



# Our Social Foundations: The Governance Challenge

Presentation to 2004 APEX Symposium

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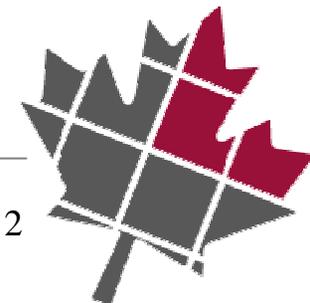
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# Where We Are

- Our social foundations are not sound today
- Because Canada has changed. Our programs, policies and institutions have not adapted --
  - Do not reflect the social risks of the 2000s
  - Based on 1960s principles and views of social need
  - Eroded by a decade of cuts / redefinitions



# New Social Risks (1)

- New family structures
  - More lone parents, fewer children, more years of study, increasing time crunch, ageing, new family types, etc
- New patterns of work and income
  - Most mothers work, income inequality rising since 1995, more 24/7 shifts, access to training expensive
  - 2 mn adults work for < \$10/hour and 1.7 mn people are on Social Assistance



# New Social Risks (2)

- New community challenges
  - High concentrations of poverty, especially for new immigrants, visible minorities, and urban Aboriginals + lack of affordable housing and weak infrastructure
  - Cities and communities lack resources to cope
- New governance challenges
  - Weak capacity to build and maintain partnerships
  - Lack of holistic, integrated service delivery
  - Short-term costs trump long-term investments and prevention



# Managing the New Risks

- All these changes interact:
  - Lone parents/others earn low wages, lack housing and community services, live in poor neighbourhoods, depend on failing infrastructure
- The economic constraints don't worry me as much as the frailty of our governance
- To help people manage these risks, Canada will have to mobilize the energy of all governments, business, community organizations, and the public
- All have a role to play in our governance



# The Governance Challenge

- Learn how to do effective multi-level government
  - Federal-provincial-territorial plus Aboriginals plus cities
  - Will help to rebuild trust
- Rebalance the roles of public and private actors to lever the strengths of each
- Empower public servants to strengthen communities by delivering integrated services, working with local leadership
- Give citizens (not just stakeholders) a role in policy discussion



# Strengthen Communities

- They need public and private partners
- For governments, this means
  1. Delegating authority to local reps so they can be responsive and decisive
  2. Integrating service delivery across ministries so local reps can choose from a menu of possibilities to meet local needs
  3. Strengthen non-profits by creating appropriate financing and accountability options
    - e.g. Voluntary Sector Accord ++;
    - Social Economy ++



# Give Citizens a Role

- Democratic renewal must go beyond electoral reform and better inter-governmental relations
  - Empower MPs to be channels of citizens' voice
  - Support deliberative forums where citizens can learn in more depth and work together to provide policy advice, create the ethical and values framework
  - Recognize the role of non-profits in civic engagement, representing vulnerable people
  - Give citizens opportunities to engage, based on objective information – through third party public monitoring of progress in meeting government goals



# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Governance

- Electoral reform is only one piece of the puzzle
  - With a highly educated population, instant communications, and declining deference to authority, governance becomes multi-layered, multi-sectoral
- Good governance requires a constant process of policy learning by leaders + public learning by citizens
- Public servants will be the key resource to make this happen – engaging citizens, building partnerships, making innovations in governance





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