

Collective Intervention Strategies for Intervention by the Economic

Yvan Comeau, Tenured Professor
Université Laval
Québec, Qc
yvan.comeau@svs.ulaval.ca

Summary

This paper presents collective intervention strategies that promote the creation and development of democratic economic initiatives focusing on integration by the economic.

Integration by the economic aims at sustainable social and professional integration from a standpoint of democratization, social cohesion and the well-being of individuals, with the help of entrepreneurial, group-oriented activities useful to a community. One may consider an intervention through integration by the economic as the outcome of a process resulting, on the one hand, from the influence exerted by structural phenomena which, as the case may be, favour and limit intervention and, on the other hand, strategic managing by players and groups associated with the initiative. The author has identified three types of strategies associated with integration by the economic: interpretative (analysis of local context, education, persuasion), institutional (institutionalization, conflicting cooperation, renewal of community initiatives) and organizational (mobilization of resources, creation of a consensus-building support organization).

Collective Intervention Strategies for Integration by the Economic

Introduction

This paper proposes a categorization for collective intervention strategies encouraging integration by the economic. The presentation is based on several empirical reports consisting of research studies exploring associations and cooperatives, observations of cooperative educational activities, discussion groups and interviews with professionals involved in integration by the economic.¹

The question of strategy is completely relevant in the field of intervention in general, and totally so in the field of professional integration, in particular. According to several authors (Checkoway, 1995; Weil, 1996, cited by Raber and Richter, 1999), the importance of intervention strategies has been largely demonstrated, with practitioners also acknowledging their vital contribution to the success of their interventions. However, intervention strategies are low on the agenda in the initial training afforded practitioners. Although they evolve in restrictive contexts with few resources, their methods of response to situations remain reactive at best.

Following presentation of the context leading players from different countries to opt for integration by the economic, the paper defines this type of intervention. Then the concept of intervention strategy is considered from the standpoint of Anthony Giddens' theory of structuration and Alain Touraine's actionalism. This conceptual framework makes it possible to distinguish interpretative, institutional and organizational strategies, which are then identified and explained.

Elements of Context Favourable to the Dissemination of Integration by the Economic

The perception that integration by the economic can fight poverty and exclusion, and promote a type of development other than new liberalism, is the result of circumstances involving structural and interpretive phenomena, to employ the terms of Giddens' theory of structuration (1997). Social and economic change at the end of the twentieth century, the limitations of the welfare state which banked on public assistance and intervention centered on

manpower qualifications rather than job creation, and promising experiments carried out by popular social economics² movements explain why integration by the economic gradually built up a field of intervention between 1985 and 2000. Let us examine more closely each of these phenomena.

In terms of social change, a capitalist information society began emerging in the mid 1970s as a result of three totally unrelated events that occurred simultaneously: a major economic crisis and restructuring, the technological revolution and affirmation of new social movements. Interaction between these phenomena produced a social structure characterized by networks, an information-oriented global economy and a virtual reality culture (Castels, 2000b). This society organized production according to the principles of maximization of productivity based on knowledge, use and development of information technologies and the implementation of infrastructures to apply these technologies (Castels, 2000a). If this New Economy produced wealth on the one hand, it also increased inequality, on the other hand, by excluding a significant aspect of economic and social life (Ramonet, 1998; Castels, 2000a). The delocalization of businesses, the decline of economic activity, the exodus of youth and the deterioration of infrastructures affected entire neighbourhoods and territories. Exclusion now became one of the social risks facing the middle class (Beck, 2001) and threatening less qualified individuals bypassed by production, consumption, social relations and influence networks (Castel, 1995).

Interventions inherited from the post-war period proved futile in confronting these new territorial situations of poverty and exclusion. The latter

were anchored in a providential, financial logic based solely on government assistance focusing more on people seeking jobs than on job creation itself. From a financial point of view, staggering increases in the number of welfare recipients at the end of the 1970s prompted governments to experiment with programs aimed at reinforcing the desire to work, even obliging people to work in exchange for welfare benefits now subject to new conditions. In addition to lack of available jobs for unskilled labour, conditional benefits were in line with a new outlook termed *workfare*³, triggering mounting opposition from social movements. This caused some governments to slowly begin to evince overtone to alternatives that might offset exclusion while promoting salaried work for insertion.

The other drawback associated with these interventions was that they focused on manpower supply (stressing the skills and qualifications of the jobless) and very little on manpower demand (number of jobs offered). Accordingly, until the end of the 1980s, there was an emergence of social practices in favour of insertion: community services, psychosocial and consciousness-raising approaches⁴. In education, during the same era, there were at least three types of intervention to fight exclusion and poverty: development of employability, qualifications and entrepreneurial training⁵. There were many advantages to be gained from these interventions, but also some limitations: tentative efforts at job creation and the tendency of some interventions to individualize the unemployment problem and center on the professional dimension of exclusion. The social dimension, territorial aspects and institutional dynamics of exclusion and poverty were often part of the analysis, but not always sufficiently integrated in the intervention.

Faced with disadvantages and deadlocks prompted by these interventions, practitioners and associations created social innovations spearheading collective ways of thinking, doing things and consuming, breaking with former practices that were embraced optimistically by other players and institutions (Chambon, David and Devevey, 1982; Bouchard et al., 1999).

Backed by the State, some communities progressively developed a mainstay of collective social and economic initiatives resulting from the integration by the economic approach.

Integration by the Economic

Integration by the economic refers to a type of integration complementary to other types of integration, and aims at sustainable integration from a standpoint of democratization, social cohesion and the wellbeing of individuals, with the help of entrepreneurial, group-oriented activities useful to a community. This approach to integration groups together a wide range of practices underlying the tradition of social economics that took root in the nineteenth century and resulted from a communal or united orientation in local development. In this type of collective intervention, groups are supported and allowed to build networks in the community. They are encouraged to help each other, mobilize resources, bring people and the community to change in response to needs and achieve greater social justice (Henderson, 2000). To this effect, integration by the economic can improve a population's wellbeing in terms of economics (jobs represent a sustainable means of doing away with poverty, and the production of accessible goods and services is likely to improve living conditions), politics (democracy is likely to impart power to users, consumers and salaried producers) and culture (the development model proposed is founded in democracy, justice and solidarity).

This social and economic approach to integration by the economic encompasses five kinds of initiatives (Ninacs, 1996):

- Self-help economic groups are initiatives lacking legal status that are based on the mutual support of the group. They include buying groups, service exchange networks and group kitchens. There are 500 group kitchens in Quebec (Fréchette, 2000) where people gather together to prepare menus on a monthly basis that are shared according to the number of mouths to feed in a household;
- Public program initiatives consist of a variety of self-sufficient organ-

izations receiving a large portion of their resources from the State and offering social and professional integration services. These organizations provide physical locations for women, immigrants and young people to define life or work projects, learn how to look for a job or create their own job. Among other things, this category encompasses job integrations agencies (Assogba, 2000) and community and residential centres for people experiencing personal difficulties and needing a down period to rebuild their lives;

- Integration businesses are authentic businesses whose goal consists of the social and professional integration of persons experiencing difficulties through the exercise of one or more economic activities. Through its global insertion approach, the integration business becomes a teaching aid offering the reality of contract work and space and time to build a life project which may encourage participants to seek better qualifications (Bordeleau, 1997);
- Community businesses are cooperatives established to provide jobs and decent living conditions for workers, and goods or services of use to the community. This type of initiative includes work cooperatives grouping together individuals who establish and manage an organization based on the principles of cooperation. They participate in a general assembly that decides coop orientations based on the principle of "one person, one vote." Work cooperatives strive to develop rewarding jobs and advocate maintaining jobs during difficult economic periods. Many community businesses are non-profit organizations;
- Intermediaries are at the crossroads of partnership, joint action and participation within a given territory. This category encompasses community economic development corporations that allow different local players to pool their resources to revitalize a neighbourhood, offer training and technical assistance in the establishment of cooperative businesses and facilitate access to

credit through initial financial contributions from local development funds (Favreau, 1994). These funds consist of real local savings originating from caisses populaires, municipalities, businesses and the population (Servet, 1999).

There are different levels of requirements inherent in initiatives involving integration by the economic for excluded individuals and intervening parties. In the case of excluded individuals, participation in a self-help economic group such as a group kitchen, for example, involves less commitment in terms of time and resources than the creation of a collective business with a strong presence on the market, as is the case with most cooperatives.

The Concept of Intervention Strategies

Generally speaking, an intervention strategy represents both the art and science of orchestrating resources in order to attain certain objectives. It involves co-production with partners (Gadrey, 1994), a thinking process, an approach to action and a correlation of means directed at a desired option. An intervention strategy involves arranging choices in order, considering their progression and synchronization within the given context, and their proper implementation. An intervention strategy must demonstrate an anticipatory capacity, the development of alternatives and the achievement of results (Checkoway, 1995). An intervention strategy differs from a tactic in that it is deployed on the long term and is the result of an action plan developed in accordance with the group's orientation, goals to achieve and obstacles to overcome; tactics represent special means to implement the strategy (Home, 1991).

By combining social and economic dimensions, integration by the economic seeks to recreate the social fabric and improve the living conditions of people within a given territory. Therefore, integration by the economic reacts to local economic and social degradation from a global perspective, allowing a community to acquire the resources needed to take control of its destiny and launch a revitalization process within the territory.

Giddens' (1997) theory of structuration situates intervention strategies within a general explanatory framework of social and economic phenomena by drawing on the broad paradigms of sociology. On the one hand, the theory of structuration considers the existence of political, economic and organizational structural phenomena that are forced, to a certain extent, on players without the players' always being able to completely grasp their effect. Structural phenomena are primarily symbolic instructions imposed by the greater or lesser recognition they impart to integration by the economic (for example, the value assigned a private initiative as opposed to a group initiative); structural phenomena also involve political and economical institutions that more or less restrict access to resources for integration by the economic (public programs supporting integration by the economic initiatives, among other things); finally, legal institutions are responsible for providing, or not providing, legitimacy afforded to the choice of integration by the economic (notably, recognition by law).

On the other hand, there are aspects of strategic action taken by players that favour the emergence and expansion of collective activities typical to integration by the economic. The strategic capabilities of players are acknowledged here, but within certain limitations: they are never completely informed of the context and are unaware of all the consequences of their actions.

If structural phenomena condition players' conduct, players may in turn have an effect on the former, because their actions can change representations and the manner in which constraints and standards are implemented. Indeed, structural phenomena involve both a context and the resulting effects of reflexive and interactive phenomena; then again, reflexive and interactive phenomena are reconstituted, to a certain extent, into structural phenomena. In this respect, social movements can lead to significant changes in the direction development may take because they express the demands of dominated social classes, provide them with a source of identity and challenge certain social institutions (Touraine, 1993).

The more or less innovative nature of reflexive and interactive phenomena is dependant on the method of structuration implemented. Indeed, the study of the structuration of social systems imparts special attention to methods of structuration and interpretation patterns in particular. Interpretation patterns are methods of representation and classification inherent in people's wealth of knowledge. The extent of knowledge and information comprising interpretation patterns depends on communication, in the strict sense of the word, between players and groups. Resources mobilized by players and groups provide them with the ability to create and act otherwise (power) in order to influence integration. The possibility of promoting certain rights and obligations, as well as making sanctions null and void, can lead to new norms being implemented.

This outlook concurs somewhat with that of Touraine (1993). In his opinion, sociological analysis involves at least two fundamental dimensions: institutional and organizational (Touraine, 1993: 58-67). The institutional dimension refers to the "political system" that allows the transformation of historic activities and conflicts "into a corpus of decisions and laws" and "mechanisms ending in legitimate decisions" (Touraine, 1993: 59). In this sense, group intervention and action seek to resolve differences existing between aspirations and unfulfilled needs on the one hand and institutionalized rules prevailing in a society on the other. The institutional component privileges relations between players leading to recognition of political pressures abounding in the field of integration. The organizational dimension concerns the "system of means" and "techniques" (Touraine, 1993: 62), in other words, means to produce activities and services encouraging integration. Although relatively independent, the organizational dimension is influenced by institutions seen as the synthesis of conflict in which players on the fringes and those within the field of integration are engaged. In this sense, even if the organizational component is relatively independent, it is in large part determined by institutional phenomena. Concretely, the organizational compo-

nent concerns means implemented by the intervention to achieve integration goals. These are mainly phenomena with an impact on financial and human resources, the coordination of activities and the production and consumption of goods and services.

In light of the preceding, aligning collective intervention strategies might ultimately limit the ability to proceed with their conceptualisation. Three types of strategies emerge from this theoretical perspective: interpretative, institutional and organizational. Interpretative strategies refer directly to interpretation patterns as a means of structuration in the field of integration. Institutional strategies concern relative changes to standards (rules and customs) that serve as the framework of integration by the economic. Organizational strategies concern resources mobilized by integration. The

following singles out strategies possibly belonging to these three categories where integration by the economic is concerned. Each group of strategies is presented on the basis of challenges that may be faced by the intervention⁶. Each refers to already proven means applied in situations of integration by the economic.

Interpretive Strategies

Interpretive strategies in integration by the economic consist of ways of voluntarily developing means to change the methods of representation and classification inherent in the knowledge base of players involved in integration by the economic, and the knowledge base of their opponents and other parties. Our analyses led to the identification of three interpretive strategies: analysis of the local context, education and persuasion.

A first interpretive strategy concerns the *analysis of the local context* in order to understand several parameters central to the intervention. First, this strategy encourages the detection of existing situations that might exacerbate an economic recession. The economic recession in the early 1980s led to a need for emergency action on the job market, even more so since unemployment was hitting persons who had considered themselves impervious to such a situation because they were educated or specialized workers. Some populated city neighbourhoods experienced deterioration over a long period of time during the 1950s to 1980s following demolitions and the displacement of families to the suburbs. The economic recession also forced the State to curb social spending and even resort to budget constraints. The social makeup of some neighbourhoods led to

Summary of Intervention Strategies in Integration by the Economic and Their Connection with Structural Phenomena

	Order Phenomena...		
	Interpretive	Institutional	Organizational
Structural Phenomena	Liberal development model Concealment of the stakes in relation to exclusion and poverty Low education levels and deskilling of the population and the promoters Controversies surrounding integration by the economic	Indifference of authorities Ambivalence of State intervention Disagreement among social movements with respect to integration by the economic Disintegration of the social fabric Collapse of collective initiatives	Low population concentration Poor rural territory Very small number of associations Dispersal and squandering of resources
	↑ ↓	↑ ↓	↑ ↓
Intervention Strategies	Analysis of the local context Education (of the public, concerning the creation and consolidation of collective economic initiatives) Persuasion (in matters regarding diagnosis, prognosis and motivation)	Institutionalization (territorial and sectorial) Conflicting cooperation Renewal of collective economic initiatives through internal institutional change	Mobilization of resources Creation of a consensus-building support organization

the need for special homecare among the elderly, for example, or job integration for women and young people. Therefore, an analysis of local context first helps pinpoint requirements that might generate a need for action.

Secondly, analysis of the local context allows assessment of the effort required for collective economic initiatives to emerge and grow. Indeed, practitioners involved in integration by the economic acknowledge that some situations are more demanding than others, owing to the existence of certain phenomena⁷: the presence of associations already within the territory that normally serve as the foundation for the emergence and dissemination of integration by the economic; geographic population concentration that facilitates players' involvement and cooperation; and, the openness of local political authorities. In addition, organizations in poor rural regions risk having fewer human and financial resources than organizations in urban, even underprivileged, settings⁸.

Education is the second interpretive strategy that cannot be overlooked in integration by the economic. Education can influence means of representation and classification in people's knowledge base and their habits in order to structure economic organizations differently from capitalist entities and make them conform, insofar as possible, to principles of integration by the economic. This strategy can remove obstacles such as popular resistance to an innovative intervention, drawbacks experienced by collective entrepreneurs in terms of competency on the job market, knowledge usually acquired through job experience and education, and networks of contacts.

An empirical⁹ approach involves three types of educational practices in social economics: educating the public, educating in implementation and educating in consolidation. As regards educating the public, targeted goals are rather limited, and the learning method of choice is media dissemination and activities bordering on leisure pursuits. The main advantage of this practice is that by referring to exemplary achievements, it fosters joint action between organizations backed by different social movements and supports players in

integration by the economic whose actions may be at cross purposes with new liberalism.

Education in the creation of a social economics initiative allows individuals to learn about associations, prepare business plans, market products or services and launch production operations, among other things¹⁰. In this type of education in social economics, learning methods are exceedingly varied, and education through action aims at solving unusual problems such as implementing a learning method based on discovery.

Education in consolidation is introduced when projects effectively drift away from the democratic ideal and degenerate, meaning they lose their democratic, participative dimension as a result of control by a handful of individuals whose decision-making is motivated solely by economic considerations (Meister, 1974; Batstone, 1983; Cornforth et al., 1988). Therefore, one should expect interventions to consolidate or regenerate projects experiencing a democratic drift. Regeneration develops participation, increases economic performance and improves the operations of social and economic projects originating as a result of integration by the economic. Regeneration includes an interpretive strategy (education) and an institutional strategy (regeneration through institutional change – refer to the section on institutional strategies). A diagnosis of problems affecting the project will determine the choice between training and organizational change, or opting for both alternatives.

Persuasion represents the third interpretive strategy. Practitioners resort to this strategy because the kind of development advocated by integration by the economic clashes with the liberal approach to development. Moreover, like other approaches to integration, it is the object of public controversy and disagreement among social movements and integration proponents. In such a context, proponents rallying with other players in favour of integration by the economic set in motion a "*framing process*" (proposed by Benford and Snow, 2000) in order to promote their approach. There are three steps in the establishment of a collective interpretation proposal: the diagnosis (problem of

improper development); the prognosis (solutions and means to implement); and motivation (arguments for mobilization).

Therefore, persuasion employed as an interpretive strategy first surmises a quality demonstration of the need for integration by the economic. The analysis of the position of proponents of integration by the economic reveals that they raise social issues such as poverty, exclusion and unequal development (Boulianne et Comeau, 2001). Generally, information originating from different sources (colleagues, sectorial and territorial groups, researchers) represents the source material of the diagnosis to promote. Secondly, persuasion involves the ability to promote proven solutions envisioned for integration by the economic. Naming the development approach supported (integration by the economic, in this case)¹¹ and showcasing achievements produced by integration by the economic and its capacity for achieving results¹² serve to justify action and persuade opponents and fence sitters. Proponents direct specific arguments at recalcitrant players: complementarity of integration by the economic with conflicting strategies of social movements, wide range of dimensions considered in integration by the economic and progress of various social and economic indicators.

Thirdly, persuasion rests on the development and maintained mobilization of players involved in integration by the economic. Parties acknowledge that players' choices are based on different kinds of rationalities (Weber, 1995): instrumental, affective, traditional and ethic¹³. Practitioners are also aware that people involved in integration by the economic experience a sense of accomplishment associated with economic (project becoming reality, offering a service, profitability and expansion of an organization, job integration and improvement in working conditions); social (having provided recognized training, having had a significant impact on an individual's development, bridging the gap between generations or players, fulfilling needs); political (causing the State to adopt a policy or standard); and personal (for example, having succeeded in overcoming a challenge) achievement. These

people become convincing and enduring militants of the cause for integration by the economic.

Institutional Strategies

Institutional strategies involve ways of combining means to establish a community setting favourable to integration by the economic and introducing an internal political system for collective initiatives that is democratic and participative. Institutionalization, conflicting cooperation and renewal of collective economic initiatives through internal institutional change are three institutional strategies emerging from empirical studies.

As an institutional strategy, *institutionalization* designates a dissemination and codification process of principles and rules applying to integration by the economic in different locations or instances. One must remember that institutions embody written codifications or accepted behaviour, routines, rules, standards and laws that govern social relations and shape interaction, making behaviour predictable. Touraine confers dynamic impetus to institutions: they correspond to a political system dominated by class relations; in other words, they are the "location where a field of action is transformed into an organization" (Touraine, 1993: 212). Through their mediating role, institutions produce decisions and rules applying to certain realms of society. Institutions provide impetus to act or not to act because of constraints and sanctions supporting compliance with rules; however, institutions also represent a place for reform and may be sensitive to the actions of "institutional players", in particular players involved in integration by the economic.

Institutionalization is a key factor because of the relationships that are established between State and integration by the economic initiatives. Owing to the complex nature of its functions, the State is in turn "integrating", "repressive" and an "agent of social change" (Touraine, 1993: 221), attempting to "unite opposing and contradictory factions" (p. 241) and "masking the tensions of past systems of action, class conflicts and political relations" (p. 242). Approaches are presented in

ambiguous and contradictory fashion. On the one hand, the position may consist of a form of recognition of integration by the economic, but policies and support programs may appear inadequate to proponents of integration by the economic, rightly raising mistrust of the State, even if the latter's support is vital to the dissemination of integration by the economic. In spite of such ambiguity, institutionalization may represent an opportunity to integrate a variety of practices within a group of rules with a measure of permanence, granting autonomy to these practices rather than spontaneous practices, establishing formal relations with the rest of society and building on the legitimacy of the practices.

Players associated with integration by the economic endorse two kinds of institutionalization: territorial and sectorial. Territorial institutionalization involves the establishment of rules, practices and partnership configurations conducive to integration by the economic in a territory. Sectorial institutionalization refers to a particular field of activities. Concretely, institutionalization takes the following forms:

- grouping together of projects or collective initiatives into a federation allowing promoters to establish themselves as spokespersons before local and national governments;
- capitalization, in particular of immoveable assets;
- garnering an exclusive market segment (for example, an agreement with a public or private partner);
- formal recognition of rights or obligations in a charter, policy, contract or legal declaration.

Conflicting cooperation represents the second institutional strategy. It designates coexistence between joint action and partnership on the one hand, pressure and demands on the other hand, and a junction with players espousing differing points of view concerning the pertinence of these actions. The justification underlying the strategy of conflicting cooperation is twofold. First, there are various obstacles linked to government programs, the market, and mentalities impeding project realization. Removal of these barriers sometimes requires local mobilization of

pressure tactics. Secondly, social movements diverge in their opinion of integration by the economic. More demanding social movements criticize integration by the economic initiatives insisting that too much income is obtained from marketing services which should be offered free of charge to the population. In their opinion, the State should be solely responsible for funding and offering these services, and for the poor working conditions of employees – for the most part women – in projects based on integration by the economic.

At least four comments may be made concerning the complementarity of these practices (pressure and cooperation). First, integration by the economic is not solely the result of consensus – even if consensus is the sustaining factor of its operation – it is also the result of conflict. Secondly, integration by the economic often associates different organizations that do not relinquish their individuality and autonomy. The cohabitation of players resorting more or less to confrontation and pressure in different issues should not harm the coalition in favour of integration by the economic. Practitioners are aware of the existence of the fundamental right of local communities to participate freely in their development and the right of the most underprivileged citizens to get organized and participate in the social life of their society. Thirdly, support of consensus or conflict depends, of course, on group ideology (Home, 1995), but also on the situation. Political maturity serves to judge if the situation is better adapted to joint action (aggregation of resources, for example), or better adapted to demands (notably, for improved working conditions though more financing). The strategy of conflicting cooperation is anchored in social movements (trade unions, feminist movements, cooperatives and others) and in the establishment of bridges between integration by the economic players and government and financial elite. Fourthly, the resolution of conflict can lead to a dynamic reappraisal, refined strategies and new outlooks that broaden the base of support.

Renewal of collective economic initiatives through internal institutional

change represents the third institutional strategy. We have seen that in interpretive strategies, education in consolidation can, to some extent, encourage the regeneration of collective initiatives. Sometimes internal institutional changes must be made to collective initiatives because the power base is more or less democratic, and the quality of cooperative relations existing in collective initiatives remains the primary reference of internal players. In many collective initiatives showing signs of deterioration, changes in the power base and the organization of work accompany education. From this standpoint, democratic functioning provides a framework for unintentional apprenticeship of the reality of integration by the economic on a daily basis. Institutional changes involve opening membership to new members, the establishment of a new member selection process, a direct control option by members and the broadening of employees' and users' rights through their representation in the decision-making process. Organizational changes may also be deemed pertinent: ethical control of a product of service, enlarging on and enriching tasks, autonomous working parties and teamwork.

Organizational Strategies

Organizational strategies consist of means employed by practitioners and players involved in integration by the economic to produce services and coordinate activities likely to result in the allocation of sufficient resources for the emergence and development of collective economic initiatives. The main organizational strategies used are resource mobilization and the creation of an organization committed to joint action and collective initiatives.

Resource mobilization combines various activities drawing on human, material and financial resources in support of joint action and the emergence of collective initiatives. Activities connected with resource mobilization include:

- information: inventory of available resources;
- organization: the establishment of rational procedures to coordinate the various types of resources;

- negotiation with partisans of integration by the economic to obtain their commitment on the medium term;
- appeals for contributions;
- demands for resources: mobilization of players to table demands with State agencies.

This strategy is vital, given that experiences analyzed and many studies have shown the need for support and advice in the creation of a collective business (Defourny, 1994; Staber, 1993; Cornforth et al., 1988). Collective businesses set up with no form of accompaniment are a rather rare occurrence indeed.

From a human standpoint, integration by the economic is based on the presence of trained practitioners, competent players, experts aware of social and economic issues, community leaders who have established networking with associations through the accumulation of political functions exercised and a variety of organizations providing true partnership efforts. From a financial standpoint, support must be obtained in the form of government financing programs, creation of development funds originating with voluntary local savings initiatives and contributions from businesses, trade unions and financial institutions.

One notes that in certain instances, practitioners prefer to introduce integration by the economic with realistic, modest projects in order to ensure that care is taken in the mobilization of resources (Breton, 1995) and that they are present for the duration of the project. Integration by the economic sometimes emerges as a result of spontaneous and rather loose initiatives taking the shape of committees or issue tables grouping together partners drawn by the devitalized local situation for the purpose of planning and coordinating projects; it is then followed by a public event during which the creation of an organization in support of integration by the economic is announced.

The creation of an organization to spearhead joint action among local players and support social economic initiatives is a phenomenon of singular importance for local development in general (Klein, 1992). This is an intermediate-level organization that seeks to

promote joint action favourable to integration by the economic and that concretely supports the establishment of collective initiatives. Practically speaking, completion of these projects serves to fulfill integration by the economic players' aspirations for territorial revitalization.

Analyses have shown that the success of such an organization is attributable to a number of factors:

- cooperative character of the founders' approach providing the impetus to launch activities;
- adoption of rules encouraging the broadest possible representation of local players (associations, trade unions, public establishments and private companies) and procedures for naming decision-makers;
- ability to marshal resources (development specialists and venture capital corporations, among others);
- dissemination of information and offering of made-to-measure training;
- networking between players who have had little contact with each other or have had antagonistic dealings in the past;
- straightforward coexistence in an environment with other intermediate organizations involved directly or indirectly in collective initiatives.

Conclusion

The review of strategies in this paper was an attempt to highlight several challenges. One of these challenges was to conceptualize intervention by considering the social and economic aspects of integration by the economic. Another challenge consisted of conciliating theory and practice, in other words establishing a bridge between thought and action. We deemed it useful in our analysis to review integration by the economic practices and collective initiatives that endure the test of time and are based on general theories of social sciences (Giddens' theory of structuration and Touriane's actionnalism).

In terms of intervention, integration by the economic involves several strategies that seek to remove obstacles to the creation and development of col-

lective economic initiatives, encourage appropriation of the approach by the excluded in society and marshal resources to achieve these objectives. Given this perspective, strategies discussed in this paper may contribute to the organization of economic activities and their democratic management by both producers and user-consumers.

Efforts to conceptualize intervention strategies in this paper are likely, among other things, to draw attention to theories on collective intervention. In a context of social change, theories on collective intervention must be re-examined because representations, poverty, social policy and scientific knowledge also change. These reasons alone justify the review of intervention strategies, but there is more still. Groups and players face structural and cyclical phenomena such that the end result of interventions in integration, like any other form of intervention, is fraught with a large measure of uncertainty. This is why strategy concerns are likely to decrease the determinism affecting intervention. The crux of strategy concerns resides in information that is as complete as possible prior to taking action and in special attention paid to the study of the consequences of action taken.

Finally, the paper shows the pertinence of research in inspiring the contents of training offered to players and calls for the renewal of this training to introduce strategic aspects. The practice of integration by the economic represents a complex, thought-provoking process. It demands a high level of professional autonomy, an in-depth understanding of the problem of exclusion and poverty, and flexibility. The creation of permanent, territorial and inter-agency premises for reflection and exchange on the renewal of practices may also constitute a singular approach to facing the challenges discussed in this paper.

Bibliography

- Ampleman, G. et alii. (1987). *Pratiques de conscientisation 2*. Québec: Collectif québécois d'édition populaire.
- Ampleman, G. et alii. (1983). *Pratiques de conscientisation*. Montréal: Nouvelle Optique.

- Assogba, Y. (2000). *Organisation communautaire et insertion des jeunes. L'expérience des Carrefours Jeunesse emploi*. Sainte-Foy: Presses de l'Université du Québec.
- Batstone, E. (1983). Organization and Orientation: A Life Cycle Model of French Co-operatives. In *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 4(2), 139-161.
- Beck, U. (2001). *La société du risque*. Paris: Aubier.
- Benford, R. D. & Snow, D. A. (2000). Framing Processes and Social Movements: an Overview and Assessment. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26, 611-639.
- Bordeleau, D. (1997). Entre l'exclusion et l'insertion: les entreprises d'insertion au Québec. En *Économie et Solidarités*, 28(2), 75-93.
- Bouchard, C. et le Groupe de travail sur l'innovation sociale (GTIS). (1999). *Recherche en sciences humaines et sociales et innovations sociales. Contribution à une politique de l'immatériel*. Québec : Gouvernement du Québec.
- Boulianne, M. et Comeau, Y. (2001). Une analyse politique des savoirs d'expérience: le cas de l'organisation communautaire en économie sociale. *Intervention*, 114, 25-34.
- Breton, M. (1995). The Potential for Social Action in Groups. *Social Work with Groups*, 18(2-3), 5-13.
- Castel, R. (1995). *Les métamorphoses de la question sociale. Une chronique du salariat*. Paris: Fayard.
- Castels, M. (2000a). *End of Millenium. Volume I: The Rise of The Network Society*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Castels, M. (2000b). *End of Millenium. Volume III: The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Chambon, J.-L., David, A. et Devevey, J.-M. (1982). *Les innovations sociales*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, Collection Que sais-je.
- Checkoway, B. (1995). Six Strategies of Community Change. *Community Development Journal*, 30(4), 11-29.
- Comeau, Y. (1998). Apports et limites de l'éducation à l'économie sociale. *Cahiers de Recherche en Éducation*, 5(3), 465 à 489.
- Comeau, Y. (2001). La structuration des stratégies du mouvement associatif: l'émergence et la diffusion du développement économique communautaire. In Dorvil, H. et Mayer, R. (dir.), *Problèmes sociaux. Tome 1: Théories et méthodologies* (pp. 335-355). Québec: Presses de l'Université du Québec, Collection problèmes sociaux et interventions sociales.
- Comeau, Y., Turcotte, D., Beaudoin, A., Villeneuve, J.-P., Bouchard, M. J., Lévesque, B., Rondot, S., Mendell, M. (2002). *Les effets du financement étatique sur les organismes communautaires. Le cas du Fonds de lutte contre la pauvreté*. Québec: Éditions Sylvain Harvey.
- Cornforth, C., Thomas, A., Lewis, J. & Spear, R. (1988). *Developing Successful Worker Co-operatives*. London: Sage.
- Defourny, J. (1994). *Développer l'entreprise sociale*. Bruxelles: Fondation du Roi Baudouin.
- Defourny, J. (1992). L'émergence du secteur d'économie sociale en Wallonie. *Coopératives et Développement*, 23(1), 151-175.
- Desroche, H. (1983). *Pour un traité d'économie sociale*. Paris: Coopérative d'information et d'édition mutualiste.
- Favreau, L. (1994). L'économie solidaire à l'américaine: le développement économique communautaire. In Laville, J.-L. (dir.), *L'économie solidaire. Une perspective internationale* (pp. 95-140). Paris: Desclée de Brouwer.
- Fréchette, L. (2000). *Entraide et services de proximité. L'expérience des cuisines collectives*. Sainte-Foy: Presses de l'Université du Québec.
- Gadrey, J. (1994). La modernisation des services professionnels: rationalisation industrielle ou rationalisation professionnelle? *Revue française de sociologie*, 35(2), 163-195.
- Giddens, A. (1997). *The Constitution of Society. Outline of the Theory of Structuration*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Girard, C. (1989). Le Mouvement action-chômage de Montréal: 20 ans de pratique sociale. *Nouvelles*

- Pratiques Sociales*, 2(2), 37-48.
- Henderson, P. (2000). Community Work. In Davies, M. *The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Social Work* (pp. 72-74). Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Home, A. M. (1991). Mobilizing Women's Strengths for Social Change: the Group Connection. *Social Work with Groups*, 14(3-4), 153-173.
- Klein, J. L. (1992). Le partenariat: vers une planification flexible du développement local. *Revue canadienne des sciences régionales*, XV(3), 491-505.
- Lamoureux, H. (1991). *L'intervention sociale collective. Une éthique de la solidarité*. Glen Sutton: Les éditions du Pommier.
- Laville, J.-L. (1994). Économie et solidarité: esquisse d'une problématique. In Laville, J.-L. (dir.), *L'économie solidaire. Une perspective internationale* (pp. 9-89). Paris: Desclée de Brouwer.
- Lefebvre, F. (1995). *Alphabétisation populaire, emploi et après...* Montréal: Regroupement des groupes populaires en alphabétisation du Québec.
- Lévesque, B. et Ninacs, W. (1997). *L'économie sociale au Canada: l'expérience québécoise*. Montréal: Les Publications de l'Institut de formation au développement économique communautaire.
- Meister, A. (1974). *La participation dans les associations*. Paris: Éditions ouvrières.
- Morel, S. (2000). *Les logiques de la réciprocité*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.
- Ninacs, W. (1996). *Le développement économique communautaire au Québec au printemps 1996: éléments de bilan*. Montréal: Institut de formation au développement économique communautaire.
- Raber, M. & Richter, J. (1999). Bringing Social Action Back into the Social Work Curriculum: a Model for Hands-on Learning. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 19(1-2), 77-91.
- Ramonet, I., (1998). Stratégies de la faim. *Le Monde Diplomatique*, 536, 1.
- Schore, L. (1989). Empowering Dislocated Workers in Union-Based Counseling Programs. *Nouvelles Pratiques Sociales*, 2(2), 158-171.
- Servet, J.-M. (dir.) (1999). *Exclusion et liens financiers*. Paris: Economica.
- Staber, U. (1993). Worker Cooperatives and the Business Cycle: Are Cooperatives the Answer to Unemployment?. *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, 52(2), pp. 129-143.
- Stercq, C. (1994). *Alphabétisation et insertion socio-professionnelle*. Bruxelles: DeBoeck Université.
- Sylvestre, C. (1994). *Synthèse des résultats des études d'évaluation en matière de développement de l'employabilité et d'intégration à l'emploi*. Québec: ministère de la Sécurité du revenu.
- Touraine, A. (1993). *La production de la société*. Paris: Seuil.
- Vienney, C. (1994). *L'Économie sociale*. Paris: La Découverte, Collection Repères.
- Vienney, C. (1980). *Socio-économie des organisations coopératives*. Paris: Coopérative d'information et d'édition mutualiste, Tomes 1 et 2.
- Weber, M. (1995). *Économie et société. Tome 1: les catégories de la sociologie*. Paris: Plon.
- ¹This research work took place between 1993 and 2000. It is based on 20 research studies completed using a common grid to collect information, interviews conducted with 17 professionals (Comeau 2001) and two different discussion groups with 24 professionals (Boulianne and Comeau, 2001), and the observation of 15 different training activities grouping together heads of collective initiatives (Comeau, 1998).
- ²In the definition of social economics, university tradition encompasses several points of view. Classical authors (Desroche, 1983; Vienney, 1980 and 1994) and other more recent authors (Defourny, 1992; Laville, 1994) propose criteria to recognize a social economics initiative: legal status, presence of an association, values and the social project (Lévesque and Ninacs, 1997). Thus, social economics designates businesses first in terms of legal status: cooperative, mutual or non-profit company. Secondly, one finds the combination of a group of persons and a business characterized by democratic functioning, determination of business activities by the people, distribution of surpluses and group ownership of reinvested surpluses.
- Thirdly, the economic activity is of the associative type based on values of solidarity, self-reliance and citizenship, the finality of which is services to members or to the community rather than profit. Fourthly, these businesses can draw on a new development model acknowledging the respective place and advantages of social economics, private economics and public economics. If efficiency is a positive characteristic of private economics and redistribution the hallmark of public economics, social economics encourages democracy through the presence of users/consumers and professionals/producers in decision-making positions, and espouses activities of reciprocity because they integrate economic activities that include sales, monetary activities other than sales (public financing and donations) and non-monetary activities (volunteer work).
- ³As a state initiative for marginalized individuals, *workfare* targets categories of people, relies on constraint, focuses solely on professional aspects and operates under the aegis of administrative logic; this is the American approach. The punitive aspect of conditional benefits saps individual motivation, because it fuels the guilt and deprecation associated with public assistance. The insertion approach is transversal, centering on the social and professional steps of empowerment, counting on the solidarity of community partners and adopting a logic based on integration; this is the French approach (Morel, 2000).
- ⁴The community services approach centers on help with immediate needs or custom-oriented information on government programs (Girard, 1989). The psychosocial approach allows the expression of difficulties experienced in a situation of exclusion and the reconstruction of a social network (Schore, 1989). The consciousness-raising approach aims at developing a balance of power with the state in the definition of social policy (Ampleman et al, 1983 and 1987). These intervention approaches allow the creation of social links or political or economic gains, as the case may be, without striving to manage the economy and direct job creation.
- ⁵The development of employability (acquisition of attitudes and aptitudes favourable to the search for employment) can encourage individual self-reliance, self-sufficiency in family relations, immediate social networking and the ability to deal with community resources (Paugman, cited by Morel, 2000: 24); however, by postulating that manpower demand is adequate, it overlooks the precarious nature of work in capitalist information societies. Qualifications (custom training to occupy a position with a company, alphabetization, basic training), often end in the abandonment of study programs, dead ends

and the dump yard when conducted in a self-contained environment in the absence of a connection to a community economic project and lack of integration into an insertion itinerary (Sylvestre, 1994; Stercq, 1994; Lefebvre, 1995). Finally, entrepreneurial training (education in business start-ups) is for individual entrepreneurs who can mobilize a certain amount of capital for investment, showcase their competence on the job market and benefit from a network of connections.

⁶These challenges were identified in two different discussion groups made up of professional players employed by organizations involved in the support and development of collective businesses. Each group met four times; the first two meetings addressed the difficulties and challenges faced by players, while the last two meetings explored avenues to overcome these difficulties.

Between two meetings, researchers drafted a paper that served as the starting point for the next discussion and a summary that the group might have to amend in order that it mirror the true contents of earlier discussions (Boulianne et Comeau, 2001).

⁷Earlier research defined structural phenomena contributing in Quebec to the dissemination of community economic development. The research was conducted between 1996 and 1999 in central neighbourhoods in Quebec City and is backed by 10 surveys of collective economic initiatives, as well as interviews with 20 managers from seven of the initiatives under study (Comeau, 2001).

⁸The inequalities between associations in these two types of territories are, for the most part, organizational. In comparison to associations in underprivileged urban areas, associations in underprivileged rural areas are run by people with less education or management experience. Among other things, association income was significantly lower. Finally, gender differentiation in the job place was stronger, with women more prevalent in clerical positions than in management in rural associations (Comeau et al., 2002).

⁹This research sought to build categories of educational practices in social economics and identify the strong and weak points of these practices. Social economics education strives to impart knowledge about, establish, and consolidate, collective businesses. Research was based on the observation of 15 educational activities, a questionnaire completed by 302 participants in these activities and semi-structured interviews with 17 practitioners involved in teaching social economics (Comeau, 1998).

¹⁰Attempting to transform individuals excluded from the job market for long periods of time into entrepreneurs is a huge challenge, giving rise to the problem of vol-

ume of human and financial resources that a community is prepared to invest in their accompaniment. Indeed, these people need close, prolonged support to overcome the many obstacles they face (for example, difficulties expressing themselves in writing, relational isolation, lack of knowledge of the sector of activity and deficiencies of certain resources).

¹¹Things occur as if one were witnessing a shift from practical awareness (description of action taken and behaviour) to discursive awareness (explanation of the context underlying the behaviour and its justification) (Giddens, 1997). Read Comeau (2001) for more details.

¹²This aspect of the persuasion strategy shows that valuation of integration by the economic is a question of credibility (Comeau, 2001).

¹³Weber (1993) specifies that instrumental rationality is mostly based on the search for economic (obtaining a job and improving one's living conditions, for example), social (acquiring a network of contacts, achieving status or a measure of pride, among other things), cultural (learn, remain active and informed, express oneself, among other things) and political (the ability and the power to bring about change) benefits, in return of the cost invested in the form of unpaid work and perseverance. Affective rationality emerges when development activities allow people to create significant ties with other people. Traditional rationality associates mutual help with family spirit and the tradition of "corvées" (days of unpaid labour). Ethic rationality justifies participation in voluntary organizations through support of community values (self-sufficiency, mutual aid, taking charge of one's destiny and justice) (Lamoureux, 1991).