

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES OF DAY

PROGRAM

Abstract

This applied thesis project describes a variety of projects that were organized and implemented during a Peace Corps Fellow (PCF) Community Economic Development

Essentially, the PCF was hired to create a more professional planning presence in local communities. The PCF did this by working to increase the social capital in communities—that is the willingness of local residents to volunteer their time, physical

(Putnam 1995, 67)

Social capital has been defined as the “local networks, norms and social trust” in a community that forms a basis for community development (Putnam 1995, 67).

Communities with high levels of social capital are better able to recruit volunteers and generate revenue to complete local development projects because there is a shared feeling

(Putnam 1995, 67)

This applied thesis project documents an innovative response to the needs of rural South Dakota. It draws on the demonstrated skills, education and experience of a PCF who is well equipped to train local residents and coordinate community projects.