

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ULTIMATELY ENSURES SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Community Economic Development (CED), a North American perspective which focuses on creating employment, income maintenance, empowering powerless and poor people, business development, sharing ownership, and government involvement in local development, is one of the most suitable interventions for achieving social development. However, it is critical that this intervention be culturally specific to the target population. This article briefly reviews the history of CED, definition, the concept of community, economic and social objectives, capital development, and the principles of empowerment. The Link between Community Economic Development and the principle of empowerment is also made. Four dimensions of empowerment are discussed. They are: personal empowerment, educational empowerment, economic empowerment and political empowerment. It is expected that the review will be useful to students and teachers, policy-makers and practitioners interested in the social development field.

Key words: society, economy, development, community, empowerment.

I. INTRODUCTION

The term "CED" was used for the first time in the USA. As Pierce and Steinbach [1] recall, CED in the U.S. originated in urban settings, in three different intervention practices between the mid-1950s and the late 1960s. Firstly, in the climate of the social movement surrounding civil rights which began in the 1950s, community organizers were inspired and the conflict model of intervention developed by Saul Alinsky for demanding resources to initiate local socio-economic development in ethnic neighbourhoods, which were in a state of crisis. Secondly, in the early 1960s, the issue of civil rights made way for more specific demands related to economic rights, such as the right to work, or to vocational training. Thirdly, in the context of the war on poverty waged by a number of US government agencies and several private foundations in the mid-1960s, CED was seen by the Ford Foundation and the Office of Economic Opportunity (a federal agency) as a way of responding to the problems of poverty and the breakdown of certain ethnic neighbourhoods.

In Canada, Community Economic Development

(CED) has been practised in one form or another for several decades. In its earliest form, it was evident in the cooperative movement, which emerged in the 1930's. It has evolved into a broad-based approach, which derives its impetus from within communities to overcome social and economic underdevelopment. Frequently, CED was an instinctive response to a community crisis like the closure of an industrial plant or the hopelessness of an Aboriginal community [2].

Many different strategies have been initiated by governments, the private sector, and to some extent, communities, to mitigate the impact of de-industrialization, economic restructuring and recession. These strategies represent two different but complementary approaches to economic problems.

A community approach represents a strategy, which believes in promoting more participatory modes of development. Also present is a belief that people in the community have ideas, management skills and leadership qualities to contribute to the process of development. Community organizations are generally more responsive to the needs and

problems of the local people. They are more likely than governments to have the interest and skills necessary to adapt development projects and programs to local conditions. There may be some continuing assistance from the outside, but it is given in ways and on terms that do not displace people's own efforts to generate income, enhance the quality of life or create infrastructures [3].

In the **government top-down approach**, the author refers to this phenomenon as the "paternalistic fallacy." Inherent belief in this approach is the idea that planners, technicians, and experts possess all the knowledge, wisdom and virtue needed to achieve development, with the poor characterized as responsive and grateful beneficiaries.

Many of these centrally planned approaches have proven to be expensive and of limited lasting value [4]. Often, they have been individual-centred, such as numerous training and social assistance programs. The results, in many cases, have been increased isolation, dependence and despair. Lewis (1994) argues that "...such an orientation is unwise on both fiscal and psychological grounds, since it perpetuates the attitudes and relations of dependency and dependency represents the antithesis of development at the interpersonal as well as the international level [5]."

More recently, development practitioners, community leaders and decision makers within governments, sensing the limits of traditional development strategies and organizations, have recognized the growing importance of CED as a comprehensive development approach. With its roots at the community level and its origins in a more self-reliant and self-help spirit, CED emerges as a better alternative to traditional economic solutions. CED endeavours to enhance the well being of the community at large by increasing economic activity, as well as empowering community members [6].

II. DEFINITION OF CED

There is a great quantity of literature on Community Economic Development (CED). A major part of this literature reflects a debate as to its definition (i.e. just what is CED?). Such debates exist in many different mediums, and are not solely the domain of academia. For example, Lewis's (1994) discussion of CED in Canada suggests that the principles and actions,

which we decide CED is to include and exclude, will have a real impact on policy makers and on people making things happen "on the ground." It is crucial to note that how one defines CED is very important to its application as an approach to fighting poverty and unemployment. The main features of the debate over the definition of CED are described below:

Blakely (1993) described what he calls "local development" in the following terms ". . . Local economic development refers to the process in which local governments or community-based organizations engage to stimulate or maintain business activity and/or employment. The principal goal of local economic development is to develop local employment opportunity in sectors that improve the community use of existing human, natural, and institutional resources [7]."

In Canada, the basic thrust of this definition is encompassed in the Community Futures Program, a federal government initiative now housed within Human Resource Development Canada. In their view, local development is aimed at increasing the community's capacity to adapt, as well as promotion and support of entrepreneurship. This includes the identification of market niches that may be served competitively by these communities.

"...A fundamental principle of community-based economic development is the intervention of individuals who take steps to improve economic, social and environmental conditions at the local level. Job creation in the context of local economic development is a key element of this process which brings together those at the local level who have decided to take action and to innovate in order to combat unemployment [8]."

The government sees CED in the light of job creation. It thus defines CED as: "... The improvement of job prospects, income and other aspects of the economy not only for our populations, but by these very populations themselves [9]."

Ultimately, this definition is problematic in nature as it limits the scope of CED, reducing it to what Fontan (1993) refers to as the "liberal local development" approach. Fontan argues that such a definition only focuses on the economic growth potential of CED. Its emphasis is on business and employment development. The underlying assumption is that local

resources should be used to stimulate and direct private, public and social sector investment. Intervention is divided between the promotion of local private entrepreneurship and measures to develop the employability of the population. It negates the social dimension of CED, which is rooted in people's involvement and participation. Therefore, in this context, such an approach is neither alternative nor reformist.

Although Perry's, (1993) conceptualization of CED is also consistent with the above, he contends that CED should also encourage small-scale capitalist development. He envisions CED as a means of transforming the community through community-based businesses. Nevertheless, while Lemelin et al. (1993) agree with Perry, they also state that "...These organizations are an alternative for local economic development, pursuing economic objectives for low income communities, particularly job protection and creation [10]."

From a client-centred approach, Shragge (1993) argues that according to the above paradigm, the economy is the primary concern and that the building of the local economy is the desired end. Shragge contends that, although economic development occupies a central role in the process, there is a concern for people. Ultimately the primary consideration is the improvement of quality of life for the majority people. Therefore, within this paradigm CED should involve considerable attention to enhancing the range of employment and business opportunities for all groups in a community, as well as development of the skills and resources needed to facilitate and realize those opportunities.

In contrast to this emphasis on the pursuit of local economic growth, another perspective emphasizes community empowerment. Thus, Swack and Mason (1987) define CED as "... An effective and unique strategy for dealing with the problems of poor people, powerless people, and underdeveloped communities. As an intervention strategy in an underdeveloped community it does not seek to make the existing conditions in the community more bearable. Instead, CED seeks to change the structure of the community and build permanent institutions within a community. As a result, the community begins to play a more active role vis-à-vis the institutions outside the community, and the residents of the community become more active in the control

of community resources ... the starting premise for CED is that communities that are poor and underdeveloped remain in that condition because they lack control over their own resources [11]."

Thus, CED not only looks inward, endeavouring to build new institutions, but also views this process in relation to wider processes that block the local community from controlling their own resources that would allow them to address the issue of poverty. Obviously, an approach that links both the social and economic vision is required [12].

Based on the dearth of literature and results emanating from the best practice examples of CED projects in Canada, the following definitions of CED have been derived. Fontan (1993) and Lewis (1994) views CED as "...A comprehensive multi-faceted strategy for the revitalization of community economies, with a special relevance to communities under economic and social stress. Through the development of organizations and institutions, resources and alliances are put in places that are democratically controlled by the community. They mobilize local resources (people, finances, technical expertise, and real property) in partnership with resources from outside the community for the purpose of empowering community members to create and manage new and expanded businesses, specialized institutions and organizations [13]."

Thus, CED can be viewed as a multi-faceted intervention, requiring the assembly of a spectrum of resources to address the multiple challenges involved in social and economic development. Community Economic Development is a distinct form of economic development operating at the local level. It can be defined as a broad development approach, which integrates social and economic development objectives for a community or marginalized groups. CED is an action-oriented approach, which aims to build long term development capacity by enhancing local resources. Typically, CED strategies are designed and carried out by various local CED organizations [14].

In several respects, this approach differs from those of Blakely, Perry, Lemelin and Morin, the Economic Council of Canada and the Community Futures Program, in that it places social goals and the creation of social equity as the central priority of economic development initiatives. In particular, it

locates matters related to creating greater local control and accountability at the very heart of CED. Indeed, it is apparent within the context of CED vision, that empowerment and local economic development must be balanced, if success is to be realized over the long term.

Given the previously discussed lack of a commonly agreed upon terminology, a CED initiative should, at minimum, show the following common characteristics:

1. The projects involve and are responsive to disadvantaged groups in the area,
2. The strategies adopted favour longer-term solutions; for example, training and employment creation for welfare recipients is often long term.
3. The community organization seeks partnerships with others to accomplish their goals.
4. The following common themes also emerge in CED: A strategy to include the excluded, community participation, economic tools to secure social goals, and intermediary organizations. These are the keys to success of CED.

III. THE CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY

Upon perusal of the literature, it is apparent that "community" is a frequently used, but controversial term. There is no unanimity as to the definition of the word community. Different authors in the area of community economic development use the word "community" to refer to diverse parameters.

Fontan (1993) adopted a multiple approach in his attempt to illustrate the meaning given to the word "community" in the expression "Community Economic Development". In his view, CED permits intervention in communities defined in terms of:

"...A geographical base: A marginalized area in an urban or rural setting;

... A social base: A minority cultural group or a marginalized group (women, young people, the elderly, the disabled, the unemployed);

...A community base: A close association between a locality and shared interest; that is, a population that shares in a given area, a history, a sense of belonging, and that has common interests, notably regarding the socio-economic revitalization of the community [15]."

As the concept of "community" is characteristically elusive, and/or pervasive, and describes many and

varied patterns of human interaction, it is critical to identify and apply those aspects of community most relevant to the practice of CED. A major aspect of CED's scope is its primary focus on particular localities. Although the notion of "community" in CED is not exclusively geographic, the research projects conducted by Perry et al., (1993) thus far delineate that the actual initiatives by and large are territorially based, covering relatively small areas. In fact, CED initiatives are local ones. While some CED efforts may be directed towards macro or regional development strategies, primarily the inherent goal is to ensure that these strategies are supportive of local initiatives or further the enhancement of policy implementation at the local level. For example, these initiatives may target specific groups like women.

IV. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL OBJECTIVES

Another contentious issue in CED revolves around the question of criteria to be utilized in measurement of its success. Bryant (1993) argues that "... If the successful integration of economic and social goals is to be understood, it is necessary to identify how the community defines "success" in the CED effort [16]."

Bryant's arguments are based on a study that was conducted by the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council in the Atlantic Provinces and Eastern Ontario. This research project aimed to study the linkages between community economic and social development, and to identify the conditions for success in such development.

The following findings sufficed in respect of "success" in terms of CED efforts. Respondents were asked to define "success" criteria for CED in their community. Their responses were summarized and classified according to economic, social or combined criteria. Approximately half of the respondents in Atlantic Canada identified economic criteria as dominant, while the other half either invoked social criteria or a mixture of economic and social criteria. Respondents in Eastern Ontario leaned more markedly towards economic criteria in defining the "success" of CED.

V. CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

Tied to the above, is another major debate on the

question: Whether or not CED is opposed to the interest of capital at the expense of people. What is clear to me is that CED is sceptical of large capital, which is transient by nature leaving behind a large pool of laid off workers and taking all the wealth away from the community. CED promotes small business development in the community. It is interested in local initiative, ownership and control of community businesses, and in creating business that is responsive to the needs of the community rather than a few private individuals who want to promote their own interests. The underlying assumption is that the wealth and surplus, which accrues in these small businesses, should stay and circulate in the community. With many small businesses however, CED should guard against the development of mini-capitalism in the community [17].

Mini-capitalism develops when there are many small businesses in the community competing against each other. These businesses are often self-centred and motivated by personal gain. Their values are not necessarily compatible with those of community organizations. The difference is that with community organizations, decision making and ownership reside in the community rather than with the individual. A CED organization seeks community empowerment, partnerships and may use consensus decision-making. The wealth that is generated is used to create more business or fill community social needs. Members do not receive a direct share of profits but the organization generates wealth for the whole community. CED appears to work best under the following conditions:

1. The Participatory Nature of CED

To be effective, a CED initiative or organization must be truly participatory. From its initial planning stage, the CED process must include all the people in the community who will benefit from a CED effort. Essentially, the planning should begin and end with the perspective and interest of the community. Therefore, ownership of the project always remains in the hands of the members of the community.

2. The Variety and Nature of CED Partners

The nature and variety of CED is critical to its long-term success. For example, the private sector can be an active partner in CED initiatives. This is, in part, because this sector is beginning to view CED in

terms of "investment" and less from a "charitable donations" point of view.

3. When do CED initiatives emerge?

Another finding relates to the fact that CED initiatives usually emerge from crisis situations, which affect both the social and economic lives of community members. In general however, CED initiatives will not work best under conditions of extreme crisis. This is because acute crisis usually requires immediate, short-term solutions.

VI. THE PRINCIPLE OF EMPOWERMENT

Similarly again, as with the term "community", empowerment is a frequently used but controversial term. It has an intriguing etymological ambivalence- it is a means and an end, process and goal. The many attempts to find an accurate definition of empowerment indicate the need to identify factors that induce empowerment. Participation in all spheres of life i.e. social, economic, and political are viewed as very important in the empowering process [18].

CED strongly believes in the participation of people in shaping their own lives. It is premised on the assumption that people should have constant access to decision-making and power. Community ownership and control are aspects of community participation. Participation therefore becomes an essential element in the process of empowerment.

Participation is an opportunity for community members to work collectively and strengthen their connections with each other. The process of participating can build skills, confidence and knowledge. It can therefore be assumed that by and large, empowerment is a product of participation and demands influence and control in social, economic, and political terms. CED has adopted the notion of "empowerment" from certain perspectives; that is, business and psychology, as a principle to guide its practice.

Borrowing heavily from Friedmann's (1992) notions of empowerment, in his discussion of "Alternative Development", Shragge (1993) defines "Empowerment" thus "... A process that occurs both at a personal and a political level. It is a process that involves changing power relations between

individuals and groups and social institutions. At the same time, it is a process of personal change as individuals take action on their own behalf and then re-define their understanding of the world in which they live. Self-perception moves from victim to agent, as people are able to act in a political and social arena and pursue their own interests [19].”

The notion of "empowerment" validates that there are powerless people in society, mainly comprised of the poor. Freire correctly identified that the powerless individual assumes the role of an object, being acted upon by the environment, rather than that of a subject, acting in and on his world. The powerless person alienates himself from participation within the social reality of his environment, resulting in a passive acceptance of oppressive cultural given about him.

Empowerment strategies within the context of CED must focus on reducing, eliminating and reversing "negative valuations" held by those identified as powerless within society. According to Kieffer (1984), strategies utilizing empowerment include both development of empowering skills and attainment of participatory competence [20].

The empowerment principle proposed in CED practice uses as its cornerstone the notions of individual, groups, organizations and communities embedded within a social and political environment. It is hoped intervention strategies will assist individuals to identify their concerns within a shared social, economic and political context rather than as isolated individual problems. Thus, the development of social networks of empowering relationships increases the potential for social change.

From the preceding discussion of developing an empowerment model for CED practice, four dimensions of practice are identified: personal, educational, economic and political. Most importantly, these dimensions serve as a focus for practice and represent a beginning in the further development of an empowerment model for CED practice. Each dimension is inexorably intertwined with the others.

1. Personal Empowerment

Personal power is based upon the competencies, self-esteem, and motivation of the individual. This

dimension reflects upon the entrenched thinking about the capabilities of people and the roles they can play in shaping their own destinies. Germain (1991) relates personal power to the ability to engage in self-direction. She states "...It is the power to make choices, reach decisions, and engage in socially effective action on behalf of the self and the collective.... to be self directing, self managing and self regulating [21].”

Empowerment within this dimension entails a process of learning to move from being reactive to life events and to becoming reactive in shaping one's vision of life. The building of personal power entails an action-oriented approach to practice. Essentially, the question remains: Can we really empower people as community development workers? There are many and varied responses to this question. The content of work to be achieved in this dimension is based upon the strength of the individual and in developing new competencies that will move the individuals towards achieving their life aspirations, hopes and dreams.

2. Educational Empowerment

Effective educational systems are defined as those that prepare people for productive engagement in both their social and work environments. The lack of an adequate education system severely limits the extent to which one can come to fully realize his or her hopes and dreams. These limitations can range from low self-esteem to an impaired ability to successfully compete for often, scarce jobs in the work force.

Selection of appropriate training and social motivation should carry the main responsibility for the development and implementation of CED strategy. Ideally, training for social transformation should assist individuals and communities to critically look at the root cause of their problems, and to be able to come up with action-oriented programs to solve or overcome them. The underlying assumption is that education empowers people to develop capacities to solve their own problems. This view is strongly held by those who espouse the notion of "Popular Education". This process is different from the conventional education system in that it starts with the experience of participants.

According to Arnold et al. (1990), popular education

is education for empowerment. It unifies people, so that they are better equipped to change the world. It asks them to decide what they want to learn and what is relevant to their lives, and helps them organize with one another. Through participatory education, people feel positive about themselves and in the process, education plays an enabling and empowering role. Educational empowerment is premised on the assumption that education in general will empower people to take control of their lives. As a continued process of raising consciousness, education provides people with hope that they can change their own world for the better [22].

3. Economic Empowerment

This dimension is described as the ability of each member of society to obtain sufficient income to live a life of dignity and one in which the requisite needs of shelter, food and clothing can be adequately fulfilled. Underlying this belief is the principle that local people should own and control resources in the community. This achievement could take place either individually or collectively. Ideally, efforts to develop alternative business structures usually have, as one of their goals, the empowerment of workers and community residents or provision of social and cultural services in the community. The orientation is towards "entrepreneurship" with a social purpose. For example, one can bring together a group of small businesses to produce simultaneously for the local market, and in the process create jobs for the local people.

Principally, the projects are designed locally, use local resources and initiatives and are managed by local members. There is no external control. Local mobilization of both human (i.e., skills training) and natural resources is central to this dimension.

In essence, it is important that the attention given to the objectives of generating profit; e.g. creation of cooperatives and other small businesses must be balanced by consideration of the social, political and economic impact the intervention has on the community.

4. Political Empowerment

Political empowerment embodies the formation of a democratic system in which all citizens can participate in a manner in which they are heard, and

can influence the shaping of those policies that impact their lives. The democratic systems include both those at the community and at the national level.

Friedmann (1992) underscores the importance of changing the power relations in society. "...This calls for something beyond an increase in access of the poor to the basis of social power. It calls for transforming the social into political power, as well as politics capable of turning political claims into legitimate entitlement. The struggle of households to gain greater access to basis of social power represents partly a self reliant effort and a political and therefore a collective struggle to put forward claims on the state [23]."

In this context, CED practice is not politically neutral. It attempts to work towards the establishment and support of organized activity, which builds citizen owned, and community-based structures and which can, in turn, wield power and influence to redistribute resources towards those disadvantaged in society.

In beginning to take control at the local level, coalitions can be formed to build networks impacting regional and national policies. Thus, fundamental change can occur in the political arena, through building strong social change movements at the grassroots level. Political empowerment of the community is therefore a critical arena for CED practice.

VII. LINKING CED TO EMPOWERMENT

As a way of concluding this section, the relationships or link between CED and the four dimensions of empowerment must be examined. Linking the debate on CED to the four dimensions of empowerment clarifies the importance of people as participants and/or social actors.

Empowerment must be socially constructed; i.e. arrangements of a social, economic and political nature must be made purposefully. Participation remains central to this process. People must get organized and fully involved. There is a clear recognition that, without people's participation through the existing and/or new institutional mechanisms, it will be extremely difficult to work towards any measure of empowerment.

The empowerment model views people interacting within a social, economic, and political environment. The degree to which one interacts successfully is dependent upon both the individual participatory competence skills, and the opportunities for participation within that environment. The four dimensions of empowerment practice (personal, educational, economic and political) represent the primacy of participatory competencies that constitute the primary thrust of CED intervention efforts. This model is based upon the strengths of the people and views the development of empowering relationships as a means of increasing the possibilities of social change.

VIII. DISCUSSION OF SALIENT POINTS

In reviewing the literature of CED, this writer has noted with great interest, four key concepts that reoccur through-out the readings: i) CED blends together interests in accomplishing economic development and social development goals; ii) CED occurs at local or community level, be it urban or rural neighbourhoods; iii) CED involves participation of citizens, especially traditionally disadvantaged groups in the areas subject to CED efforts; and iv) CED requires partnership among organizations in the area being served, as well as partnership with external organizations.

Therefore, the author views CED as a strategy that stresses community participation, utilizing of local people, and financial resources, as well as acknowledges the bonds between the economy, the environment and social condition. For example, CED initiatives established in response to labour market issues, like high unemployment, benefit a wide range of people.

Summing up the findings from the research studies provided, confirms on the spectrum of views found on CED. At one end of the continuum is the belief that business development, in particular job creation, is paramount. At the other extreme is the emphasis on aiming for greater social development. The reality of CED is undoubtedly somewhere in the middle.

Still, what remains unanswered is the apparent split in perspectives, even among CED advocates. While many CED initiatives speak of the importance of demonstrable results, they simultaneously extol the virtues of the process of getting there, especially

when it comes to participation and planning [24]. However, there is an apparent dichotomy on this issue. While some people are results-oriented in their approach to community development, others appear to recognize the value of the process.

Nevertheless, Shragge (1994) [25] and Brodhead (1993) [26] recognize the tension between the social and economic aspects of CED, particularly the tension between CED as a business development strategy, and CED as a wider strategy of social intervention and social change. A combination of social and economic development objectives within one framework results in this dispensity of beliefs and underlying prospects.

While some CED programs provide assistance to small business owners, others support jobless people who were employed in manufacturing or resource industries, while a third group has targeted disadvantaged people such as social assistance recipients, immigrants and aboriginal people.

Moreover, another concern apparent is that the notion of participation has not been fully explored and analyzed. For example, CED organizations continue to be looked upon as alternative instruments to development, but it is not always apparent as to whose instruments are being used. There is no thorough analysis of who actually controls CED organizations (e.g., local elites), and the participatory nature of decision-making and implementation within these organizations. It is important to note that communities at grassroots level are not homogeneous units. Their social structure is often dominated by a small group of powerful or rich people who benefit from external support of CED's. This group is comprised of the local political and bureaucratic elites. Generally, the fact that political power structures and vested interests prevent viable and participatory development is not given necessary attention.

While there appears to be a general consensus that participation is a key to development i.e., "people centred development", it is often not clear what is implied by participation. Participation is, or can be an imposed agenda by outsiders such as donor agencies and government. It can and may become a euphemism for either the physical labour of the beneficiary or extensive and frequent discussions with the community and lectures by development

workers. This implies lack of power and control by the community over the implementation of its programs.

Also, relatively little attention is focused on an analysis of the conditions which would establish CED organizations as truly participatory instruments of disadvantaged groups at the grassroots level. The practice of having a board of directors, as a representative of the community, should not be necessarily taken for granted as providing democratic participation. Thus, board of directors representing communities should be scrutinized. A representative approach should emphasize the "interactive problem solving approach" i.e. direct participation by the community as opposed to elected officials who are answerable to and represent their constituents. This approach presents a lot of problems in our modern day complex society. It assumes that the "traditional Greek" version of direct participation is still possible. Political empowerment also assumes this, but given the complex realities of the society it also embraces the idea of political representation. This is because direct democracy is not always possible in practice. However, it is rooted in the process approach, which is very important for it provides community perspective.

IX. CONCLUSION

The major conclusion based on research and literature to date, is that CED offers an exciting alternative to more traditional approaches of social and economic development used in Canada and the U.S., to create sustainable employment while at the same time, improving the social circumstances of families and individual members of the community.

Attempts to promote CED are also at times hindered, not so much because senior decision-makers lack understanding of what CED is, but due to confusion surrounding its eclectic nature [27].

The author believes that the process involved in CED is as important as its economic benefits, and that the truly innovative aspect of CED lies in its capacity to integrate both the social and the economic goals of communities. Any valid evaluation of CED must include measurement of both social and economic outcomes, especially the participatory process inherent to it.

In summarizing the debates on CED, it is concluded that there are indeed some important points of convergence. First, CED is a development strategy and tensions are contained in this strategy in its efforts to harmonize economic and social goals. More interesting, however, is the research indication that CED goes beyond simply having economic and social goals, neither does CED strive to actually harmonize them. In other words, CED tries to erase the line separating the economic and social development realms.

Very often programs are planned without input from people involved, such as communities, social workers or the people themselves. There may be exemptions to rules for say an employment program, but once exempt, these people may still need help. For example, there are those who may be exempt due to criminal conviction, but exclusion from an employment program may lead them back to criminal activity rather than to become productive members of society. People working in programs at the local level are rarely consulted for their input, and the aid recipient also has little involvement. There is an ideological standard that the recipients are expected to meet, but their reality can be very different. This standard is set by national government or headquarters of a large organisation with little divergence allowed for differences in communities or people. Sometimes the outcome numbers are more important than how to actually help a community. Some people may continue to need long term support. This is why I stated earlier, empowerment of the individual and the community in personal, educational, economic and political areas is so important.

A closer examination of CED practice also reveals that practitioners mix and integrate practices, programs, and policies, which are found in both the economic and social development domains. Although more research work still needs to be done on this aspect of CED, this author agrees with the general point of view that suggests that it is the crucial merging and matching of objectives and tools that leads to tangible social and economic results.

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