

A Community Development Approach to Prosperous Labour Force Development

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Outline

Introduction

Place / region in a global economy

Understanding change / context

Labour force development

- Goals

- Processes

Discussion



Introduction I

- Most labour force development debate is focused on the “economic” side of ledger
 - Industry demand in short / near term future
 - Training / skills upgrades of adults to fit demand
- Useful for ‘plugging’ gaps
- Fails to support the type of workforce rural places need to be successful in the future

Introduction II

- Community development approach
 - Understand place / region in the global economy
 - Understand trajectories of change
 - Long-term view to supporting resilience as foundation for flexibility and success (prosperity)
- Goal
 - We are seeking resilient and sustainable communities, economies, and environments

Place / Region in the Global Economy I

While a 'globalized' economy is nothing new, somethings are new:

- Pace of change is accelerating
- Global 'interconnections' increasing / increasingly complex
- Booms come faster; busts go deeper
- Industry is global (compete for them; compete for share of jobs)

Place / Region in the Global Economy II

Common issues affecting OECD non-metropolitan areas:

- Population aging
 - Resource frontier aging / youth out-migration
- Limited resource economy base
- Social, political, economic restructuring
- Service closure / withdrawal
- Outdated governance structures
 - ‘Invisibility’ in national debates
- Distance / remoteness
- Aging infrastructure

Place / Region in the Global Economy III

- The community development – economic development challenge:
 - If capital can be “anywhere” Why would it invest in your place / region
- Response:
 - Place-based approaches to community and economic development
 - Focus upon re-imagining & re-bundling our assets to create new competitive advantage that fits with our aspirations

Understanding Change & Context: Economy I

Development history:

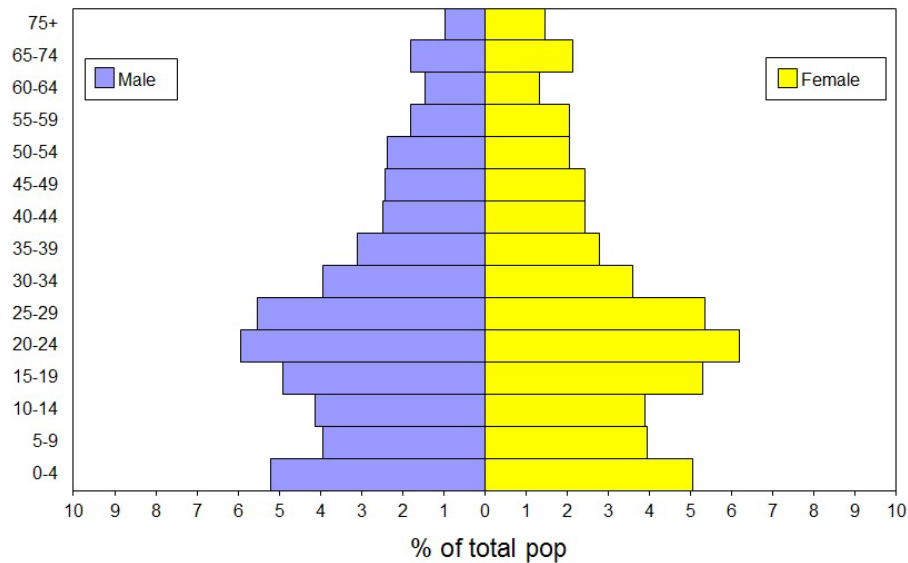
- Post war 'resource frontier':
 - Coordinated public policy initiatives to stimulate industrialization of remote resource opportunities
 - Create employment and robust small town economies
 - Create finance / commerce / management hubs in urban centres
 - 'Long boom' of 1950 to 1980

Understanding Change & Context: Economy II

- 1980s resource commodity recession
 - Focused on resource regions in the global economy
- Pressures since:
 - International trade agreements
 - Trade globalization
 - Low cost production regions
- Resource industries are concentrating
- Technology is labour shedding

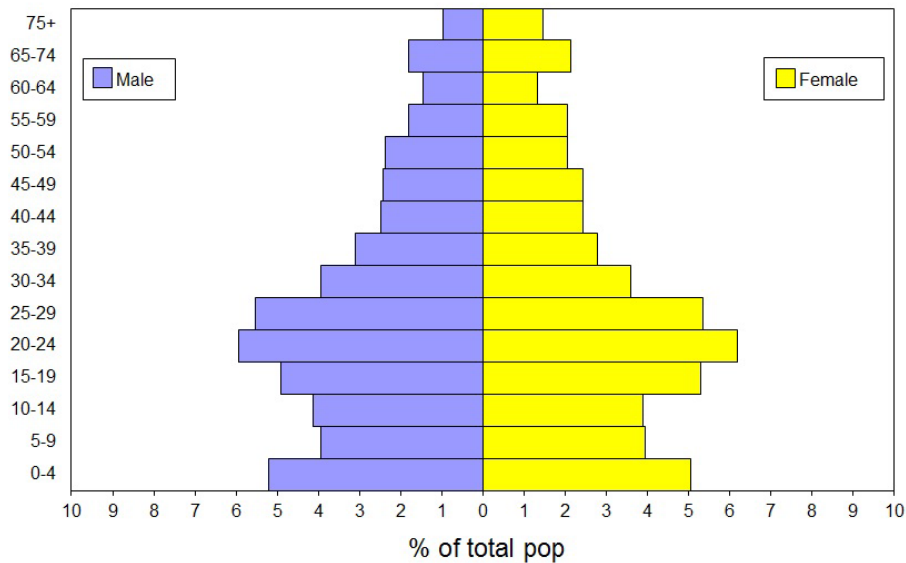
Understanding Change & Context: Demographics

Quesnel - 1981

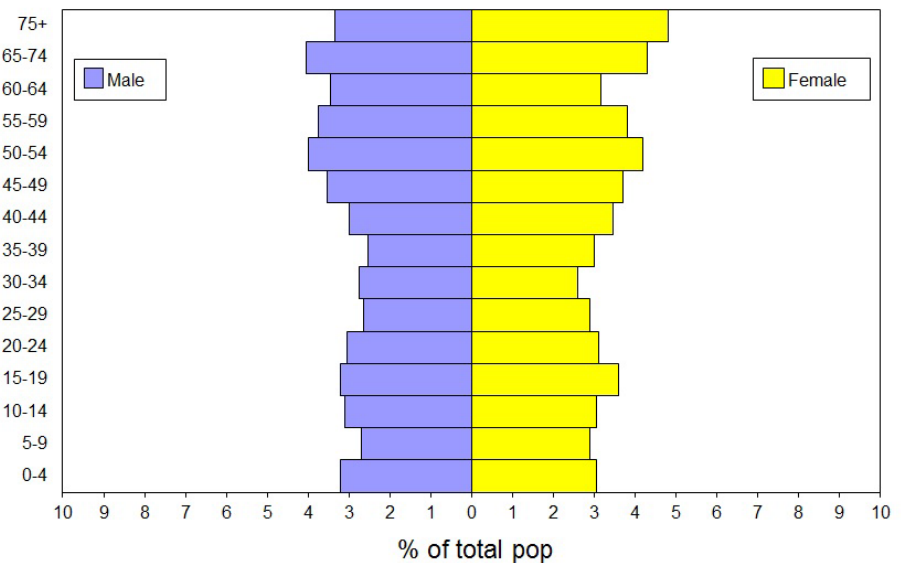


Understanding Change & Context: Demographics

Quesnel - 1981



Quesnel - 2016



Understanding Change & Context: Pathways Forward

- Across rural Canada, the community & economic development message is very clear:
 - Economic development that not only creates jobs, but respects people, the environment, and our quality of life
- Four bottom lines:
 - Culture
 - Community
 - Economy
 - Environment

Labour Force Development: A Community Development Approach I

Context:

- Ongoing global economic change
 - Need for flexibility of skills across labour force
- Resource frontier aging
 - In the old economy:
 - Opportunities related to older workers
 - Opportunities related to younger replacement workers
 - In the new economy:
 - Opportunities for work that we can imagine
 - Opportunities for work that we cannot yet imagine
- Goal:
 - A learning workforce

Labour Force Development: A Community Development Approach II

- Time:
 - Change time horizons from 6 month training programs to a generation long support for the next learning workforce
 - 1980 to 2018 period of economic restructuring spanned more than 1.5 generations in time
- Community development focus:
 - Invest in the economy
 - Invest in the society
 - Support an environment for innovative approaches

Labour Force Development: A Community Development Approach III

- Healthy moms with healthy pregnancies
- Support for elders
- Early childhood programming
- Success by six programming
- Investments in elementary & high schools to connect families / communities
 - Especially in developing teaching technologies so students can access full range of curriculum opportunities
- Investments in bridging, internship, apprenticeship programs
- Investments in lifelong learning structures and programs

Labour Force Development: A Community Development Approach IV

- In 20 years, rural Canada would have a learning workforce
 - Critical element to revitalize in today's global economy
- But:
- Must be matched by infrastructure investments
 - Communication
 - Transportation
 - Social
 - Recreation
 - Cultural
- If workers can “work anywhere, live anywhere” Why would they live in your community

Discussion

- Current approaches are limited in scope and thinking
- Community development can broaden scope and thinking
- All community development work takes time
 - But it is critical to get started now

Our Team

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