FROM IDEA TO COMMUNITY VENTURE – A RESOURCE DEPENDENCY PERSPECTIVE (SUMMARY)

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SUMMARY
FROM IDEA TO COMMUNITY VENTURE – A RESOURCE DEPENDENCY PERSPECTIVE

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Principal Topic
This paper reports on a longitudinal study of the start-up process of two music festivals in Norway to explore how initial resources emerge and develop in the case of new community ventures within rural communities. A community venture is defined as new activities likely to create economic, social, and/or environmental values for the local community. The resources necessary for launching a community venture are embedded at different levels within the rural community and the emerging activities may cut across the voluntary, business, and governmental sectors. Thus, the process of creating a resource-base is influenced by many different goals within the community.

A resource dependency perspective is used to capture the embedded nature of the resources necessary to build a resource-base. This approach views the environment as a pool of resources where organizations enter into transactional relationships with environmental factors as they cannot generate all resources internally. Thus, community entrepreneurs are highly dependent on the local community to gain access to resources and develop the community venture. The research question is: How does the entrepreneurial process of creating a resource-base for a community venture evolve?

Method
An explorative case-study design was used to obtain data on different levels by following the initiation and development of two music festivals over time. Data were collected from multiple sources, such as: reviewing e-mails, web-pages, newspapers, and written documents; interviewing key actors; and participant observation of the festivals.

Results and Implications
The resource dependency approach illustrates how the emerging community venture becomes embedded into the structures in the local community to get access to resources. In both cases it becomes necessary to create ownership to the community venture within the rural community. Both community entrepreneurs have professional music competence and well developed networks nationally, and they introduce new resources and activities to the rural communities. Simultaneously, other actors in the community are more fixed to old structures and contribute to transform the ideas into a viable format. The new venture idea is therefore developing in a different direction than initially thought by the actors involved. This supports Haugh's (2007) model, identifying the process of filtering alternative ideas into one idea that achieves most support.

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