



An incredible experience – one that truly showcased & celebrated this nation’s numerous success stories & small miracles in CED. The conference also created the perfect ingredients for the inception of so many more.

Winnipeg, Manitoba was the venue for the 2002 National CED conference, a 5-day gathering of CED professionals, activists, and adherents unprecedented in its size and diversity. SEED Winnipeg, the Government of Manitoba, and other local CED organizations hosted over 400 participants September 23-27. It was for many the outstanding CED happening of the year.

ship structure. Before, CCEDNet recognized “friends” who could participate in the network but, unlike “members” had no voting privileges. A new membership policy eliminates those two categories and recognizes one inclusive definition of “member” with barrier-free membership rates.

Members receive all CCEDNet privileges and have single vote. Individual staff of organizational members cannot also be individual members. Each member is a voting member of CCEDNet.

CCEDNet members also discussed a Three Year Strategic Plan that emphasizes the building of an inclusive

2002 National CED Conference Highlights

We must continue to work toward the inclusion of all voices. This theme was echoed throughout the keynote speeches, workshops, & plenaries. It is in this process of inclusion & respect for difference that we harness the assets of our communities & strengthen our innate capacity to innovate.

Organized by the Canadian CED Network (CCEDNet) and the CED Technical Assistance Program (CEDTAP), the conference took the theme “Strengthening Community Led Innovation” and featured over 60 workshops on CED practice, policy and emerging issues.

In the course of the event, CEDTAP held in its annual forum and CCEDNet its annual general meeting. Manitoba, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Nunavut jointly sponsored a government dialogue on CED. HRDC held a consultation on its Skills and Learning Agenda, with a focus on strengthening “Learning Communities.” Keynote speakers included Silver Donald Cameron, the Hon. Jane Stewart Minister of HRDC, Sherman Kreiner of the Crocus Fund, Sheri Torjman of the Caledon Institute, Eugene Kostyra of the Manitoba government, and Mike Lewis of the Centre for Community Enterprise.

A major development at the CCEDNet AGM was the decision to change the national network’s member-

member-led network with the capacity to support its members and advance CED nationally. (See page 21, this edition, for details of the national CED census and other CCEDNet research projects that are now underway.) The board has been expanded from 9 to 11, and includes four members:

- Ify Uzor of Distinctive Employment Counselling Services, Edmonton, AB
- Victoria Morris of SEED Society, Christina Lake, BC
- Caroline Lachance of Économie Communautaire de Francheville, Trois-Rivières, Québec
- Kevin Edwards, Community Opportunity and Innovation Network, Peterborough, Ontario

Thanks to a number of foundations, government, and other supporters, many representatives of small community-based organizations received travel assistance, making the event the largest and most diverse national CED conference so far. The conference evaluation and proceedings are available from the CCEDNet website www.canadiancednetwork.org. ■

Conference photos courtesy of Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs and Yvon Poirier. All pullquotes are comments of Natasha Jackson, Black Community Workgroup of Halifax Cooperative, Ltd.



Engaging the Private Sector

An excerpt from the plenary address of Sherman Kreiner, President & CEO, Crocus Investment Fund

Let me leave you with some active steps that I think are important and possible to engage the business community.

First, community development organizations need to be incorporated as nonprofits with the ability to issue charitable tax receipts. In [Winnipeg's] Community Ownership Solutions (COS) we have a model that I think can be replicated.

Second, we need to work collectively to create additional tax advantages for businesses that contribute. At Crocus and COS we have started this dialogue with the government. I think successful U.S. models ... provide the best starting point for this effort. I know that the CED Network has identified this as a policy priority and I wish you success in your efforts.

Third, we need to find a "credible broker" that can provide an effective interface between business and community

We must continue to come together to share our experiences. It is in networking that we able elevate our work locally & strengthen our CED movement nationally. This is a movement!

development entities. A tax credit program will be most effective if businesses can look to someone they trust to direct them to appropriate community development organizations and conversely, if CDCs can look to a credible advocate to help identify business partners for them.

In Winnipeg the local United Way organization has been doing excellent work to position itself as the honest broker in this area and clearly has the potential to play this role well. The natural extension of this is of course that other United Way agencies can follow suit across the country.

We need also to develop an inclusive approach to community development; one that engages business, education, community organizations, foundations, government, and affected members of a community in building the solutions.

Another key is moving away from government as the sole source of financing for community development. In many ways this can be the logical outcome of government providing its support not just through direct grants but also through tax advantages directed to businesses that contribute. In this latter approach government continues to have a key role but the compounding effect of their contribution is significantly more beneficial than their existing direct support.

Labour Sponsored Investment Funds like Crocus provide an excellent analogy. At Crocus roughly \$40 million in tax credits by the provincial and federal government have been leveraged to create investment of \$130 million by retail investors, all of which has led to a fund exceeding \$165 million. And so far Crocus has invested in about 60 Manitoba businesses and helped create, save or maintain more than 11,400 jobs in our community. ■

CCEDNet Tax Credit Task Force

An excerpt from the plenary address by Mike Lewis, Centre for Community Enterprise

Why have we in CCEDNet decided to focus on tax credits?

Imagine the most important project your organization has on its agenda. It might be a low-income housing development, a community business, or perhaps the revitalization of a commercial strip in a run-down neighbourhood.

What options do you have to get the equity your project needs to structure a viable financing package? Government grants? A community angel? A thousand bake sales? All of these may be useful, but they take a lot of effort and they are often scarcer than hens' teeth.

The tax credit models we are looking at, such as those in Nova Scotia and New Hampshire, provide significant tax benefits to investors and put cash into the hands of projects and

organizations that address a defined public good. And in the process, relationships between people, projects, and organizations are being strengthened at the local level, feeding the resilience and entrepreneurial capacity of the community.

We have recently figured out a way forward on this agenda item. The policy council established a task force chaired by Dianne Fitzgerald, president of the Atlantic CED Institute and director of the Nova Scotia Cooperative Council. Stewart Perry of the Centre for Community Enterprise is joining her, as are Ross Mayer, executive director of the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers; Chris Pinney, vice-president of the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy and director of the Imagine Campaign; and Nancy Neamtan, president of Chantier de l'Économie Sociale in Québec, a network of networks involving hundreds of organizations.

All of these people are involved in CCEDNet. However, this task force is being structured somewhat differently, in this case as a strategic alliance convened and chaired by CCEDNet. Positioned in this way, the initiative clearly can claim to be sponsored by organizations with hundreds of organizational members and tens of thousands of individual members.

While basic research has been done, more focussed analysis of the best options and market research are necessary. Educating our membership on the options will be part of the process and, of course, we must actively move the discussion into the financial sector, the private sector, and into the finance departments of provincial capitals, as well as in Ottawa. ■



We must continue to create ways that allow communities (including communities of interest) to take a lead. Our challenge is to even out that road so they can take it.

In vigorating – that’s the word that describes CCEDNet’s recent national conference in Winnipeg. It wasn’t that we learned some groundbreaking new approach to the work. No, the really exciting thing was my sense that what CED practitioners know and do really does matter to our national policy-makers.

Over 200 of the 400 people conference delegates – representatives of community-based organizations, private practitioners, educational institutions and government offices – attended a feedback session on the federal government’s Innovation Strategy. Their expectations were minimal. Some were accustomed to having their feedback politely acknowledged but then watered down significantly upon translation into policy. Having participated in other feedback sessions across the country, some fully expected CED to get lost in a discussion focussed on innovation through technology.

The skeptics came away surprised. The Honorable Jane Stewart joined the session and spent fully two hours listening to feedback. She participated actively in small group discussion. Finally she presented to us her interpretation of the collective feedback, which strongly advocated CED as a viable strategy in the government’s innovation platform.

Throughout the session, delegates spoke of the significant gap between the intent of the policy and the actual barriers that people face as they attempt to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from our current economy. As much as we appreciate the intent, there is work to be done if Canada sincerely recognizes that people are this country’s greatest resource in the knowledge-based economy of today. This work must focus on

- inclusion
- identifying and training for skills required in the new economy
- access to skills-training opportunities
- access to education and training
- income support
- welfare-to-work policies
- a co-ordinated system of supports among various government departments
- core funding that allows communities to get on with what they need to do

It was a pleasant surprise to hear not just the consistency in what delegates said, but the language they used. Maybe it was just us, but we heard people talking about “what we can do” as opposed to “what you need to do.”

Then Minister Stewart, reflecting concisely on the feedback, acknowledged the likelihood of using the skills and knowledge available in the practitioner network to further the policy agenda. That was the real breath of fresh air – that and her acknowledgement that there is a definite need to find a way to create long term funding commitments. For the first time in a long time there appeared to be an understanding and a potential to elevate CED to an integral role in Canada’s skills and learning agenda.

Beyond that, however, the Minister and the delegates connected. We experienced a connection based on a common understanding of the obstacles faced, a recognition of the value of the work we do, and a commitment to addressing the challenges through revisions to national policy.

An impromptu comment from one of the delegates demonstrated this connection. As the delegate stepped to the podium, we braced ourselves for the critical remarks that are so common at such events. Instead, we all heard a moving apology – an apology that we, as a network, had let the Minister down when a short while ago when she came under fire in Parliament. Could we not have done more to challenge the criticism to which she was subjected, and to acknowledge the assistance that communities have received through HRDC’s ongoing commitment?

We cannot be certain what transpired for others in Winnipeg that day. What we do know is that for ourselves, it was invigorating to feel not just listened to but heard. It was invigorating to hear a commitment to find financial resources and ensure that the work in our communities continues. Most importantly, it was invigorating to experience a commitment between government and delegates to collaborate to provide opportunities for all Canadians to participate in, contribute to, and benefit in our knowledge-based economy.

Two CCEDNet conference delegates ■

(below) Honourable Jane Stewart, federal Minister of Human Resources. Conference photos courtesy of Manitoba Ingovernmental Affairs, Yvon Poirier, Community Opportunity and Innovation Network, and Natasha Jackson. All pullquotes are comments of Natasha Jackson, Black Community Workgroup of Halifax Cooperative, Ltd.





What made that workshop on youth leadership in CED so good?

Rather than talk about youth leadership the workshop facilitators as youth demonstrated youth leadership - positively engaging all participants, providing perspectives on youth leadership through short descriptions of their personal experiences, creating an environment encouraging participants to collaborate together.

They showed that youth can meaningfully participate and engage within a multi-age group, and most of

all showed that if you are going to be successful in engaging youth you must instill the process with a spirit of "this is fun" not a drudge.

I left the workshop on a real high mainly because it confirmed my believe that youth do and can play an important role in the broad scope of community process and decision making. Unfortunately many communities treat youth as second class citizens and don't provide them with the opportunities play a leadership role even in those areas that impact youth directly.

What can we learn from the delivery of that workshop that can be applied to

workshops in general? It is not about the workshop leader(s) it is about the participants and it is the participants that will make or break a workshop. It is participant(centric) not leader(centric) and I think that means participants within the structure of the topic will define the flow of learning and sharing of information. This of course can only happen with facilitators who can forge a co-operative and collaborative environment. Again an important ingredient in the recipe is the process must be fun and engaging.

- Art Lew, Haida Gwaii Community Futures Development Corporation ■

You've heard it said that "it takes a village to raise a child," an African proverb brought into households around this continent by Hilary Clinton. In our case, the village is our collective voices and the child is our hope for equity for all citizens today & in the future. (Natasha Jackson, Halifax, NS)

With "partners" like these ...

You may have noted that the sidebar on page 18 withholds the writers' names - a strange thing to find in a magazine that aims to be overtly by and for practitioners. The authors, both senior CED managers working in employment support for well-known and -respected organizations in different parts of the country, insisted on remaining anonymous.

That they feel they must do so says volumes about the tension in this country between those who do CED, and the federal bureaucracy that is supposed to support them in their work.

Our two commentators are manifestly positive about what the federal minister of human resources, Jane Stewart, said and did at the CCEDNet conference in Winnipeg. She listened to frank and direct feedback from the floor and then satisfied a couple of hundred seasoned practitioners that she heard what she had been told.

Delegates could have expected a good deal worse. Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) has taken a hammering in Parliament over the last couple of years for its accounting practices, and hundreds of organizations across the country are feeling the repercussions. HRDC project officers must now count pennies, rather than track outcomes. It's discouraging, to say the least, especially when so little has been done to reduce the barriers that deny many people the training and other supports they need to get a job.

Despite this, our commentators actually came away from Stewart's session in a hopeful frame of mind. Don McNair,

managing editor of *Making Waves*, pressed them to let themselves be named. If you get to be the bearer of good tidings, why hide it?

The response that he received was revealing: the commentators' programs rely so heavily on HRDC funding that they could be jeopardized, should departmental staff object to something said or unsaid.

And this from the very people that Jane Stewart heard in Winnipeg, whose words visibly moved her, and to whom she evidently responded with convincing integrity and openness. How ironic! Apparently, we have evolved a system of governance in which a minor bureaucrat's personal perceptions can serve to muzzle the people who are getting the results on the ground. Since they cannot predict nor risk how a bureaucrat may choose to interpret their words, it is wiser for them to say as little as possible.

What does it take to get a partnership with government that focusses on learning, on mutual accountability, and on achievement measured in terms of outcomes? How do we avoid becoming captives to the cynicism that is grinding down so many well-intended people in government? And this in a department that is supposed to focus on human development? Is it partnership when some bean counter can wield more power and influence that those in and outside government who are actually making things happen?

As Silver Donald Cameron would say, don't make me puke!
- Mike Lewis, editor

