The search for new practices guiding industry-community relationships: Structural underpinnings of rapid growth

Laura Ryser, Greg Halseth, Sean Markey*, and Marleen Morris

UNBC, *SFU

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Outline

- Background
  - Mobile workforces
  - Limited local capacity
- Results
  - Policies and regulations
  - Assessing cumulative impacts
  - Information for workforce
- Discussion

Restructuring in Resource Regions

- Shift away from building resource towns
  - Rising costs
  - Lengthier approval processes
  - Reduced role of senior gov'ts in town development
- Industry operations
  - Adoption of labour shedding technology
  - Search for larger labour supply
- Shift towards rotational / mobile workforce practices

Mobile Workforces I

- Used in many resource-based sectors
  - 1950s oil and gas sector (Gulf of Mexico)
- Accelerating since 1980s

Mobile Workforces II

- Limited local skilled labour pool
- Difficulty encouraging skilled labour to relocate
- Used largely during construction / maintenance, but also some operations

Limited Local Capacity for Rapid Growth

- Local governments lack adequate staffing levels
  - To maintain relationships, information, and processes
- Strategic investments in services and infrastructure impeded by lack of information
  - Demand and impact that mobile workforces have on local services and infrastructure

Methodology

- 30 key informant stakeholder interviews in 2014
  - Industry associations, work camp providers, union, host community stakeholders
  - Canada, US, Scotland, Australia

- Questions explored:
  - Workforce pressures
  - Work camp processes
  - Structural mechanisms shaping industry-community relationships

- Latent and manifest content analysis

Results

I. Policies and Regulations

II. Assessing Cumulative Impacts

III. Information for Workforce

Policies and Regulations I

- Regulations and standards often become obsolete
  - Discuss basic provision of first aid kits even though many work camps employ paramedics, nurses, and doctors
  - No longer reflect modern designs, heating, and infrastructure in camps

  "It all originates from camps that were 'camps'. The industry has evolved quite a bit." (Participant ID#17)

Policies and Regulations II

- No reporting systems across government(s) that monitor camps
- Unable to track the status (i.e. location, size, operations, and closures)
- Missing links to health care / emergency services
- Few policies guide the construction, use, and decommissioning of work camps

"There's gotta be an exit strategy for sure. There have been instances where people have taken trailers into the woods, set them up and to run a camp that failed. They go bankrupt and disappear. Now you've got propane tanks and equipment out in the middle of nowhere where it's very expensive to bring them back" (Participant ID #24).

Assessing Cumulative Impacts I

- Municipalities, senior gov'ts, and industry use different methodologies to forecast growth
- Industry aligning forecasting methods for production, workforce needs, and impacts through all phases
- But….
- Senior gov'ts do not require industry to provide information to guide program and infrastructure investments
- Delays in studies to address community infrastructure
- No information framework to address cumulative socio-economic issues

"We have a bad intersection in town. People sit for 20/25 minutes trying to pull out. This is a real problem.' So finally, when they got up here and looked at it, our traffic had increased over 70% at that intersection. **That started around 2010 and we are not going to see a signal hanging there until 2016**" (Participant ID #23).

Assessing Cumulative Impacts II

- Infrastructure and program funding based on Census

- Does not capture the shadow population

- CMHC won't track housing figures if town population under 10,000

Assessing Cumulative Impacts III

- Learning curve for local government
  - Prepare local information
- Community connections by industry
  - Understand local context
- Senior governments need to support industry / community information needs and learning

on the move
partnership

"I think it's important that the public sector or local government takes responsibility for compiling information about local businesses and suppliers in the local community and that the oil and gas companies put their money where their mouth is and use those local suppliers and companies" (Participant ID #20).

Workforce Information Needs I

- In host communities, while labour is mobile, services rooted in place
- Standard business hours don't work
- Flexible labour needs flexible service provision
- Identify mobile worker needs and connect with on-site and community supports
  - To assist workers to cope with the stress, anxiety, workplace bullying, and mental health pressures
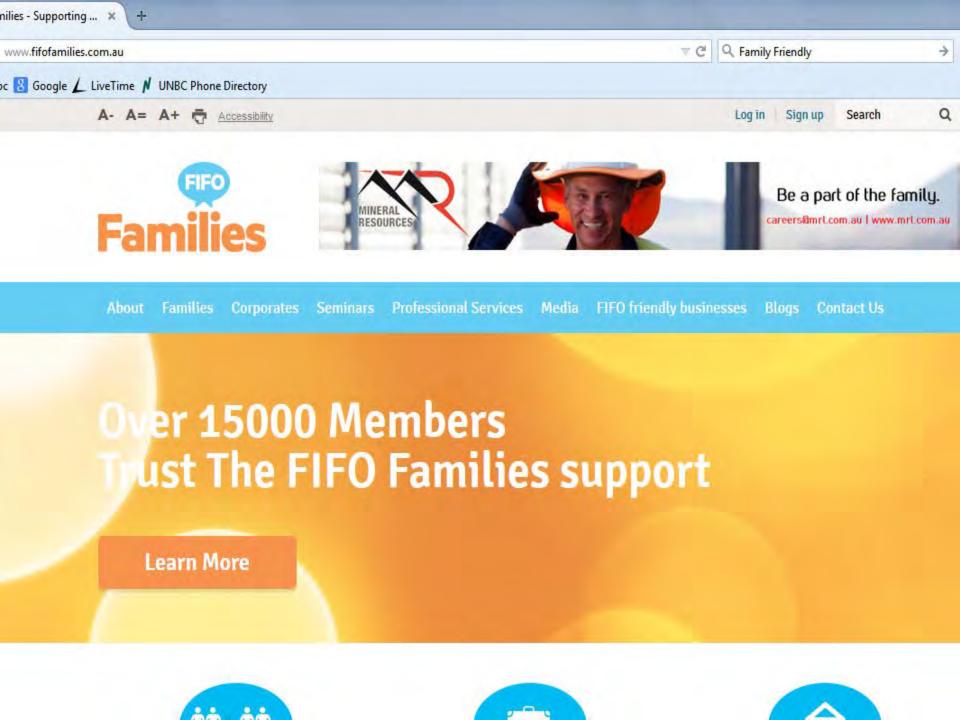
"People say, oh I hate Fort McMurray. And I say why do you hate Fort McMurray? **They say well there isn't even this service or that service.** The best example is they there isn't even a recreation facility for families. And I say have you ever heard of MacDonald Island? They say no. I say do you realize that MacDonald Island is likely Western Canada's or Canada's largest and best recreation facility. They said that they had no idea" (Participant ID #7).
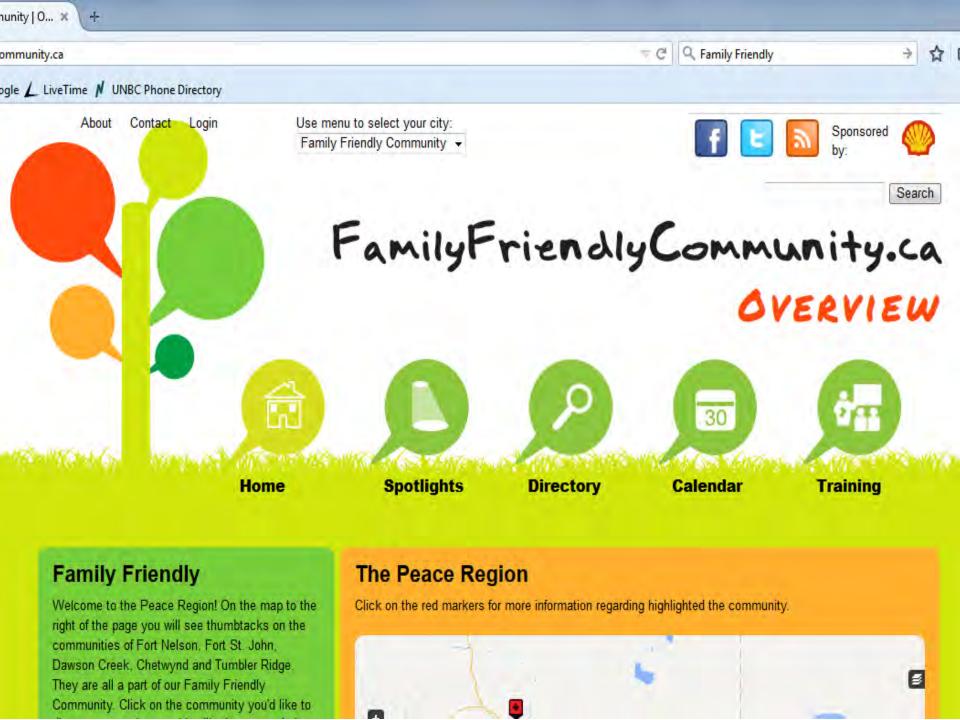
Workforce Information Needs II

Host community best practice:

- Orientation packages and programs
  - Housing, development regulations, businesses / services, cultural protocols, etc.
- On site presentations / barbeques used to connect mobile workers with supports
  - But not common practice
- Need to obtain information about interests, lifestyles, needs of workers and their families
- Invest in information support workers
- Need to strengthen visitor / information centres

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communities of Fort Nelson. Fort St. John,
Dawson Creek. Chetwynd and Tumbler Ridge.
They are all a part of our Family Friendly
Community. Click on the community you'd like to

The Peace Region

Click on the red markers for more information regarding highlighted the community.

Discussion I

- Three decades of restructuring
- Towns now immersed in fluid flows of labour and capital
- Communities and governments share concern about capacity and responsibility

Discussion II

- Readiness is not a one-time investment
  - Need relevant policy and information structures to inform investments and support long-term working relationships
- Policies and information structures have not been retooled / designed to support mobile labour

Discussion III

- Communities, industry and senior governments need to work together to pursue a long-term approach and vision to community and resource development

UNBC **Community Development Institute**

3333 University Way

Prince George, BC, Canada

V2N 4Z9

http://www.unbc.ca/cdi