



## *Doing the Planning, Research, & Advocacy*

**C**ED is not merely an organized strategy of selected substantive development tools like business creation, housing development, credit arrangements, etc., each of which requires specialized thought and effort. CED is also a working process, which requires its own set of tools: organizing a lead group (the CEDO), strategic planning, data collection on local businesses, creating partnerships, etc. So this class of CED tools also requires specialized effort and thought. The CEDOs that have evolved the best practices in CED have created specific and effective means for putting these elements of Planning, Research, and Advocacy into place.

Among the tools described in this topic heading are a set that embody the procedures by which an effective organization or institution is mobilized or designed to conduct and manage an overall CED program. This set can be grouped under the sub-topic Organizational Development. They include the procedure of getting the community to coalesce around a picture of the sort of future that they seek (community visioning). Then there is the task of constructing a strategic plan to get to that future. Ultimately there is the task of shaping the lead organization, or CEDO, to take responsibility to see that the CED strategy is carried out.

Another set of process tools deals with discovering and recording for later mobilization exactly what assets the community already has. These are presented under the sub-topic Inventory and Mapping of Community/Regional Assets. Basic to these tools is a perspective, as stressed by the seminal CED spokesperson John McKnight, which insists that the most empowering of community-building programs will start from concentrating on assets, not on problems or needs.

To repeat, the effective deployment of a CED strategy requires that some local group accept responsibility first for designing it to fit local conditions and then for using it effectively. Depending upon the stage of local evolution of the CED process, that organization may actually be an existing group that is a CEDO or it could be any other group that accepts the task, like a Kiwanis Club or a municipal government agency. Further, it may be that some tools in the strategy were used some years previously and the relevant information not kept up to date. Thus, they would have to be re-deployed. In fact, information gathering is a good first stage of the CED process, and herein is described the major information-gathering activities.

## *Tools & Techniques*

Besides those addressed here, there can be many other planning, research, and advocacy tasks to be carried out in a systematic way at different stages of a community's efforts. Among these might be Labour Market Surveys and Input-Output Analyses, just to take a couple of examples. A subsequent edition of *Tools & Techniques* will expand on these. For now, we begin with the key tool, the CEDO itself.