as one of their responsibilities for leading effective and cohesive CED activities within their communities.

Survey participants also affirmed that communicating with major employers in their community or region is an ED organization responsibility. Around 87% of economic developers surveyed testified that they maintain some kind of communication with major employers in their region. CED is, in part, about job creation and retention, and it is apparent that economic developers view this communication with major employers as part of their role within their communities.

Responses from another question regarding ED organization responsibilities confirms that many Saskatchewan economic developers are interested in being a coordinator of different interests within their community. Just over 93% of survey participants stated that they were interested in coordinating efforts between educators, financiers, business development support service providers, regulators, existing businesses, and community volunteers. This indicates that economic developers see a role for themselves in creating community networks and cohesion.

Two general areas where Saskatchewan economic developers view themselves as having less responsibility, or are less involved, concern Aboriginal business development and involvement of Aboriginal peoples in planning. Only 45% of survey respondents undertake specific initiatives regarding development of Aboriginal businesses. There are a number of potential reasons for this, including: a belief that this is the responsibility of other types of organizations; Aboriginal business is integrated into their other business development activities; specific groups are not targeted for business development; or the Aboriginal population in their area is not large enough to constitute specific initiatives aimed at business development.

Although less than half of participants have integrated specific initiatives for Aboriginal business development, many more responded that they encourage involvement of Aboriginal peoples in strategic planning or in the design and implementation of CED initiatives. A little more than 68% of respondents confirmed that they encourage participation of Aboriginal people or organizations in planning for their community or region. This suggests that even though economic developers may not see Aboriginal business development as a priority, they nevertheless perceive that including Aboriginal people in the planning and implementation of CED projects is a responsibility for their ED organization.

For six of the seven survey questions that concerned economic developers' responsibilities, a majority answered in the affirmative. This is a clear indicator that ED organizations are active in a number of different areas within their communities and that they also perceive their actions as responsibilities. One of these tasks is structured planning so as to maximize their CED activities' efficiency.

PLANNING HABITS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

The ability of economic developers to effectively meet responsibilities largely rests upon their planning habits. Therefore, a number of the survey questions were designed to gain a general understanding of Saskatchewan ED organizations' approaches to planning. Responses to these questions will offer insight into the importance placed upon planning and, subsequently, abilities to fulfill responsibilities within their communities.

The first question regarding planning simply asked participants whether their ED organization undertakes strategic planning to establish direction and priorities for their CED activities. More than 92% of economic developers surveyed stated that their organization had developed and implemented a strategic plan to guide its activities. Because such a large percentage of Saskatchewan ED organizations have strategic plans, it indicates that economic developers recognize the importance of planning for the overall direction of their activities. Strategic planning is generally acknowledged as an essential element for implementation of effective CED initiatives. Because of the high number of Saskatchewan ED organizations with plans in place, it is clear that there is movement towards methodical and effective development activities within the province.

It is undoubtedly important for ED organizations to develop and implement strategic plans. However, the process must not end there. It is equally important to maintain this plan once operational. Of the survey respondents who confirmed that their organizations have strategic plans, 83% also stated that they review and update these plans on at least an annual basis. This is important because it indicates that a large majority of the organizations are continually assessing the priorities identified in the plans and ensuring that they are reflective of current activities and circumstances.

Another important aspect of the planning process is communication and openness between organizations within a community. Keeping this in mind, survey participants were asked if their organization shares its strategic plan with other stakeholders within its community or region. More than 83% of respondents stated that their ED organization makes its plan available to the community. This openness can be important within a network both to ensure that duplication of services does not take place and that essential responsibilities are not neglected. Moreover, it can help set a tone of co-operation and trust among organizations working within a community.

Directly linked to the previous question, participants were asked if they consider the plans of other stakeholders within their community when setting their activities, priorities, and directions. The answers were consistent with those in the previous question, as 83% of participants confirmed that other associations' plans influence their organization's direction. This is equally as important as the previous question because it, too, looks at an organization's awareness of its surroundings and openness to the influence of other stakeholders working in their community. This also connects back to ideas of trust and co-operation among key community players.

Another important element of planning within an organization is sticking to a strategic plan once it is created. As a means of assessing this, survey participants were asked, first, if they receive any government funding, and, second, if they apply for this funding based on a strategic plan. Of the economic developers surveyed, 92% said that their organization receives some kind of financial support from municipal, provincial, or federal government departments or agencies. Subsequently, 50% of survey respondents claimed that they always apply for government funding based on their strategic plan; 18% said that their ED organization usually does so; and slightly more than 15% confirmed that they sometimes use the priorities identified in their strategic plan to apply for government monies. Although these responses are not as concrete as some others, these results are still positive in that 68% of ED organizations in Saskatchewan are following their strategic plans either all the time or usually. Moreover, these results may be used as an example of one area of the planning process that needs to be strengthened to emphasize to ED organizations that a strategic plan is only helpful if it is put to use and followed. Ignoring an established strategic plan when applying for government monies may offer economic developers the financial means to carry out their activities, but it may also compromise the quality or effectiveness of the work that they are performing in their community.

The final element of planning about which respondents were questioned was strategic planning within communities. Economic developers were asked if their community has developed and implemented a strategic plan. Nearly 49% of respondents said that their community had a strategic plan, while 46% answered that theirs did not. Although slightly more participants replied in the affirmative, this is not an overly positive result because it means that fewer than half of the respondents live in communities with

significant community-wide consensus about direction and priorities for their community. As planning is such an important part of CED, results from this question suggest that considerable education is required in Saskatchewan communities to emphasize the value of the process and product of strategic planning. The process can be one in which community members come together to determine what is important to them as a group and create a vision for future growth and direction. The resulting strategic plan is important because it is a tangible product of the planning process to which a community can refer and use as a guide for future activities. It is evident from the results that many Saskatchewan communities are not engaging members in a planning process, and thus may be missing some of the positive effects that it can produce.

Strategic planning is an important part of the CED process and is integral to building community resilience. The above results indicate that a large majority of ED organizations in Saskatchewan are aware of the benefits of planning and have therefore integrated it into their operations. Some educational work may be required both to convince these organizations to follow this plan consistently once it is created and to encourage a greater degree of community level planning. Overall, however, it appears that economic developers are engaged in strategic planning.

PARTNERSHIPS

The partnerships that CED organizations establish between themselves and other stakeholders in their communities and the surrounding area can be vital to the outcomes of their CED activities. Due to the importance of partnerships to the practice of CED within Saskatchewan communities, the survey questioned participants about their organization's relationships. Two three-part questions illustrate the breadth and depth of partnerships evident in the practice of CED in Saskatchewan.

In each part of these two questions, participants were asked about their relationships with other organizations. Seventeen different types of people or organizations were used: Neighbourhood Development Organizations, Regional Economic Development Authorities, Communities Futures Development Corporations, Regional Health Authority, educators, local business owners associations (LBOA), local businesses, towns or cities, tourism board, chambers of commerce, Tribal councils or local First Nations, community associations, rural municipalities, provincial government, federal government, crown corporations, and financiers.

In the first question, participants were asked whether representatives from these seventeen groups participate on their organization's board of directors or subcommittees, whether these organizations contribute any kind of resources to their organization, and whether their organization had partnered with them on CED initiatives.

Response was quite positive regarding the question concerning participation on boards or sub-committees. A majority of participants answered in the affirmative for 11 of the 17 organizations—six organizations, namely Neighbourhood Development Organizations, CFDCs, regional health authority, community associations, the federal government, and crown corporations—were not represented on the board of directors or subcommittees of more than half of the respondent organizations. This shows that CED organizations are looking to a variety of other agencies or people in their community for representation. Moreover, it can be seen that relationships between organizations vary in strength. For example, because more than 93% of respondents have formal representation from their town or city in their organizations, it is clear that this is a desirable, important, and strong tie between the towns and CED organizations. However, only 16% said that representatives from crown corporations sit on their board or subcommittees. It can be deduced that this relationship is neither as strong nor as fundamental to CED work within communities.

The second part of this question concerned receiving resources, both time and financial, from the seventeen organizations. Most respondents answered that 16 of the 17 organizations offer some kind of resources to their CED work. Crown corporations were the only organization cited by fewer than half of participants as resource providers. This indicates that other stakeholders are generous with their limited resources when it comes to CED work within their community or region. This is an important element for CED work within Saskatchewan communities because ED organizations rely on volunteers, grants, and donations to enable them to pursue their CED activities. Without other stakeholders' support, economic developers' jobs would be more difficult and ED organizations would be limited in their ability to carry out their CED projects fully.

The third sub-section of this question asked participants if they had ever partnered with the listed organizations on CED initiatives. Once again, respondents showed that they had strong ties with other stakeholders within their communities. Only three organizations—Regional Health Authority, community associations, and crown corporations—had not partnered with a majority of respondent CED agencies. This indicates that organizations undertaking CED activities have created partnerships with a varied group of stakeholders, and that they have a large network from which to draw when initiating CED projects.

Results from this question reveal that CED organizations have many different types of relationships with other stakeholders working in their community or region. The first part of the question shows that networks between CED agencies and some organizations vary in formality. However, it also shows that CED organizations have representatives from a diverse group of stakeholders. The second part illustrates that even though some organizations are not as linked formally to CED activities, they are still willing to donate time and money to CED agencies. The last sub-section of the question demonstrates that CED organizations enter into several partnerships when initiating projects within their

communities, and that they have various networks from which to draw when creating these partnerships.

The second question about CED agency partnerships asked respondents about levels of involvement of the seventeen organizations identified above in CED initiatives that their organization wanted to undertake. The survey asked if, based on current relationships, it would be easy or difficult to get these organizations to “buy in” to a project, contribute time/resources to a project, and take ownership of a project. Answers to these questions not only reveal the strength of partnerships between CED organizations and others in their community but respondents’ perceptions regarding these community stakeholders and their willingness to become involved in CED organization activities.

Regarding the first part of this question, which asks about getting organizations to buy in to a hypothetical CED project, results were again quite positive. With the exception of crown corporations and the Regional Health Authority, a majority of respondents felt that it was easy to get organizations to buy in to a project that they had initiated. This indicates that most respondents are optimistic about their ability to gain the support of stakeholders in their community and about these organizations’ willingness to be open to new ideas in the area of CED.

The next component of the question dealt with the ease of getting the seventeen organizations to become slightly involved and contribute some time or resources to the hypothetical project. In this case, a majority of respondents answered that with the exception of the Regional Health Authority, Tribal Council/First Nations, the federal government, and crown corporations, it would be easy to get these organizations to contribute resources of some kind to a project. This suggests that CED organizations have had success in getting other organizations in their community involved in their projects, and that they are confident that this support will continue with future CED projects.

The third part of the question regarding involvement of the organizations in a hypothetical CED project concerns their willingness to take ownership of a project. Although a majority of respondents answered in the affirmative for all but a handful of organizations in the previous two answers, when they were questioned about getting these organizations to take ownership of a project, they were much less optimistic. Of the seventeen listed organizations, most respondents felt that only the REDA would be willing to take ownership of a project. Survey participants thought that although many organizations would be willing to provide moral support or even resources to a project initiated by another organization, they would not likely take on full responsibility and ownership of this same project. This indicates that although CED organizations have a number of partnerships with other organizations, these relationships do not run as deeply as possible. Given that participants felt that most of their organization’s relationships with other stakeholders in their community were not strong enough to transfer ownership of a project, these networks likely need strengthening and deepening.

Results from this question illustrate that networks between CED organizations and community stakeholders are stronger in some situations than they are in others. Respondents believed that stakeholders would be more willing to contribute either moral support or resources when less is asked of them. However, when investment in a CED project becomes greater, survey participants answered that these same organizations would not be willing to take on added responsibility. This is perplexing in the context of the previous question because when asked about partnerships, which implies shared ownership of a project, a majority of respondents replied that they had partnered on CED projects with all but a few of the stakeholders. Why did survey participants feel that the same organizations with which they have already established partnerships would be unwilling to take ownership of a project that they had initiated? Although the answer is not clear, it is apparent that the relationships and networks between CED agencies and community stakeholders are wider than they are deep. Perhaps the number of established networks should be decreased so as to strengthen those relationships most important to their CED activities.

THE FOUR DIMENSIONS OF RESILIENCE

The Community Resilience Model was used as a guide for SEDA's survey of Saskatchewan economic developers. However, because this model was not followed strictly, it is impossible to assess how survey participants' responses compare directly to the model. Instead, this study looks at the four dimensions of resilience: resilient people, resilient organizations, resilient resources, and resilient communities (The Centre for Community Enterprise, 2000: 11-12). Moreover, by looking at the four main elements of resilience, some general observations can be made about what Saskatchewan economic developers are already doing in terms of testing resilience, what needs to be done, and what some of the applicable survey results mean in terms of CRM.

RESILIENT PEOPLE

The Community Resilience Model's first dimension is resilient people, which is made up of nine points:

- Leadership is diversified and representative of age, gender, and community cultural composition;
- Elected community leadership is visionary, shares power, and builds consensus;
- Community members are involved in significant community decisions;
- The community feels a sense of pride;
- People feel optimistic about their community's future;

- There is a spirit of mutual assistance and co-operation in the community;
- People feel a sense of attachment to their community;
- The community is self-reliant and looks to itself and its own resources to address major issues; and
- There is a strong belief in and support for education at all levels (The Centre for Community Enterprise, 2000: 13-15).

These nine points concerning resilient people focus on both community leaders and citizens. If community members are active, optimistic, and co-operative—that is, if they are resilient themselves—then the community has a better chance of being resilient as a whole.

Because the survey questions focused more on the activities and priorities of economic developers and their organizations, few of the survey questions correspond with the more general topic of resilient people. Only one of the survey questions is applicable here (Question 16: In your opinion are the leaders and stakeholders in your community or region currently aware of and open to Community Economic Development?). Almost 92% of respondents answered in the affirmative. This question relates to the second point, which concerns visionary leadership. Given that close to 92% of participants believe that their leaders support CED activities within their community, it suggests that these leaders have a degree of vision for their community's future directions and can see that CED work helps achieve this.

Resilient people, both community leaders and members, are the cornerstone to a resilient community. This is not a new concept to the field of CED. Economic developers have long been aware of the human element to their work and they know that supportive, optimistic, and active people are essential to the CED process. Moreover, as economic developers consistently work with the people within a community, they are in a position to assess resilience levels of community members and leaders to ascertain the strengths and weaknesses of their people as a group. They can also identify ways to commend citizens for their strengths and to support them in improving weaknesses.

RESILIENT ORGANIZATIONS

The Community Resilience Model's second dimension concerns resilient organizations. The premise herein is that along with people, organizations are components of a community, and their ability to function and co-operate with one another can affect how the community operates as a whole. There are two points within this dimension of resilience:

- There are a variety of organizations in the community that perform community economic development functions (e.g. building human resources; access to equity and credit; infrastructure, and research, planning, and advocacy) and

- Organizations in the community have developed partnerships and collaborative working relationships (The Centre for Community Enterprise, 2000: 15).

Both of these points focus on the agencies, businesses, and groups that operate within a community. The first point simply requires that there are organizations within the community that support CED activities, while the second concerns the necessity for positive networks between these organizations.

The survey focused a great deal on partnerships between CED organizations and other stakeholder groups within their communities. Based on the overall positive results of these questions, it is apparent that Saskatchewan economic developers are aware of the necessity for both organizations within a community to provide services that enable CED projects to proceed, and for working relationships and partnerships to be in place. Much like the idea of resilient people, this concept of resilient organizations is not new to economic developers. Working intensely in communities and dealing with other local organizations, they are quite aware of the necessity for a community to have an infrastructure of organizations that co-ordinate efforts to improve all aspects of the community itself.

RESILIENT RESOURCES

Resilient resources are another aspect of community resilience. A community needs to have access to resources to grow and react to changes. The difference between resilient and non-resilient resources is that the former focus on addressing local needs and are often locally based sources of employment, skills, and finances. There are six points to this dimension of resilience:

- Employment in the community is diversified beyond a single employer or employment sector;
- Major employers in the community are locally owned;
- The community has a strategy for increasing independent local ownership;
- There is openness to alternative ways of earning a living and economic activity.
- The community looks outside itself to seek and secure resources (skills, expertise, finance) to address areas of identified weakness;
- The community is aware of its competitive position in the broader economy (The Centre for Community Enterprise, 2000: 15-16).

Resilient resources are an essential element for community growth and prosperity. A major aspect of CED activities in many communities is building these resources.

One survey question directly corresponds to the last point regarding resilient resources. Question 18 asked survey participants if their community had identified its

competitive advantages and opportunities. Roughly 85% of respondents answered in the affirmative. Moreover, in a follow-up question that queried if there was a plan in place to capitalize on these competitive advantages, 78% of respondents confirmed that their community had a plan to benefit from its identified opportunities and advantages.

Economic developers pursuing CED work look to build local ownership and diversity and to create access to outside resources that the community does not possess but needs to develop more local resources. Saskatchewan economic developers are aware of the needs for community resources because of their daily work with community members. Moreover, given that SEDA conducted this survey with representatives from CED organizations in Saskatchewan, it is apparent that the latter are making an effort to foster resilient resources within communities through CED activities.

RESILIENT COMMUNITY PROCESS

The final element of the Community Resilience Model is a resilient community process. Its effectiveness is reliant upon the presupposition of the three other dimensions of resilience. There are six points within this component of community resilience:

- The community has a CED Plan that guides its development;
- Citizens are involved in the creation and implementation of the community vision and goals;
- There is on-going action towards achieving the CED Plan's goals;
- There is regular evaluation of progress towards the community's strategic goals;
- Organizations use the CED Plan to guide their actions;
- The community adopts a development approach that encompasses all segments of the population (The Centre for Community Enterprise, 2000: 16-17).

The essence of this dimension of community resilience is that developing and following a community action plan is essential to fostering forward movement and growth.

A number of survey questions focused on resilient community processes. The first asked participants if their community had a strategic plan in place. Slightly less than 49% of respondents answered in the affirmative. Moreover, when a follow-up question was posed to participants concerning how often their community's strategic plan is reviewed and revised, 47% of respondents answered that this occurred on at least an annual basis. On a less positive note, around 32% of respondents did not know how often their community's plan is revised. In contrast to these results, 92% of survey participants confirmed that their CED organization had a strategic plan in place and 83% of these also stated that they review and update these plans on at least an annual basis. Although almost half of the economic developers surveyed lived in communities that did not have

strategic plans, almost all the CED organizations have plans in place. CED organization plans could be regarded, at least partly, as community plans for CED where no actual community plan exists.

Community-based strategic planning is an essential element of the CED process. The planning process often leads to many positive developments that can benefit a community in its pursuit of positive change. Once again, this is not new to economic developers. Most CED organizations are well aware of the importance of strategic plans, which is why so many already have them in place. Economic developers have already integrated planning into their CED activities, for they are aware of its benefits for providing direction towards growth.

CONCLUSIONS

The survey that SEDA conducted in the summer of 2003 served a number of purposes, including providing a follow up to the Connectivity 2003 conference, helping identify interest and readiness in measurement of economic development initiatives, which may lead to community-based accreditation, and identifying priorities for future events. The survey's main purpose was to ascertain whether Saskatchewan economic developers are already integrating CRM elements into their CED work and determine readiness for integration of this model into Saskatchewan CED organizations. It is apparent from the survey findings that economic developers are working in some of the same areas identified in CRM. This is, in part, because many of the key aspects of community resilience are well-known concepts within established CED practices and principles. Given that CRM is simply another approach to CED, it does not greatly diverge from CED principles. Instead, it provides a more structured base upon which to test the resilience of communities and conduct CED activities.

It can also be determined from the survey results that greater education is needed before economic developers adopt CRM throughout the province. Although the model shares many similarities with basic CED principles, it is a more structured process and there are many phases to the process that economic developers need to understand before they can begin to test their community's resilience.

There are a number of steps involved in testing resilience and numerous subsequent elements in interpreting and applying the results. First, as this is a community process, the idea must be presented to the community. Following this, a steering committee must be set up (The Centre for Community Enterprise, 2000: 19). After these two preliminary actions, a community portrait must be created. This is "a description of a community from the perspective of resilience. It gathers together information about a community for each of the 23 characteristics [of resilience]" (The Centre for Community Enterprise, 2000: 21). The portrait includes statistical information about the community and perceptual

information ascertained via interviews, town meetings, focus groups, and written surveys. The portrait must be presented in a manner that the strengths and weaknesses of the community can be clearly understood by the community (The Centre for Community Enterprise, 2000: 25-27). The community must then come together in a decision-making workshop to set priorities and decide what actions it will take to address weaknesses (The Centre for Community Enterprise, 2000: 35). The last step of the process is planning. The community must create a plan for achieving priorities set in the decision-making workshop (The Centre for Community Enterprise, 2000: 35, 41).

Based on the survey findings and the process that comprises CRM, it is clear that Saskatchewan economic developers need to be reintroduced to the idea of resilience. A process of educating economic developers about the finer details of community resilience is vital so that they all have the knowledge and tools to employ the its principles. If this occurs, CRM could become a useful CED approach among Saskatchewan development agencies.

REFERENCE

Centre for Community Enterprise. (2000). *The Community Resilience Manual: A Resource for Rural Recovery & Renewal*. Port Alberni, B.C.

Appendix A. The Survey and Results.

1. Does your organization undertake any specific initiatives aimed at improving attitude and optimism in your community or region?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	39	27	66
No	8	4	12
Total	47	31	78
	Yes = 82.98%	Yes = 87.10%	

2. Does your organization support education and training efforts?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	44	31	75
No	3	0	3
Total	47	31	78
	Yes = 93.62%	Yes = 100%	

3. Does your organization undertake any initiatives to promote Aboriginal business development?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	19	16	35
No	28	15	43
Total	47	31	78
	Yes = 40.43%	Yes = 51.61%	

4. Does your organization support and encourage the involvement of Aboriginal peoples or organizations in strategic planning or in the design and implementation of CED initiatives in your community or region?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	28	28	56
No	19	7	26
Total	47	31	78
	Yes = 59.58%	Yes = 90.32%	

5. I am going to go through a list of 17 stakeholders in your community who may or may not have an interest in Economic Development. I would like you to answer with a “Yes” or “No” for each of the organizations with regard to the following 3 questions: Are these stakeholders represented on your Board of Directors or sub-committees; do these stakeholders contribute any kind of resources to your organization; have you partnered with these organizations on CED initiatives?

Neighbourhood Development Organization

	Participate on Board or Sub-committees	Contribute Resources	Partner on CED Initiatives	Total
Yes	6	11	11	28
No	14	9	9	32
Don't Know	0	1	1	2
Total	20	21	21	62

REDA

	Participate on Board or Sub-committees	Contribute Resources	Partner on CED Initiatives	Total
Yes	26	30	36	92
No	14	11	5	30
Don't Know	0	0	0	0
Total	40	41	41	122

Community Futures

	Participate on Board or Sub-committees	Contribute Resources	Partner on CED Initiatives	Total
Yes	25	32	31	88
No	26	20	20	66
Don't Know	0	0	1	1
Total	51	52	52	155

Regional Health Authority

	Participate on Board or Sub-committees	Contribute Resources	Partner on CED Initiatives	Total
Yes	26	38	30	94
No	46	34	42	122
Don't Know	0	2	2	4
Total	72	74	74	220

Educators

	Participate on Board or Sub-committees	Contribute Resources	Partner on CED Initiatives	Total
Yes	40	55	53	148
No	9	19	21	69
Don't Know	0	0	0	0
Total	69	74	74	217

Local Business Owners' Association

	Participate on Board or Sub-committees	Contribute Resources	Partner on CED Initiatives	Total
Yes	29	31	32	92
No	17	15	14	46
Don't Know	0	0	0	0
Total	46	46	46	138

Local Businesses

	Participate on Board or Sub-committees	Contribute Resources	Partner on CED Initiatives	Total
Yes	56	58	52	166
No	16	15	20	51
Don't Know	0	0	1	1
Total	72	73	73	218

Town/City

	Participate on Board or Sub-committees	Contribute Resources	Partner on CED Initiatives	Total
Yes	57	54	54	165
No	4	8	8	20
Don't Know	0	0	0	0
Total	61	62	62	185

Tourism Board

	Participate on Board or Sub-committees	Contribute Resources	Partner on CED Initiatives	Total
Yes	29	35	38	102
No	28	23	20	71
Don't Know	0	0	0	0
Total	57	58	58	173

Chamber of Commerce

	Participate on Board or Sub-committees	Contribute Resources	Partner on CED Initiatives	Total
Yes	41	50	51	142
No	19	12	11	42
Don't Know	0	0	0	0
Total	60	62	62	184

Tribal Council/First Nations

	Participate on Board or Sub-committees	Contribute Resources	Partner on CED Initiatives	Total
Yes	30	33	36	99
No	26	24	21	71
Don't Know	0	0	0	0
Total	56	57	57	170

Community Associations

	Participate on Board or Sub-committees	Contribute Resources	Partner on CED Initiatives	Total
Yes	27	38	34	99
No	44	36	34	114
Don't Know	1	0	1	2
Total	72	74	69	215

Rural Municipality

	Participate on Board or Sub-committees	Contribute Resources	Partner on CED Initiatives	Total
Yes	48	53	54	155
No	15	11	10	36
Don't Know	0	0	0	0
Total	63	64	64	191

Provincial Government

	Participate on Board or Sub-committees	Contribute Resources	Partner on CED Initiatives	Total
Yes	39	60	56	155
No	33	11	16	60
Don't Know	0	1	1	2
Total	72	72	73	217

Federal Government

	Participate on Board or Sub-committees	Contribute Resources	Partner on CED Initiatives	Total
Yes	18	49	42	109
No	53	23	30	106
Don't Know	0	1	1	2
Total	71	73	73	217

Crown Corporations

	Participate on Board or Sub-committees	Contribute Resources	Partner on CED Initiatives	Total
Yes	11	27	26	64
No	59	44	45	148
Don't Know	0	1	1	2
Total	70	72	72	214

Financiers

	Participate on Board or Sub-committees	Contribute Resources	Partner on CED Initiatives	Total
Yes	43	56	48	147
No	29	18	26	73
Don't Know	0	0	0	0
Total	72	74	74	220

6. If your organization were to identify an initiative it wanted to undertake, based on your current relationships would it be easy or hard to get the following 17 organizations to buy in to the project; to contribute some kind of resources to the project; to take ownership of the project.

Neighbourhood Development Organization

	Buy In to the Project	Contribute Time and/or Resources	Take Ownership of the Project	Total
Easy	14	12	8	34
Hard	3	6	8	17
Medium	0	0	0	0
Don't Know	3	3	3	9
Total	20	21	19	60

REDA

	Buy In to the Project	Contribute Time and/or Resources	Take Ownership of the Project	Total
Easy	31	27	20	78
Hard	3	8	16	27
Medium	3	1	0	4
Don't Know	3	4	4	11
Total	40	40	40	120

Community Futures

	Buy In to the Project	Contribute Time and/or Resources	Take Ownership of the Project	Total
Easy	37	29	13	79
Hard	4	10	27	41
Medium	2	4	2	8
Don't Know	5	5	7	17
Total	48	48	49	145

Regional Health Authority

	Buy In to the Project	Contribute Time and/or Resources	Take Ownership of the Project	Total
Easy	33	24	6	63
Hard	22	28	51	101
Medium	2	4	0	6
Don't Know	10	11	10	31
Total	67	67	67	201

Educators

	Buy In to the Project	Contribute Time and/or Resources	Take Ownership of the Project	Total
Easy	4	47	21	122
Hard	12	13	38	63
Medium	1	7	7	15
Don't Know	1	1	2	4
Total	68	68	68	204

Local Business Owners' Association

	Buy In to the Project	Contribute Time and/or Resources	Take Ownership of the Project	Total
Easy	30	28	17	75
Hard	6	7	15	28
Medium	2	3	5	10
Don't Know	2	2	2	6
Total	40	40	39	119

Local Businesses

	Buy In to the Project	Contribute Time and/or Resources	Take Ownership of the Project	Total
Easy	52	41	23	116
Hard	8	19	37	64
Medium	9	6	5	20
Don't Know	0	1	3	4
Total	69	67	68	204

Town/City

	Buy In to the Project	Contribute Time and/or Resources	Take Ownership of the Project	Total
Easy	46	44	28	118
Hard	6	10	22	38
Medium	5	3	7	15
Don't Know	2	2	2	6
Total	59	59	59	177

Tourism Board

	Buy In to the Project	Contribute Time and/or Resources	Take Ownership of the Project	Total
Easy	45	38	25	108
Hard	1	7	17	25
Medium	2	3	6	11
Don't Know	7	7	8	22
Total	55	55	56	166

Chamber of Commerce

	Buy In to the Project	Contribute Time and/or Resources	Take Ownership of the Project	Total
Easy	48	44	27	119
Hard	7	10	22	39
Medium	1	2	5	8
Don't Know	3	3	4	10
Total	59	59	58	176

Tribal Council/First Nations

	Buy In to the Project	Contribute Time and/or Resources	Take Ownership of the Project	Total
Easy	28	21	12	61
Hard	14	18	29	61
Medium	5	6	6	17
Don't Know	6	8	8	22
Total	53	53	55	161

Community Associations

	Buy In to the Project	Contribute Time and/or Resources	Take Ownership of the Project	Total
Easy	44	36	17	97
Hard	10	14	34	58
Medium	3	6	4	13
Don't Know	9	10	11	30
Total	66	66	66	198

Rural Municipality

	Buy In to the Project	Contribute Time and/or Resources	Take Ownership of the Project	Total
Easy	45	42	21	108
Hard	9	13	31	53
Medium	4	3	5	12
Don't Know	3	3	5	11
Total	61	61	62	184

Provincial Government

	Buy In to the Project	Contribute Time and/or Resources	Take Ownership of the Project	Total
Easy	48	35	17	100
Hard	13	21	44	78
Medium	5	8	3	16
Don't Know	2	5	4	11
Total	68	69	68	205

Federal Government

	Buy In to the Project	Contribute Time and/or Resources	Take Ownership of the Project	Total
Easy	34	27	11	72
Hard	19	25	46	90
Medium	6	6	3	15
Don't Know	9	10	8	27
Total	68	68	68	204

Crown Corporations

	Buy In to the Project	Contribute Time and/or Resources	Take Ownership of the Project	Total
Easy	23	20	8	51
Hard	28	27	43	98
Medium	4	5	2	11
Don't Know	11	14	13	38
Total	66	66	66	198

Financiers

	Buy In to the Project	Contribute Time and/or Resources	Take Ownership of the Project	Total
Easy	49	37	13	99
Hard	12	23	49	84
Medium	4	5	2	11
Don't Know	4	4	5	13
Total	69	69	69	207

7. Does your organization have a strategic plan?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	41	31	72
No	6	0	6
Total	47	31	78

How often is it reviewed and revised?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Quarterly	2	2	4
Semi-Annually	0	4	4
Annually	30	22	52
Bi-Annually	7	3	10
Every 5 Years	1	0	1
Don't Know	1	0	1
Total	41	31	72

8. Does your organization share its strategic plan with other organizations in your community or region?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	36	29	65
No	3	1	4
Don't Know	1	1	2
N/A	7	0	7
Total	47	31	78

9. Do the plans of other organizations working in your community or region influence the activities, priorities, and directions of your organization?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	38	26	64
No	8	5	12
Don't Know	1	0	1
Total	47	31	78

10. Does your organization receive financial support from any municipal, provincial, or federal government departments or programs?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	41	31	72
No	6	0	6
Total	47	31	78

11. Does your organization apply for government funding based on the priorities and directions identified in its strategic plan, or the strategic plan of your community?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Never	2	2	4
Sometimes	9	3	12
Usually	9	5	14
Always	19	20	39
Don't Know	1	0	1
N/A	7	1	8
Total	47	31	78

12. Does your organization receive information or technical support from government departments or agencies?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	45	30	75
No	2	1	3
Total	47	31	78

13. Does your organization maintain contact with the major employers in your community or region?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	42	26	68
No	5	4	9
Don't Know	0	1	1
Total	47	31	78

14. How often do you correspond with a majority of these employers?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Weekly	4	2	6
Bi-Weekly	4	1	5
Monthly	8	7	15
Quarterly	12	2	14
Semi-Annually	9	1	10
Annually	3	9	12
Bi-Annually	0	2	2
Don't Know	2	2	4
Total	42	26	68

15. Does your community have a strategic plan?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	20	18	38
No	27	9	36
Don't Know	0	4	4
Total	47	31	78

Yes = 42.55% Yes = 58.07%

How often is it reviewed and revised?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Semi-Annually	1	1	2
Annually	9	7	16
Bi-Annually	3	2	5
Every 5 Years	0	1	1
Every 10 Years	2	0	2
Don't Know	5	7	12
Total	20	18	38

16. In your opinion are the leaders and stakeholders in your community or region currently aware of and open to Community Economic Development?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	40	28	68
No	3	3	6
Total	43	31	74

17. In your community or region, is there a willingness to replace the current leaders when they step down?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	40	28	68
No	3	3	6
Total	43	31	74

18. Has your community or region identified what competitive advantages and opportunities it may have?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	40	26	66
No	7	4	11
Don't Know	0	1	1
Total	47	31	78

19. Is there a plan to capitalize on these competitive opportunities?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	36	25	61
No	11	4	15
Don't Know	0	2	2
Total	47	31	78

20. When opportunities for new projects and businesses are identified in your community or region, how difficult is financing and fundraising?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Not Difficult	7	2	9
Somewhat Difficult	21	18	39
Difficult	6	5	11
Very Difficult	12	5	17
Don't Know	1	1	2
Total	47	31	78

21. If someone in your community or region has an idea that could be turned into a business opportunity, where do they go for help?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Financial Institution	8	8	16
Town/City	16	5	21
REDA	26	17	43
Community Futures	19	19	38
Chamber of Commerce	3	2	5
SBLA	10	2	12
Other	16	8	24

22. Does your community participate in regional opportunity identification and planning?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	42	24	66
No	5	5	10
Don't Know	0	2	2
Total	47	31	78

How well does this work?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Not Successful	3	3	6
Somewhat Successful	20	12	32
Successful	10	6	16
Very Successful	8	3	11
Don't Know	1	0	1
Total	42	24	66

23. Is your organization interested in coordinating efforts between educators, financiers, business development support service providers, regulators, existing businesses, and community volunteers?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	38	30	68
No	4	1	5
Total	42	31	73

24. What kind of resources are you lacking to be a strong coordinator of community economic development initiatives?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Strong Network	2	1	3
Financial Resources	28	15	43
Human Resources	26	22	48
Information	3	2	5
Support from Governments	5	1	6
Support from Development Organizations	3	1	4
Support from Private Sector	2	1	3
Other	3	7	10
Don't Know	2	1	3

25. Were you at Connectivity this year?

	SEDA Members
Yes	25
No	22
Total	47

26. Would stakeholders in your community or region benefit from economic development training?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	44	30	74
No	3	1	4
Total	47	31	78

What kind?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Basic Introduction to CED	20	13	33
Process of CED	20	13	33
Benefits of CED	19	13	32
Building Community	14	6	20
How to Attract Investors to your Community	8	3	11
Innovation	4	2	6
Business Retention and Expansion	4	3	7
Other	20	17	37
Don't Know	2	1	3

27. Do you feel there are community leaders willing to pay to learn more about how to build a stronger and more resilient community and economy?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	26	13	39
No	15	16	31
Don't Know	1	2	3
Total	42	31	73

How much do you think they would be willing to pay for a full day of training?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Under \$100	9	6	15
Total	5	3	8
\$150-\$200	9	2	11
Over \$200	0	2	2
Don't Know	3	0	3
Total	26	13	39

28. Does your organization have the ability to financially sponsor this training for your leaders and stakeholders?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	25	21	46
No	17	10	27
Total	42	31	73

29. If there was an opportunity to obtain accreditation for the role your organization plays in leading CED efforts in your community or region, would you be interested in pursuing this accreditation?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Yes	31	23	54
No	11	4	15
Don't Know	0	4	4
Total	42	31	73

How much would you be willing to pay to receive and maintain this accreditation every 3 years?

	SEDA Members	Non-Members	Total
Under \$500	15	8	23
\$500-\$1000	6	9	15
\$1000-\$1500	3	1	4
Over \$1500	0	2	2
Don't Know	7	3	10
Total	31	23	54

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