

Collective Entrepreneurship and Regional Development: Case Study of a New Brunswick Cooperative

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Abstract

In this article, we address the question of regional development by arguing that a new approach motivates government policies at this level. We present the case study of a cooperative representing a strategy of a community trying to better control its socio-economic destiny. By taking charge of its destiny and influencing the rules that will preside over its socio-economic development, the community (including employees) is thus able to influence the orientation of its development according to the larger needs of the community. In other words, an opportunity is created to define socio-economic development according not only to economic demands, but also to cultural and social ones within the community. Many situations present themselves on the continuum that goes from strictly private entrepreneurship that first and foremost satisfies the needs of the owners, to collective entrepreneurship geared towards serving the association of workers and the community's interests. Our case study demonstrates the role played by the mobilization of certain social actors in the community, in the creation of a collective enterprise. It also shows how the conditions of this entrepreneurial effort may prevent the redefinition of economic rules that would not easily allow a development based, at least in part, on the larger demands of the community.