Putting the Challenge in Perspective: Lessons Learned from Coal Communities Across the Country

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November 21, 2019
University of Illinois Extension Webinar
About Us

Jack Morgan
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"We need to be prepared for the future, because we don’t know what the future holds for the coal industry."

Rich Fink, former coal miner and retired Armstrong County, PA Commissioner
Coal-reliant counties and regions are setting their own visions for the future
Change Inspires Creativity
No one is coming to save your community – but you have the tools to do it!
A National Issue

Credit: National Association of Counties
Resilience: The ability of a region or community to anticipate, withstand, and bounce back from shocks, disruptions, and stresses including:

- Weather-related disasters or hazards / Impacts of climate change
- The closure of a large employer or military base
- The decline of an important industry
- Changes in workforce / effects of automation
- Demographic shifts
- Much more...
Resilience: The New Normal
from NADO

Resilient Regions & Communities are well prepared to RESPOND & RECOVER.
Why Regional Resilience?

- Nearby communities often share similar risks/hazards
- Disaster impacts cross jurisdictional boundaries
- Communities are interdependent
  Vulnerabilities in one community could impact another.
  Mitigation investments in one community could impact another (positively or negatively).
- Economies are regional in nature
- Communities can accomplish more when they work together
What is Economic Diversification?

Refers to regions with “a varied mix of industries and the absence of dominance of any one industry in terms of employment or income.”

Economic Diversity can vary by:

**WHAT?** A region’s goods and services

**HOW?** A region’s talent base

**WHY?** A region’s suppliers and customers
Places that successfully diversify their economy tend to…

- **Leverage state, federal, private resources**
  - Not Just $$
  - Continuously seek resources to close gaps

- **Maintain and Build Local Capacity**
  - Among staff and community leaders

- **Incorporate a broad array of perspectives**
  - Think regionally
  - Look and work beyond their own silos (Traditional ED v. Other ED approaches)
Places that successfully diversify their economy tend to…

- **Do their research**
  - Honestly assess their strengths and weaknesses
  - Understand external opportunities and threats
  - Learn from other places

- **Make planning an ongoing process**
  - Planning allows for intentionality
  - Builds regional consensus
  - Integrates new leaders
  - Provides accountability
And it’s about Home-Grown Innovators: Small & Local is Good!

1) Local is Good
   More Jobs
   Less Poverty

2) Smaller is Better
   Small Firms > Large Firms
How Do We Get Entrepreneurial and Inclusive?

The Ingredients

- Self-Belief
- Access to Ideas
- Relevant Skills
- A Playing Field for Innovators
## The eight capitals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The capital</th>
<th>The definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>The existing stock of skills, understanding, physical health and mental wellness in a region’s people.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intellectual</td>
<td>The existing stock of knowledge, resourcefulness, creativity and innovation in a region’s people, institutions, organizations and sectors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>The existing stock of trust, relationships and networks in a region’s population.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>The existing stock of traditions, customs, ways of doing, and world views in a region’s population.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>The existing stock of natural resources—for example, water, land, air, plants and animals—in a region’s places.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Built</td>
<td>The existing stock of constructed infrastructure—for example, buildings, sewer systems, broadband, roads—in a region’s places.</td>
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<td>Political</td>
<td>The existing stock of goodwill, influence and power that people, organizations and institutions in the region can exercise in decision-making.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>The existing stock of monetary resources available in the region for investment in the region.</td>
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Explore Multiple Forms of Wealth in Your Region

It’s More than Just Jobs!
What’s Happening in Coal Communities Across the Country?

Short Answer: A lot!
Southwest Virginia
West Virginia
Eastern Kentucky
Wyoming
Utah
Western Colorado
Southeastern Montana
Northern Arizona
Honoring the past while still looking to the future…

Kentucky Coal Museum, Benham, KY

Lessons from coal communities in Germany
Key Actions to Support Economic Diversification

Cooperate
Observe
Adapt
Leverage
The Cheat Sheet: Final Thoughts

**Do It Yourself!**
While federal and state governments may provide resources, the future of the region belongs to its residents.

**Regionalism works.**
Economic activity does not respect political boundaries – neither should economic adjustment activity.

**Thinks Assets, Not Gaps.**
Assess full range of local assets and build strategies to catalyze them.

**No Secrets!**
Communications and transparency are vital to create community trust and attract investment.

**Execute in the Short-term/Plan for the Long-term.**
Effective short-term plans to “stop the bleeding” build local trust and buy-in for longer-term efforts. Early wins help!

**Hit for Singles, Not Home Runs.**
Immediately serving affected workers is necessary. But, the goal must be to diversify local/regional economies.
Resources from NACo and NADO RF

GROWING STRONGER ECONOMIES IN OUR NATION’S COAL COMMUNITIES

A Bi-weekly Update from the National Association of Counties and the National Association of Development Organizations

STRENGTHENING ECONOMIES IN THE WEST
Coal-Reliant Communities Challenge

DENVER, COLORADO
MAY 15th-19th, 2019

RESOURCES FOR TRANSITIONING ECONOMIES
www.diversifyeconomies.org
THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO INVEST IN WHEN RESOURCES ARE UNCERTAIN ARE PEOPLE'S IMAGINATIONS, PASSION, AND COMMITMENT.

IF YOU HAVE THAT, YOU CAN FIGURE OUT HOW TO REACT AND RESPOND AT ANY MOMENT.

Janera Solomon