Chapter 10—Hybrid Community Diversified Cooperative (HCDC)

Extracted from the book "Vision – We are Re-Creating the World: A resource manual – "tool-box" – for revitalization and empowerment through grass-roots efforts and environmental awareness."

Background

The idea for a new model for cooperatives first came to me while I was working on my masters degree in forestry at Iowa State University in the early 1990´s. I am not sure what all of the contributing factors were, but I suspect that it was a series of experiences growing up in Iowa. I had my first entrepreneurial experience in 1980 in Cambridge, Iowa with our family business Odin Associates. The grain elevator, cooperative had a dominant presence in that small community so I remember driving by it almost every day. Then in 1983 I ended up working for a construction company that built grain elevators. It was a very interesting experience.

The first time I thought of the cooperative as I am describing here was when I learned from my father that California was the number one producer of all agricultural products, including corn which a total surprise since Iowa is almost totally covered with corn. In any case, I pondered this idea and the waste associated with growing and shipping products from California that could be grown in the region. That was combined with the knowledge that the cooperative really transformed small agricultural production, giving the farmers more power and negotiating leverage in dealing with the marketplace. However, cooperatives, in my opinion have not continued in this vein of benefits to the producer in all cases. The coffee and banana industry here in Colombia is a very explicit example, and I know that is the same many other places. The cooperative has been formed to be a sort of "middle-man" that is really exploiting the little producers and creating obstacles and barriers to new products, producers and ways for the farmers to get a living wage from the crops that they grow.

This idea regarding waste also came to me regarding forestry products. At the time I was working on my masters thesis on an alleycropping agroforestry system for the disposal of municipal waste as a fertilizer and the trees and crops to be utilized in a bio-energy application. Agroforestry systems are essentially farming trees and can be highly efficient economically and much better for the natural environment in comparison with the status

quo corn—soybean disposal of municipal waste. Also, I had been studying the problems of the forest industry, and destruction of native forests in the northwestern U.S. and wondered for a few years and was totally familiar with the failure of that industry and the resultant destruction of some of the most precious natural systems in the world.

So, the idea came to me "why don´t we develop regional based systems?" We could grow the timber for all sorts of products including construction right in our region. This would not only eliminate the destruction of our wild and scenic forests of the northwest, but also diversify the already risky agricultural economy of Iowa. This was the seed of thoughts that spawned what you are now reading what I am calling the "Hybrid Community Diversified Cooperative". These ideas have been gestating for twenty years because I finally put these ideas on paper in 2009. This concept, in my opinion, is one of the most powerful and exciting aspects of the RRES and I am very much looking forward to building the first HCDC.

Cooperative Definition (from Wikipedia)
A **cooperative** (also **co-operative** or **cooperative**; often referred to as a **co-op** or **coop**) is defined by the International Co-operative Alliance's Statement on the Co-operative Identity[1] as an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise[2]. A cooperative may also be defined as a business owned and controlled equally by the people who use its services or who work at it. Cooperative enterprises are the focus of study in the field of cooperative economics[3]. Cooperatives have a sponsored top-level internet domain .coop[4], which identifies legally registered or recognized co-operatives.

"Hybridizing" the Cooperative Model
This document begins a "Master Mind" dialog for evolving the concept of a new type of cooperative. There is something incredibly powerful about the "cooperative". It transformed agriculture. And yet in the U.S. it has really been limited in its utilization and evolution. Also, in my opinion, it tends to have a "corporate" feel. The idea of a "hybrid"

1 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Statement_on_the_Co-operative_Identity

2 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Business

would be to adjust the concept of "one vote per member". This concept rings of democracy which may not be the ultimate form of a cooperative venture, because in "a democracy" you could have 49% of the group disgruntled. That to me is not a workable model.

An evolution of the original concept of the cooperative might be derived from Napoleon Hill's book "Think and Grow Rich" describing the functioning of the Master Mind (see discussion later in this essay). A process built into the Cooperative could involve assurance of 100% alignment regarding actionable efforts. The key to tapping into incredible powers would be to assure "pure" collaboration. In many historical and contemporary human endeavors small percentages of dissonant opinions and voices resulted in ultimate failure.

Determining the scale for regional cooperatives

In the United States, an important foundational principle for how to re-structure to a more sustainable, rural "localized" model, as compared to trying to compete in "global markets", is to look at things from a larger scale than individual communities or counties. This likely is the same for any location in the world. Defining a region is not necessarily constrained to pre-established geopolitical or jurisdictional boundaries. In fact, as was highlighted at the Rural Policy Conference of the Federal Reserve Bank of

Kansas City in 2004[5], the county based system has probably outlived its utility. In the U.S. counties were established in the 1700's based on how far a person could ride a horse in a day. And small communities may have been self-sustainable in those times.

However, today, a small local community can likely not survive unless they are associated with other communities in their region. This concept has been around for some time in tourism (Clair Gunn, 1970's). With Internet technologies, and networking capabilities, we can establish whole new paradigms of regional economic models. Imagine the waste of resources that are going to the county government offices – (in Texas alone there are 254 counties). Most of these government run operations are not very effective or efficient.

3 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Co-operative_economics
4 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/.coop

Building regional economies should be based on a scale that creates adequate "economies of scale". Production of all types of agricultural produce and products can occur regionally.

- regional delineation should be "organic" and based on a collaborative "win-win-win-win" spirit
- only extend to larger markets, for imports and exports, when necessary
- competing in "global markets" is not necessary except where there is some very special products.

A proposed structure for the cooperative – three legs: business, social, infrastructure

In the world today there are three primary types of organizations: *business* (financial), *non-profit* (social good) and *institution*/government (infrastructure and public services). Usually, these three types of organizations end up attempting to support all three of these societal functions within their organization, but do not succeed because the organization´s "mission" is not ultimately aligned with functions outside of their normal domain of activities. For example, government agencies are very much challenged to operate a business successfully. This is also the case with non-profit organizations, in their original form they are not really designed to be businesses.

However, over time the majority end up becoming business oriented. In all three of these organizations the main focus of the organization does not give as much emphasis on the other activities. This equates usually to sort of "lip service" being paid, or worse yet a blatant use of these activities to garner support that is then utilized in an unbalanced, or manipulative way. Many cases can be seen by corporations that are really creating environmental problems using social programs or environmental programs to convince their customers they are doing good and thus people should buy their products.

A balanced organization should give adequate importance to each function. For example, if infrastructural support falters, the success of the organization will be diminished. Likewise, if the "quality of life' (social) diminishes then the whole organism suffers. Finally, if adequate financial resources are not generated and sustained, there will be a breakdown of the whole organization (community, region).

It appears that a blending of the primary functions of these three entities would make for a more efficient organization. The *institution* would be responsible for managing the infrastructure and the services of the Cooperative. The *business* would be responsible for

the fiscal and financial (marketing, business development) aspects of the Cooperative and the continued monetary support/management for the other two legs of the organization. The *non-profit* portion of the organization would be responsible for the programs that ensure the continued vitality of the region, such as education, social and other community empowerment programs.

What if cooperatives became the hub of distribution of locally produced products? Whatever could be made/grown locally could be distributed locally (this includes many potential cottage industry products). Also, localized "preferred" and "quality assured" services could be supported. Ever have trouble finding a good mechanic, doctor, plumber or dentist? The cooperative could provide some form of quality assurance. This could be tied to a robust Community Supported Agriculture program (CSA) which is a growing phenomena in the United States.

A regionally oriented assessment tool could be developed and used to determine what products/crops could be grown in the area based on soils and historical productive capacities, with special emphasis on environmental sustainability. A team of researchers from Iowa State used a very robust, and adaptable model for a project contracted by the Winnebago Indian Nation in 1991.

Basic guiding principles

In order for the project to be successful and built on a solid foundation, the following principles should guide the structure, functions and programs of the HCDC.

- Community (regional) Ownership of their Own Destiny
- Education is Foundational (John Hagelin)
- Regional responsibility
- Feed everyone (Norman Borlaug – Nobel Prize)
- Adequate housing (e.g. Habitat for Humanity)
- Activities for youth (Boys & Girls Clubs) (Star Club)
- We are all in this together lending a hand to our sisters and brothers
- Empowered individuals (Desmond Green – The Practice)
- Arts, Inclusion and Cultural Diversity (Yvette Dubel)

5 "New governance for a new rural economy : reinventing public and private institutions : a conference summary" http://ideas.repec.org/a/fip/fedker/y2004iqivp55-70nv.89no.4.html

- Innovation in agriculture (Rwanda SPREAD project)
  - Environmental protection (Thomas Berry)
  - Full-enriched "Quality of Life"
  - Eliminating the Middle-man, and helping the region to realize those lost
    "profits"
  - Entrepreneurship (various programs, Marketplace for Entrepreneurs & Kids)

Cooperative facilities / services

One of the most important parts of the HCDC will be the construction of very beautiful and functional infrastructure. The idea is to create a "center", or place where the people of the region will be very happy to come and utilize for all of their needs as they work to improve their businesses, their farming practices, environmental practices and to network and collaborate with other regional citizens. Diagram C10-2 Shows a view from above of a conceptual example of the HCDC grounds and facilities.

One of the major components is to create a multi-purpose conference, education, business and community center. This would be comparable to the best of the best conference centers, but utilizing the local architecture and vernacular. At the same time as being beautiful the facilities should be efficient and effective at serving all of the region´s needs for coordination of the RRES.

Another critical aspect is that the HCDC facilities be located in a beautiful natural environment giving the region´s citizens abundant opportunity to experience the out of doors through recreational activities and for community programs. The variability of these "facilities" could be significant whether it be totally natural, have recreational youth sports fields, or a community theatre. The key would be to have the facilities conceived, designed and built with the regions citizen´s input and support.

The following list provides a preliminary list of some of the facilities we think would be important, but of course this list would likely be modified depending on the needs of the region where it is developing (letters in parenthesis below associate with letters on Figure C10-2).

- Classrooms (6) (A)
- Virtual learning facilities – Computer center (A)

- Business center (A)

- Meeting facilities – conference rooms (A)

- Community center (A)

- Multi-purpose facilities (no. 3) (A)

- Social services center (A)

- Hands-on learning facility (4-H, We learn to do, by doing) (a)

- Distribution facilities (B)

- Value-added product development center (Technical Assistance) (B)

- R&D laboratory (C)

- Co-op research grounds (research station) (F)

- Energy center (B)

- Nature preserve / park (E)

- Farmers Market (G)

Financing the HCDC facilities

In most cases, because this is long-term capital investment in the region, financing or

(A) Housed in the Conference Center.

funding could be gotten in the same ways that roads, buildings, universities or any large infrastructure in our traditional way. However, if support is not available creativity and resourcefulness should guide the process. For example, if the necessary capital is not available to design and build, the HCDC initially could co-op (rent, barter) existing facilities from other organizations to save money. This would be a matter of partnering and scheduling and coordinating access.

Organizational structure and character

One of the most important ideas for the RRES and the HCDC is to take advantage of the concept of cooperation instead of competition. If one looks at most communities there are many organizations that could, if they took the time to investigate, discover that they have complimentary interests. The idea of the HCDC is really to capitalize on this and bring together, create, or re-create a centralized organization that serves the functions, or serves to connect the functions of the following:

- Chamber of Commerce

- Convention and Visitors Bureau

- Community/regional social programs

- Cultural organization/Arts Council

- Festivals and events

- Farmers Markets

- Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

- Regional Environmental Assessment Program (can use model like the
  Winnebago project)

- Service Organizations (Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.)

- 501 c (3)

Educational programs (determined by regional needs)

As the reader has already found, education is paramount in this process. What sets the
HCDC apart is the nature of the educational programs. In the main they should be
pragmatic, useful and practical programs aimed at the needs of the citizens, businesses,
and organizations of the region. Generally, the following list would be a good set of
programs to support initially, but this is only the beginning. The possibilities are only
limited by the needs and creativity of the communities and people.

- Innovative and existing agriculture

- Value-added agriculture

- Marketing, packaging and distribution

- Experiential tourism (eco, nature, agri, cultural-historical, adventure, etc.)

- Web-based technologies

- Networking

- Entrepreneurship

- The Arts – creativity

- Festivals and events

The following conceptual facilities were developed for the Department of Quindio,
Colombia so the architecture was designed to fit the regional vernacular.

Figure C10-1: Vision for Conceptual Cooperative Multi-purpose Conference and Education Center—architecture Quindio, Colombia

Legend
A. Multi-purpose Conference
   Education Center
1st Floor - classrooms (6)
   Computer Center
   Meeting/conference rooms (3)
   Multi-purpose facilities
2nd Floor
   Business Center
   Community Center
   Social Services Center
   Hands-on Learning Center
B. Distribution facilities
C. Value-added product
   development center (Tech. Assist.)
   R&D laboratory
   Energy Center
D. Co-op research grounds (research station)
E. Nature preserve / park
F. Outdoor Amphitheater
G. Farmers Market

Figure C10-2: Conceptual grounds for a HCDC
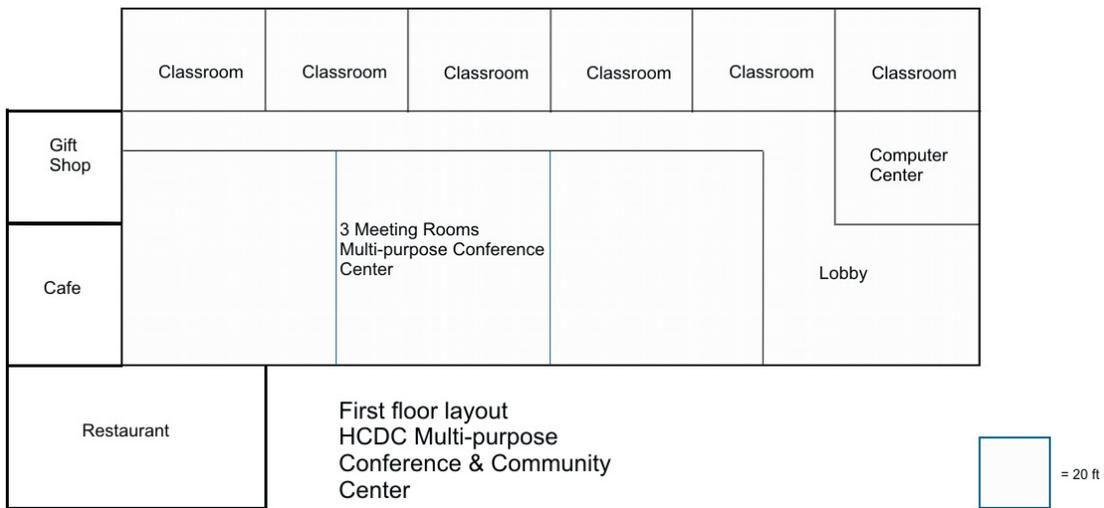
Diagram 10-1: Floor plan layout, 1st floor HCDC Multi-purpose Conference and Education Center
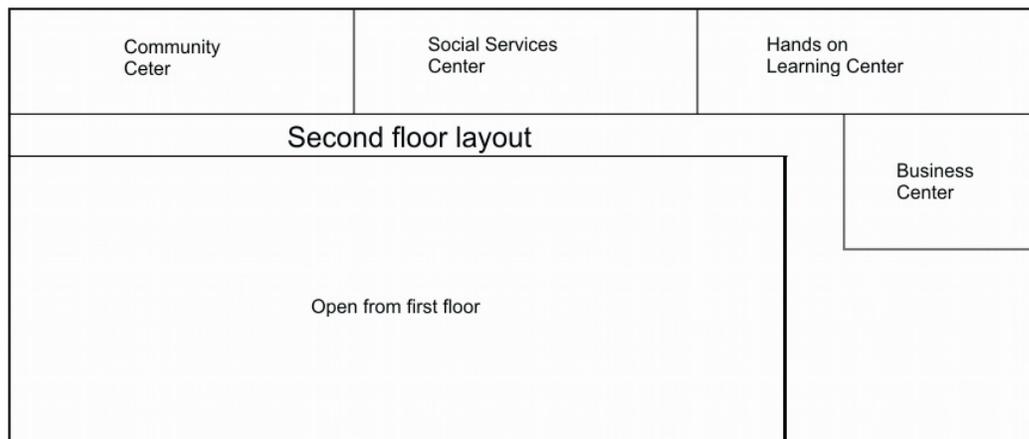
Diagram 10-1: Floor plan layout, 2nd floor HCDC Multi-purpose Conference and Education Center
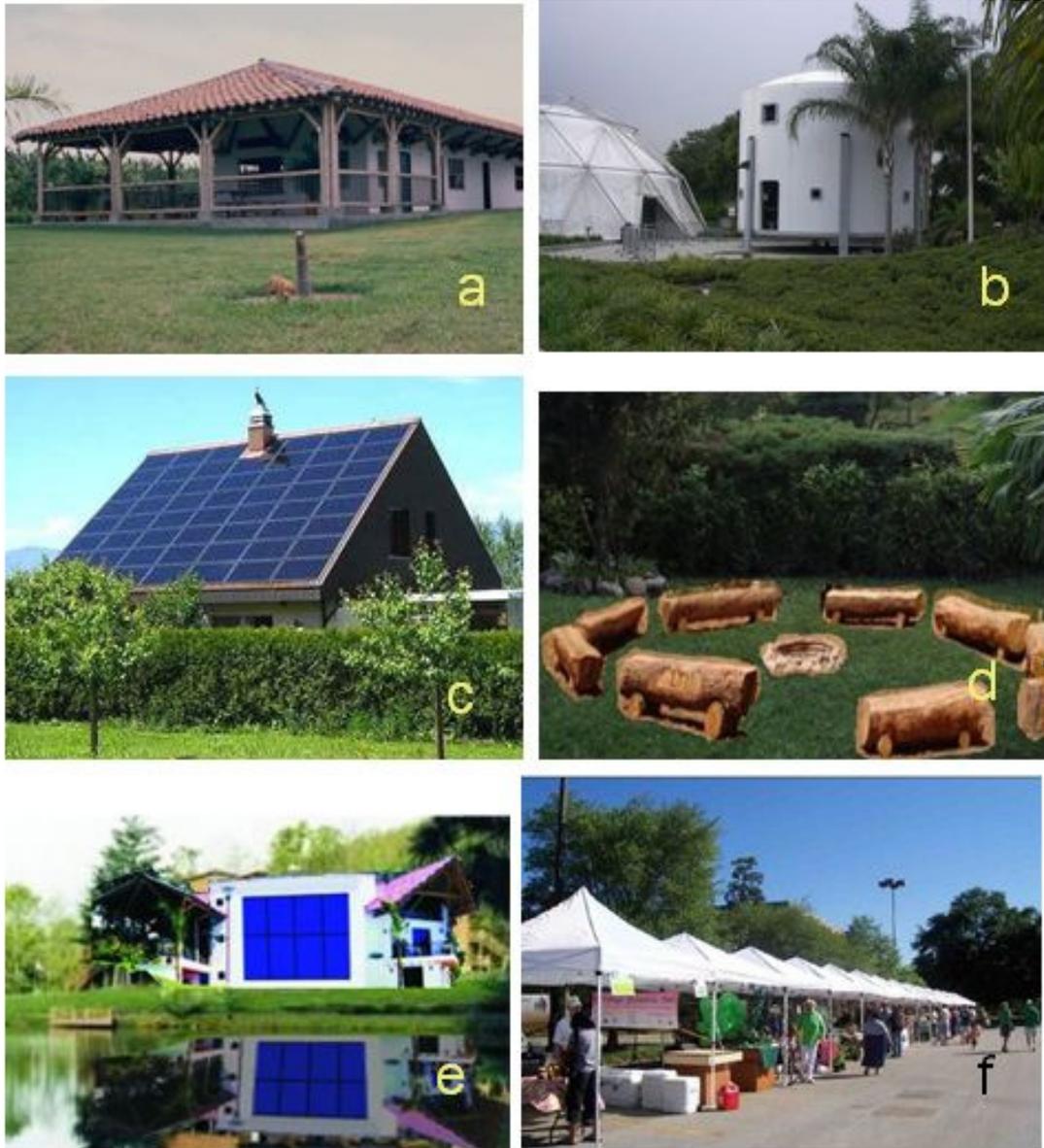
Figure 10-3: Other "conceptual" images of various facilities of the HCDC
(a—research station, b—energy R&D, c—fabrication center, d—outdoor rec. fire ring
e—view of conference center from nature area, f—famers market.)

Possible functions and activities of a Hybrid Community Diversified Cooperative

There are so many possible scenarios and programs that could be developed it will be impossible to cover the gamut. An entire book could be written about the HCDC. However, following are just a few examples of areas that are pretty much universal for all places.

Energy

One possible aim of the cooperative could be "self-sustainability" of each member of the cooperative. Or that the cooperative be internally *regionally* supported and not require being "on-the-grid". However, each cooperative would be autonomous.

> *Bio-ethanol and Bio-diesel for transportation*
> - Instead of building huge "plants" Maybe distilling ethanol and biodiesel could be done on smaller scale - like "moonshiners", these fuels could contribute to the solution, and provide lubricants.
> *Other energy production* – (e.g. Obayomi's waster paper digester)
> - the ultimate solution to energy is Solar, Zero Point and geothermal – the

cooperative could negotiate better prices on equipment if they couldn't be manufactured locally. Energy will be discussed in some detail later in this book.

Food

As with Energy, a possible aim could be that of regional "self-sustainability".

> - Anything that can be grown locally should be, and distributed locally. In actuality, using free energy systems and greenhouse technologies there is probably nothing that could not be grown in any place. Freedom from larger market forces controlling food production and supply would greatly benefit any citizen, community, region or nation.
> - Farmers could have a broad based of diversified products to take to the local cooperative, the cooperative acts as marketer and distributer.
> - Producers could diversify into many products not just grains or agricultural products in bulk, but support all kinds of value-added production.

Building - construction

> - Agroforestry systems, producing a "local lumber" market with poplar tree farms, etc, etc.
> - A main function of the Cooperative could be regional "marketing and distribution".

Other functions

- Cottage industries,

- Supporting all kinds of business, regional product distribution,

- products tied into arts, the cultural and environmental aspects of the region.

- Plus, provide membership access to all kind of education, tech-assistance, etc.

Positive Attributes

Values

1. Less fragile because system not dependent on single or limited product market (e.g. corn, timber, beef, etc.).

2. Transport vehicles could have smaller load but multiple compartments for different products - like recycling trucks, thus road infrastructure wouldn't need to support heavy haul trucks and loads.

3. Distribution could occur on a more localized scale, create opportunities for small businesses.

4. Reduce long-haul transport and expand local support businesses.

- eliminate corn/soybean subsidies - make the farmers and those crops support themselves based on market demand.

- farmers can return to the "diversified" operation, becoming like previous generation, entrepreneurial and "jacks of all trades".

- we can provide educational materials to help farmers get access to best practices, networks and other producers.

Benefits

- Broaden / diversified economy is more stable.

- Lower fuel and energy consumption.

- Look at smaller scale processing facilities.

- Employ more people locally, and control employment within the region.

- Expand regional economy based on sound environmental ability to support without impacting local endowment a) soils, b) water, c) social, etc..

A major function of the HCDC is entrepreneurial development and innovation. This is about creative business enterprise and new processes for getting new and better products to the world. So, even though this concept has been introduced previously, it will be useful to reiterate in the specific context of the HCDC.

Value-added Product Development Center and Research Grounds—Idea and Product Visioning & Creation Center

This section describes a second critical tangible "center" for the RRES, that which empowers entrepreneurship. In combination with the Institute, this part of the strategy is one that brings a tangible asset which results in many benefits.
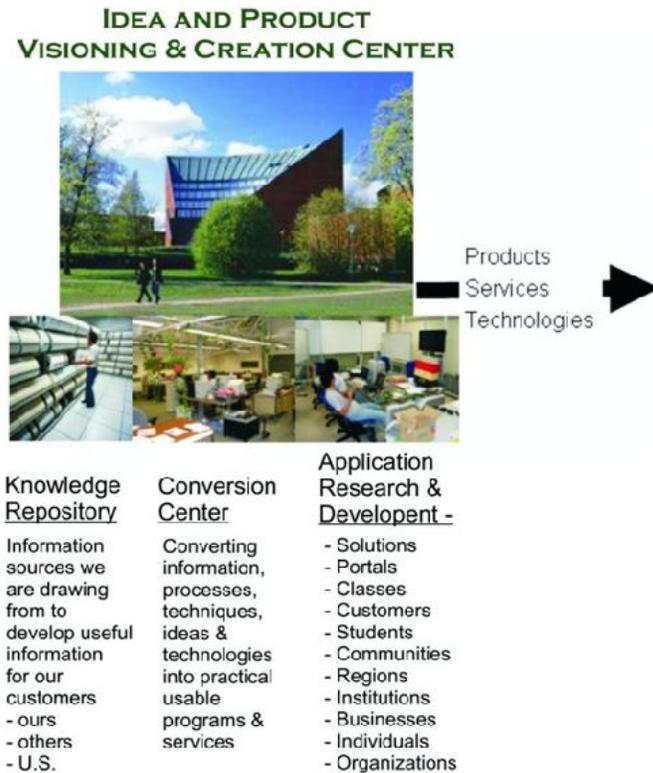

Figure C10-5: HCDC Idea and Product Visioning & Creation Center

 Focusing on supporting the process of generating new ideas and products, there is a cooperative nature grounded in the ultimate aim to support regional communities, businesses, organizations, but ultimately individuals. The model is designed in a way for it to be adaptable. It includes a practical arrangement for the organization, its functions, the steps to implementation and an overview of the technologies that will facilitate completion.

Figure C10-5 povides a schematic for the overarching components of the Idea and Product Visioning & Creation Center (IPVCC). The foci of the IPVCC will be on small business (products, services) creation and support and tourism. The tourism strategy will follow the

regional development model as described in detail earlier in this book with a focus on education, marketing and technology. The diagram below shows the initial structure and flows of activities and organizational functions of the IRVCC. The items "Education" and the "Rural Urban Nexus" identify the first opportunity spaces and the way the process will begin will be through the successful launching and implementation of "pilot projects."
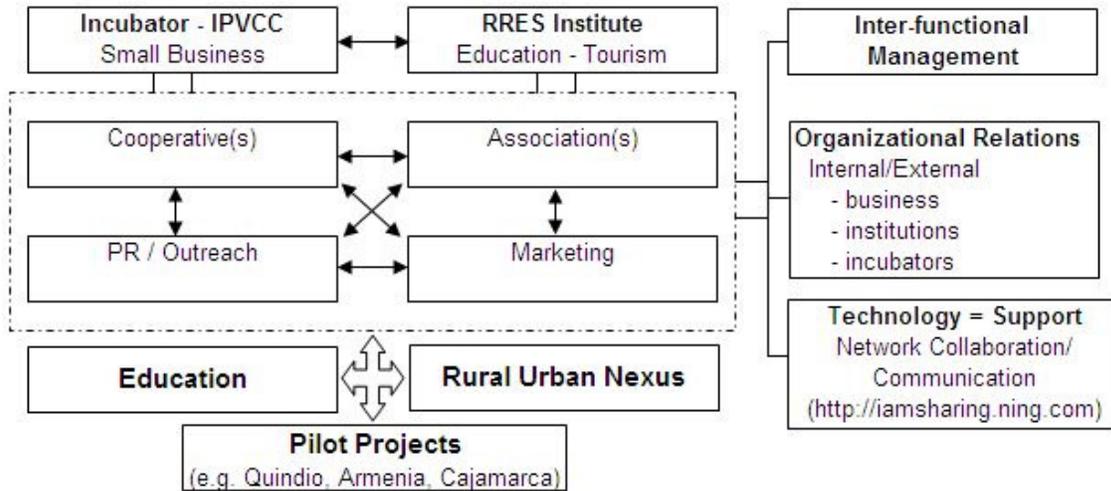
RRES (IPVCC) Organizational Structure

Diagram C10-5: Functional Structure (internal & external) for the HCDC-RRES Idea and Product Visioning & Creation Center

This description only provides a brief outline of what we see as the critical functions necessary and the steps to realize the "vision" of the IPVCC. This is a "living" document so elements can be added and expanded and adaptation will occur often, depending on the organic, evolutionary nature of this "systems" endeavor:

Facilities necessary to accomplish our Vision

The kinds of facilities that we will need to realize this vision are depicted in Diagram C10-6**.** Both Diagram C10-5 and C10-6 are based on the activities occurring for supporting several products and entrepreneurs and businesses. In Colombia South America "green" products are gaining market presence so supporting the invention and processes to bring these to market is important. Thus, there is a focus on the creation of the product development laboratory, testing center and shop outfitted with all the necessary tools to manufacture or fabricate first production (test versions) of the various products.

Additionally, our understanding for the success of a regional initiative is to have a physical place where the community can come and actually see the products and gain an

understanding of progress for our initiative. To fulfill this it would be important to include a product and demonstration showroom. We also want to have a "business development" section: Marketing, business planning, packaging

Also necessary will be computer infrastructure for supporting online application development, a GIS laboratory, hyperspectral data storage, manipulation and product creation.
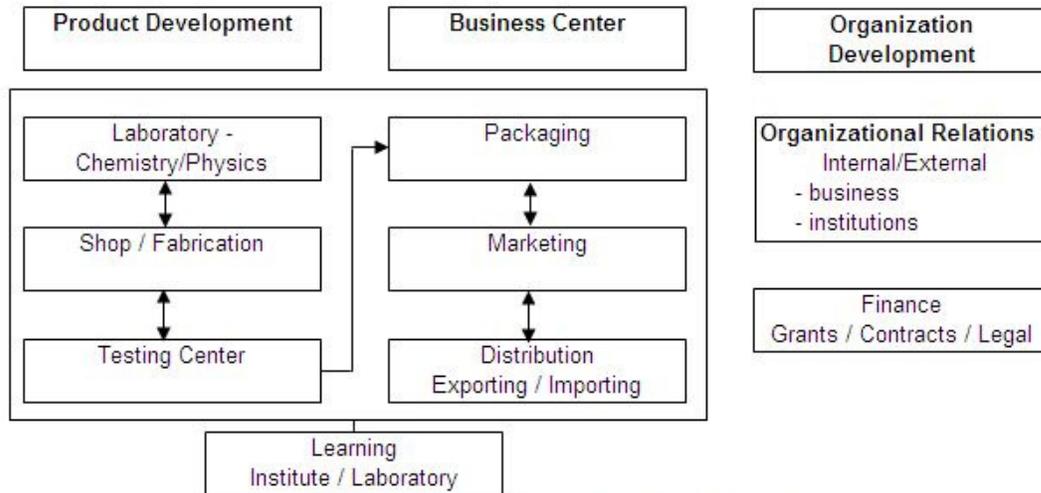
RRES - Internal Organizational Structure

Diagram C10-6: Internal Organizational Structure for the RRES Product and Idea Visioning & Creation Center

Diagram C10-7 below illustrates to the flow of an idea or product from conception to delivery to the market place. The center box, is a sort of "black box" representing the flow of activities between the product creation section (Incubation) and the business side of the IPVCC. This box is depicted in organizational details in Diagrams C10-5 and C10-6. One important additional aspect are the feedback loops from the products and services in the market place. These provide intelligence and continual quality control to assure that the process is functioning effectively and efficiently.
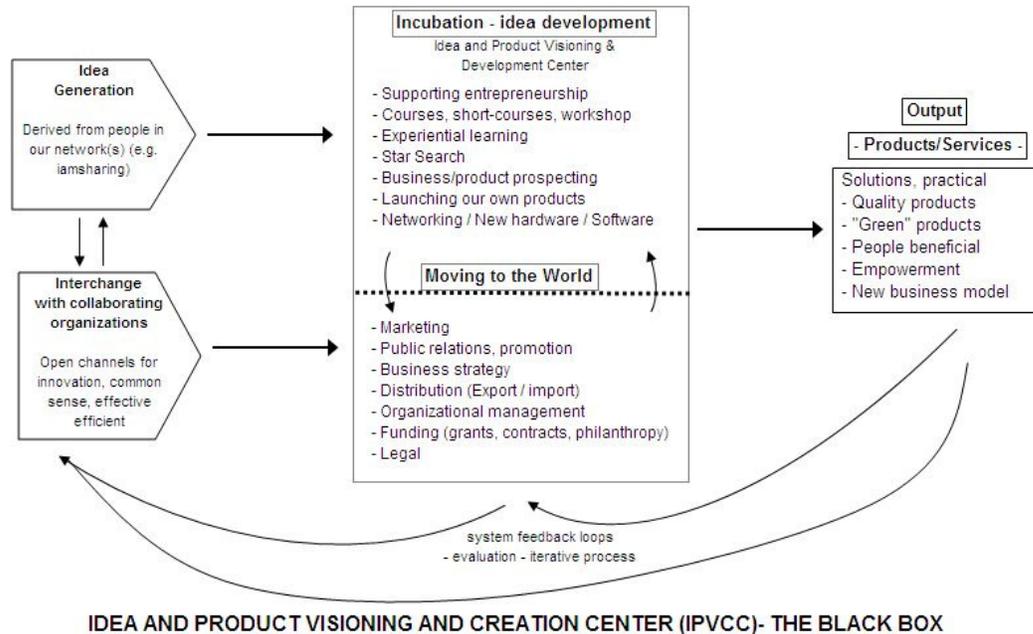
IDEA AND PRODUCT VISIONING AND CREATION CENTER (IPVCC)- THE BLACK BOX

Diagram C10-7: The "Black-box", movement of ideas from inputs to outputs.

Case Study—bamboo, organic food farming

If the reader has not ascertained by now, I believe case studies are a very powerful tool to find good strategies, and I believe they can be adapted to the RRES. This is not to suggest that I have done anything like a total review and assessment of examples for these areas covered in the RRES and HCDC. However, I have collected a few choice examples that I believe provide enough evidence to begin the process of understanding that one of our most efficient ways to develop systems and projects that work are to find successful examples out in the world, and then adapt those to our own situation. Over the years I have kept my eye on a few friends, and projects that have come to my attention as being exceptional, and for providing me insights as I write this book and present these concepts to the world.

One of the most impressive people I have ever known is David Cater. He was a very successful landscape architect in Austin, Texas and then he began to grow ornimentals and bamboo. That led him to create the Utility Research Gardens, bamboo and organic vegetable farm in Brazoria county Texas (started on 24 acres, 8 employees, profitable in 2 years). Now he is growing other organic products and selling them at a farmer's market in Houston, Texas. David is the perfect example of what one person can accomplish once they set their minds on a vision. A more detailed description is provided in Chapter 12 of

the Utility Research Gardens, in addition to Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), which another wonderful component that should be developed in a RRES.

Grass-roots – avoiding bureaucratic tendencies.
The key to success for the RRES and HCDC and all these subsequent endeavors requires "grass-roots" and a people empowerment strategy. I believe it is time to stop going to our government bureaucracies, politicians and the "powers that be" to try to get things done. They have demonstrated what they can accomplish, and it is time that we, in a way "reverse engineer" ourselves out of the collective conundrums that we face, across the globe.

Our cooperative project should start with a model for development in a "pilot" setting, then have the model be "adopted and diffused" through the success of the approach. We need to rebuild rural agriculture from both the bottom and the top. Of course, we need to get better leaders, but we also need to help the masses of people to understand that they are not powerless. But we don't have to wait to get good leadership to start. If people get together they can easily change things.

Moving Forward—Norman Borlaug's "keys to success": (Nobel Prize Winner)
At this point I think it is very important to re-visit the idea that there are people who have shown us that if we put our minds and hearts to a task, we can accomplish great and profound things. The case of Norman Borlaug is one, but of course we can find many others. The Nobelity project has picked up on this idea that the great minds have provided us insights, however, I think it is absolutely critical that we not get confused, or distracted, by in-depth intellectual discussions. The time to get things done is upon us. We just don´t have time to wait around and hope or talk about how things need to change. We need a model by which we can move forward. That is where Norman has provided us a framework to work with. Of course, as is built into the process we can adjust, adapt, or redirect our efforts if we discover we are getting off course. But the most important thing for now is to get started, and "git ´er done". Here is a review of the Norman Borlaug approach.

Primary Attributes Vision! Spirit! Humility! Persistence!
- Examine primary issues in problem - within context.
- Develop common sense solution - create action plan.
- Implement plan - no matter what it takes.

- Recruit young scientists, specialization secondary, teach about context - instill *Spirit of the cause!*
- Grow effort, deal with obstacles, *adopt - diffuse*.
- Never lose sight of end objective!

Remember the name of the overall strategy is "revitalization and empowerment". So a key is to stay positive and find some "pilot" projects to work on. Of course it is critical to recognize the challenges we face. We do not want to be like the proverbial ostrich with our head in the sand. But we also don´t want to get mired in negativity. That works against our cause.

After implementing our vision we can find organizations to support what we are doing. We should not wait to get started in hopes that we will find an organization to support us. We need to start with a collective vision and then the resources and organizations that we need will be attracted to us. And the nice thing is that we will be "driving the boat".

Background materials supporting a HCDC
Here is a quote from Wallace Wattles's book "The Science of Getting Rich" that I think is appropriate, and supports these ideas (written in 1910):

> "So the factory workers, either as individuals or as a class, are not deprived of opportunity. The workers are not being "kept down" by their masters; they are not being "ground" by the trusts and combinations of capital. As a class, they are where they are because they do not do things in a Certain Way. If the workers of America chose to do so, they could follow the example of their brothers in Belgium and other countries, and establish great department stores and co-operative industries; they could elect men of their own class to office, and pass laws favoring the development of such co-operative industries; and in a few years they could take peaceable possession of the industrial field."

> "The working class may become the master class whenever they will begin to do things in a Certain Way; the law of wealth is the same for them as it is for all others. This they must learn; and they will remain where they are as long as they continue to do as they do. The individual worker, however, is not held down by the ignorance or the mental slothfulness of his class; he can

follow the tide of opportunity to riches, and this book will tell him how."

The Master Mind – an evolution of the "Democratic" cooperative model
Extracted from "Think and Grow Rich" by Napoleon Hill (written in 1937 at the request of Andrew Carnegie). Twenty years research of the most successful people in America went into this book —*and success isn't just about money*.

In this book Napoleon describes the "Master Mind". It is a very powerful way to enhance our success. Andrew Carnegie had a Master Mind of 50.

Definition: The Master Mind is "Coordination of knowledge and effort, in a spirit of harmony, between two or more people, for the attainment of a definite purpose." Hill describes two characteristics of the Master Mind: economic in nature and psychic.

"The economic feature is obvious. Economic advantages may be created by any person who surrounds himself with the advice, counsel and personal cooperation of a group of men (women) who are willing to lend him wholehearted aid, in a spirit of PERFECT HARMONY (originally capitalized). This form of **cooperative alliance** has been the basis of nearly every great fortune. Your understanding of this great truth may definitely determine your financial status."

"The psychic phase of the Master Mind principle is much more abstract, much more difficult to comprehend, because it has reference to the spiritual forces with which the human race, as a whole, is not well acquainted. You may catch a significant suggestion from this statement: "No two minds ever come together without, thereby, creating a third, invisible, intangible force which may be likened to a third mind"."

Hill goes on to give the example of Mahatma Ghandhi as the most powerful person on the planet at the time this book was written (1937) citing the potential power of the concept of the Master Mind. Influencing 200 million people to a like mind.

Here is a brief outline of Hill's suggestions for forming the Master Mind -

a) Ally yourself with a group of as many people as you may need for the creation, and carrying out, of your plan or plans for the accumulation of money--making use of the "Master Mind" principle described in a later chapter. (Compliance with this is *absolutely essential*. Do not neglect it).

b) Before forming your "Master Mind" alliance, decide what advantages, and benefits, you may offer the individual members of your group, in return for their cooperation. No one will work indefinitely without some form of compensation. No intelligent person will

either request or expect another to work without adequate compensation, although this may not always be in the form of money.

c) Arrange to meet with the members of your "Master Mind" group at least twice a week, and more if possible, until you have jointly perfected the necessary plan, or plans, for the accumulation of money.

d) Maintain PERFECT HARMONY between yourself and every member of your "Master Mind" group. If you fail to carry out this instruction to the letter you may expect to meet with failure. The "Master Mind" principle cannot obtain where PERFECT HARMONY does not prevail.

Keep in mind these facts--

First. You are engaged in an undertaking of major importance to you. To be sure of success, you must have plans which are faultless.

Second. You must have the advantage of the experience, education, native ability, and imagination of other minds. This is in harmony with the methods followed by every person who has accumulated a great fortune.

There are detailed instructions that I will not produce here, however, one last note from Hill:

"You may originate your own plans, either in whole or in part, but SEE THAT THOSE PLANS ARE CHECKED, AND APPROVED, BY THE MEMBERS OF YOUR "MASTER MIND" ALLIANCE".

Steps for starting the HCDC Institute

-Conduct Strategic Planning session for the HTA-ERC Institute strategy workshop –
   Identify Project Board and Key Stakeholders for the coalition.
- Form working coalition.
- Identify viable sized "region(s)" to initiate project.
- Create short list of prospect communities (regional based preferred – see criteria
   below).
- Evaluate those communities based on a set of criteria to ensure project success.
- Resources for the Institute are available and some are in development, or can be
   adopted/integrated from a variety of sources (e.g. Solomon Source, extension at
   various U.S. universities, etc.).
- Identify potential additional funding sources (public & private)
- Solomon Source Consulting, Minister and Director of Tourism and others

contextualize" the approach based on political and social climate of proposed sites.

Hybrid Community Diversified Cooperative

- Use existing resources to start pulling together the HCDC

- Identify **"pilot"** site (criteria described in other sections)

- Identify "board of advisors"

- Establish Web presence

- Identify "affiliates"

- Strategy workshop

Questions that need to be answered

- What are the various facilities/resources needed for the incubator?

- Who are the key people?

- What are our first products?

- Who / what do we need to attract?

- $

- People

- Building

- facilities

Need to build/design the organization/strategy

It could be possible that given the identification of a serial entrepreneur, or a coalition of people with a group of products, that we could begin building the HCDC around those products. For example, some time back I was supporting an entrepreneur, Guillermo Rodriguez, who had over 2000 products that he wanted to bring to the market. Unfortunately Guillermo passed away. The key to starting the incubator is to find a small group of entrepreneurs or small business owners who need assistance. As the reader might have already determined the author has a number of products to bring to the world too, we just need to get started. First items to address would be

1. Structure business – divisions

2. Should we create a business incubator

3. How do we attract $$!!

4. If there is such a diversity of products, what brand do we want to create as an umbrella, or is that in our best interests.

5. What are our Initial Products/Projects

Top Seal

Natural herbicides

Special formulas

Colombian Trucking Confederation

Bio-ethanol

Viva Quindio

Regional development strategy

Hyperspectral

Bio-fuels

Water motor (cycle car)

Other products available from the region

6. What do we need to attract to get started?

- Patent lawyer – for helping to register, patent products.

- Attract the Best Team!

- Colombian business associates

- Insights to know when the right people are introduced to us.

Private Incubator

1.Structure and flows of activities – describe, and diagram the experiences of a person
   (student, business owner) and/or an idea coming into the incubator.

2. Nature of affiliations with schools, agencies, businesses and organizations

- students

- strategic partnerships

3. What is in the laboratory/shop/computer lab

4. Maybe organize the business/incubator around people then make linkages for
   common functions and needed support.

5. Solomon Source Team - Austin, Texas and global network.

In order to attract and support regional entrepreneurs we can open a "store-front" to in
begin attracting potential customers and collaborators. This could have multiple purposes.
First to actually support small businesses to improve their businesses and products.
Second to identify potential products that we might be interested in having as a part of
our portfolio. And third to create a network of businesses throughout the region and to be
able to assess the nature of those businesses. The following is a "conceptual" description
of what might happen to a prospective customer.

A customer walks in the door.

Step 1) We ask them why they are here

a) incubate an idea or business, or

b) business counseling / assessment.

Depending on their answer we give them a short assessment questionnaire.

Step 2) It is reviewed for potential based on the attitude of the individual and the idea.

Incubator – if yes, they are set on a path dependent on the type of product that they are pursuing and the level of support that they are seeking.

If "no" they are given some free materials to assist them with their areas of challenge, and/or directed to some of the courses and workshops that are available through the HCDC Institute-Incubator.

One of the most important factors is the character of the person(s) who are seeking assistance. Here is a very short preliminary list of things that the intake interviewer should make sure is evaluated.

Person Assessment

> What is their attitude?
>
> What are they saying?
>
> What is their vision – do they have one?
>
> What are they attracting?
>
> What is their idea?
>
> How far along is it?
>
> What do they need?
>
> Who do they know?
>
> What is the idea's potential?
>
> How can we help?
>
> Does it fit with our vision – where?
>
> Do they listen?
>
> Are they willing to learn/change?

Business assessment. Finally, we adapt the Solomon Source Business Assessment to the context of the region, and the types of businesses that are being supported and recruited. See Chapter 13 for the Solomon Source business evaluation tool that has been developed for individual businesses. One possibility for how to introduce the region to these services would be to have students with palm pilots, and digital cameras go out into the

communities and conduct the interview/assessment of the businesses

(We will need to determine how much we charge? We want it to be enough so we can generate resources, and possibly weed out frivolous ideas/customers.)