



Social Economy Research Network of Northern Canada

SERNNOCA NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2010

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

BUILDING A PEOPLE CENTRED ECONOMY IN CANADA—SUMMIT IN OTTAWA MAY 30-JUNE 1, 2010 (PAGE 4)

NEW SOCIAL ECONOMY RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS (PAGE 6)

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Nunavut Summit on the Social Economy

It is the people that are the true strength of northern communities. Many individuals do so much to ensure they have a vibrant and healthy community. A number of these individuals gathered for a special session to hear details and recent findings about the area they work in—now commonly referred to as the *social economy* (SE). This is being recognized as a vital sector of the Canadian economy. It includes nonprofits, charities, volunteer

groups, cooperatives, credit unions, social enterprises and traditional land based activities. Many of these groups struggle to secure adequate funding, staff, volunteers and other resources to continue operations. They recognize a need for greater policy supports and acknowledgement of the value and necessity of their work.

The session held in Iqaluit, Nov. 25-27, 2009 provided opportunities for community input into a pan-Northern research program examining the social economy. Key researchers, practitioners and other supporting networks were present to share and listen to what is being said about the social economy in Nunavut. It was a dynamic and informative session that has hopefully led to

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Opening of Nunavut Social Economy Summit session with a special performance by Inuksuk Drum Dancers

Who are the social economy groups in the North?

One of the main studies undertaken by SERNNoCa is to profile the social economy groups of the North. A survey of all SE groups in northern Canada was done 2 years ago and the second phase of this work began last summer. Each Territory, Nunavik, and Labrador are compiling an inventory of social economy groups and the results will be combined to give a complete picture of the number and types of SE groups that currently exist. Preliminary results were released in an article in the Northern Review. As a follow up to this work Chris Southcott, research director for SERNNoCa, is continuing with a condensed questionnaire. Meetings in communities in Nunavut, Northwest Territories and Yukon have provided data and additional information for the social economy survey. This will give a more complete picture of the northern Social

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Sheena Kennedy's research was developed for the needs of a northern community. Her work will establish a socio-economic baseline data set for Igloodik that will be a resource tool for future planning and community development initiatives.

SERNNoCa Spotlight on Students

Students are an important part of the SERNNoCa program leading the research for many new and exciting projects in the North. The following provides a short description of some of our student researchers.

- * **Raila Salokangas** has been involved in research in the NWT since 2003. She began as an intern at the Aurora Research Institute while studying environmental management in her home country of Finland. From 2004 to 2006, her interests in resource development and Aboriginal issues led her to work with the Inuvialuit and the Gwich'in to find out community views of the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project. In 2009, she graduated from the University of Alberta with a Master's degree in rural sociology. Her thesis, *The Meaning of Education for Inuvialuit in Tuktoyaktuk*, is a historical examination of the way formal education has evolved in the community of Tuktoyaktuk. The thesis was funded by the Social Economy Network of the North. At the moment she is working on an International Polar Year project, *Arctic Peoples, Culture, Resilience, and Caribou*, for the University of Alberta.
- * **Angie Chiu** is currently enrolled in the master's degree program in Agricultural and Resource Economics at the University of Alberta. Angie grew up in Edmonton and obtained an undergraduate degree in Economics with a minor in Statistics from the University of Alberta in 2006. She subsequently completed courses in environmental and conservation sciences and undertook a summer internship at a non-governmental women's rights organization in southern Spain. Her thesis research focuses on the impact of industrial development on community and household food security in a few communities in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, and in particular, the relationship between food purchasing patterns and the economic status of food stores and retailers in these communities. Angie is very excited to be conducting her research project in northern Canada.
- * **Zoe Todd** is currently pursuing an MSc in Rural Sociology investigating the impact of participation in the wage economy on traditional harvesting, dietary patterns and social networks in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. She is interested in the social and health impacts of environmental change in the Canadian Arctic, as well as the broader issue of how resource extraction impacts the health and well-being of Indigenous peoples throughout the world. Zoe Todd is Cree/Métis going back six generations to the Red River in Manitoba, as well as having ancestry in the St. Paul de Métis Settlement and Whitefish Lake First Nation in Alberta, and Turtle Mountain in North Dakota.
- * **Nick Falvo** is a PhD Candidate at Carleton University's School of Public Policy and Administration (Ottawa, Canada). He has written several policy papers on homelessness and affordable housing. His research interests include homelessness, affordable housing, child benefits, social assistance and program evaluation. Under the supervision of Prof. Frances Abele, he is currently the main researcher on a three-year



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Nunavut Summit on the Social Economy cont.

enhanced communication and support systems for these groups. Some of the recommendations from the Summit include:

1. Advocacy—central voice connected to research to influence public policy
2. Need a social investment plan for stable core funding
3. More engagement across sectors—networking
4. Share knowledge and assets

The discussions provided research directions for the activities of the SERNNOCa research team. Nunavut needs to be recognized as a leader in SE organizations and activities. There is much to be learned from each other.

Details of the presentations (MP3 recordings) and group discussions are available on our website at dll.yukoncollege.yk.ca/sernnoca/news or contact the SERNNOCa coordinator for more information.

Thanks to all the people who put this together and made the event such a success!

“Discussions with communities has

been one of the most effective mechanisms for

providing a clear understanding of the northern social economy”



NORTHERN COORDINATOR ACTIVITIES

A coordinator in each of the Northern Territories facilitates SERNNOCa's research and communication. They are key points of contact to assist communities and researchers.

A very big thank you for the excellent work of Karen Mackenzie who coordinated the Nunavut activities for the past year. We welcome Doug White who will be the new Nunavut coordinator and thanks to Eric Corneau for filling in the last few months. Activities in Nunavut have included the SE Summit in November and recent distribution of the questionnaire for the second phase of the survey of social economy groups. Three newsletters have been developed by Karen dedicated to issues of the social economy in Nunavut.

There have also been changes in coordination for Northwest Territories. Thank you to Stephanie Irlbacher-Fox for her work as the coordinator this past year. We welcome two new individuals to support the NWT work.

Rajiv Rawat will be the new coordinator with Diane Essery assisting with the various tasks including the survey of SE groups in the NWT. They both bring excellent understanding and experience working with various social economy groups. They have put together a website for the NWT to facilitate communication of the SE: <http://sernnoca.circumpolarhealth.org/>

This past summer Chris Southcott visited Inuvik to discuss the survey work of SERNNOCa with social economy groups in the community. The feedback provided by these groups has given more details for our understanding of the social economy in this location. The presentation and notes of the Inuvik session are available on the website at <http://dll.yukoncollege.yk.ca/sernnoca/documents>. A similar session was done in Dawson City, Yukon. Discussions with communities has been one of the most effective mechanisms for providing a clear understanding of the northern social economy. If you are interested in having a similar presentation and community discussions in your location please contact the main coordination office in Whitehorse.



Inuvik Community Greenhouse building an active social economy operation in Inuvik.



The Canadian Social Economy Hub (CSEHub) acts as a facilitator promoting collaboration among six regional research centres across Canada (Québec, Atlantic, Southern Ontario, Prairies and Northern Ontario, BC and Alberta and the North), and creating opportunities and exchanges with international networks

National SE Partnerships

A main focus of the Canadian Social Economy Hub has been on the examination of the unique role and relevance of Social Economy organizations to public policy issues around the world. Their recent newsletter highlights the role of the social economy in public policy and how it strengthens the outcomes of the Social Economy for societal benefit. The results of the research are available in a series of public policy papers

1. Advancing the Social Economy for socio-economic development: International Perspectives *Crystal Tremblay* Full paper available at: www.socialeconomyhub.ca/sites/default/files/Crystal%27sPaper.pdf

2. Public Policy Trends and Instruments Supporting the Social Economy: International Experiences *Crystal Tremblay* Full paper available at: www.ccednet-rcdec.ca/files/ccednet/images/Crystal_sPaper2.pdf

3. Building a People Centered Economy in Canada: Next Steps for Public Policy *Rupert Downing, Sarah Amyot and Crystal Tremblay* Full paper available at: www.ccednet-rcdec.ca/files/ccednet/PublicPolicy.pdf

In addition to these papers a **Summit “Building a People Centered Economy in Canada”** will be held at Carleton University, May 30-June 1, 2010. The Summit is being coordinated by a number of networks/organizations and will be designed to create a process for engagement and knowledge mobilization pertaining to public policy and the social economy. There are 6 themes for the Summit

1. Finance and Investment
2. Enterprise Development
3. Territorial Revitalization
4. Organizing the Social Economy Marketplace
5. Partnerships / Sector Development
6. International

<http://www.ccednet-rcdec.ca/en/summit>

Two other major National events that will highlight areas of social economy research across Canada include:

Social Innovations for a New Era: Contributions from Nonprofits and the Social Economy The Association of Nonprofit and social economy research (ANSER) conference June 2-4, 2010 at Concordia University, Montreal, QC (details at www.anser-ares.ca)

Community Building through Co-operative Research: Challenges and Opportunities at Home and Abroad. June 1-4, 2010. Concordia University, Montréal, Canadian Association for Studies in Cooperation (CASC)



SERNNoCa Spotlight on Students cont.

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study exploring homelessness and affordable housing in Canada's North—a partnership with the Centre for Northern Families.

- * **Jean-Sébastien Boutet** is working on his MA in Geography at Memorial University. In his research he is using archival and oral history techniques to gather indigenous perspectives on the history of iron mining in the Schefferville region of

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northern Québec. Little is known about the Innu and Naskapi encounter with industrial mining development in the mid-1950s, in particular regarding the transition toward a mixed economy and the co-existence of land-based activities with wage labour opportunities at the mine. This research will address some of these historical shortcomings, in particular in light of the contemporary projects that are currently being developed by companies such as New Millennium and Labrador Iron Mining to re-open and expand the extraction of iron ore deposits in the region.

- * **Sarah Gordon** is a PhD student at Indiana University's Folklore Institute beginning her dissertation research on the role of storytelling traditions in shaping and contributing to conceptions of community health in Déline, NT. As a component of this project, she plans to explore the role of stories and storytelling in influencing how traditional and wage-based economies are integrated in Déline. She is also interested in exploring the idea of a narrative economy--patterns and values that govern the circulation of narratives within the community--and the ways that such an economy may interact with other spheres.
- * **Tobi Jeans** is a MES Candidate with the School of Environment and Sustainability at University of Saskatchewan. Ms. Jeans' thesis project, with supervisor Dr. David Natcher, will focus on how the enforcement of the US/Canada border has affected the Vuntut Gwitch'in's (Old Crow, Yukon) ability to access traditional food sources – including the harvest, sharing and receiving of these traditional foods. Tobi is a member of Matachewan (Ojibwe) First Nation of northern Ontario.

Students who have completed research projects

- * **Jennifer Alsop** has completed her Masters in Public Administration at the School of Public Policy and Administration at Carleton University. Jennifer's research, "The Role of the Cooperative Enterprise in the Social Economy of Repulse Bay" looked at the changing role of the cooperative sector in Repulse Bay, as community members adapt to new and evolving environmental, governance and economic realities. In focusing upon the cooperative as a mode of economic organization, this research looked at how the 'mixed economy' of this northern community is transforming in the face of these broader socio-economic and environmental changes. **Report posted on the SERNNOCA website**
- * **Sheena Kennedy** has completed her MA in Public Administration in the School of Public Policy and Administration at Carleton University in December 2009. Her research focused on the social economy in Igloolik, Nunavut and the role that the mixed economy plays therein. Sheena is now working for the Hamlet of Igloolik to continue the project to establish a socio-economic baseline by documenting all the economic activity taking place in the community and develop a model of the local economy. This data will be used to look at changes over time with resource developments and for planning purposes. Focus groups to review the findings of 2 sets of surveys will be done. Aboriginal policy and community economic development with a particular focus on the North.

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Photo of the Naujat Coop in Repulse Bay. Jen Alsop's research focused on Arctic Cooperatives—a successful social economy group that operates in many remote Northern communities



**The North has
the highest
percentage of
social economy
organizations per
population in
Canada**

**The Inuvik Community
greenhouse is likely the
furthest north you would
find such a greenhouse. It
is the home of the Com-
munity Garden Society of
Inuvik—a nonprofit group
that has been in operation
in the NWT since 1998.**



NEW SERNNoCa Publications

Completed Thesis (available at <http://d11.yukoncollege.yk.ca/sernnoca>)

1. Conservation, Community Benefit, Capacity Building and the Social Economy: A Case Study of Lutsel K'e and the proposed National Park. Nathan Bennett
2. Women at the Heart of the Social Economy: What Motivates Women to Work in the Social Economy in Whitehorse, Yukon? Tomiko Hoshizaki
3. Understanding levels of social economy development: an examination of Northern Canadian communities. Danielle McLean
4. An exploration of the views of volunteers in outdoor recreation within a social economy framework. Carrie McClelland
5. Yukon Co-ops. Kim Hardy

Reports

- ◆ Co-operation in the North: Understanding Co-operatives in the Yukon. Doug Lionais and Kim Hardy, Cape Breton University
- ◆ Maximizing Lutsel K'e Community Benefit from the Proposed National Park: Through Capacity Building and the Social Economy. Nathan Bennet and Harvey Lemelin.
- ◆ Proceedings from the Nunavut Summit on the Social Economy

Who are the social economy groups in the North?

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Economy and contribute to the National research work in this area. Researchers across Canada are increasingly getting a better understanding of the size and scope of the Canadian Social Economy with an aim to influence policy directions. To date, we have put together preliminary results for each Territory.

Initial census showed 1190 organizations identified as social economy groups in the three territories. The main activities of these organizations included sports, recreation, tourism, social services, arts, culture, law, advocacy and politics. There are unique components of the social economy in the territories, as well as common characteristics and challenges that are faced. Some initial findings for the North to date include:

1. Most social economy organizations in the territories are non-profits while over half are voluntary organizations.
2. Most organizations get funding from government sources but a large percentage get funds from other sources including sales of goods and services.
3. The main challenges organizations face are obtaining and retaining paid staff, along with finding funding and decreasing government funding.

Reports and presentations for this research have been posted on SERNNoCa's website.

We appreciate all the support and input of organizations in completing the questionnaire and would welcome any additional survey responses to give a complete picture of the Northern Social Economy!

New Research Projects

Food Security and Cross Border Dimensions of the Vuntut Gwich'in Social Economy

Research Team—David Natcher, Norma Kassi, Jody Butler Walker, Tobi Jeans

While food security is undoubtedly influenced by environmental change, maintaining access to reliable and nutritious food sources is also part of the larger social and political system in which food procurement occurs. It is in this context that this project will explore the social and political dimensions of food security, with particular focus on the unique challenges faced by Old Crow due to its close proximity to the US/Alaska border. This research will examine how the US/Canadian border has affected food sharing systems and will identify ways in which sharing networks can be strengthened in times of need. More details of the project on our website.



The community of Old Crow is home for the Vuntut Gwitchin people whose main source of livelihood is based on trapping, hunting, and fishing and the sharing and trading of these resources.

Housing and being Homeless in Yellowknife, NT

Research Team—Frances Abele, Arlene Hache and Nicholas Falvo

The purpose of the study (jointly with the companion study on the psychological dimension) is to uncover the main factors contributing to homelessness, to publicize these, and to develop practical recommendations for the elimination of homelessness. It studies the effect of past and present policies for their impact on the social economy—in this case, on the organizations engaged in providing social housing, emergency support, and general support to people in need. Since most housing in the Northwest Territories has historically been social housing, a survey of particular modes of ownership and the attendant regulatory regimes is needed. The study will contribute to a better understanding of the role of social economy organizations in an important area of social need and to our knowledge of the dynamics of their relationships with the territorial, municipal and federal state.

Creation of a Galleria of Arctic Cooperatives

Research Team—Ian MacPherson, Jen Alsop and Mary Nirlungayuk

The intention of this work is to create a Galleria to provide an introduction and historical account of the Arctic Co-operatives. This is intended to provide an understanding of their development and operations and give a comprehensive introduction to the Arctic Cooperatives in the Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. This will involve preparation of brief case studies aimed at collecting information on the history of the co-op: e.g., date of formation, key formative influences, key early leaders, philosophy of the co-op, important transitional events and dates, roles in communities, nature of current business activities, important successes, important challenges today, etc. The exact list of information to be sought would be developed through a consultative process, following approval for this project from territorial authorities.



Photo of the West Baffin Arctic Co-operatives new store opening in 2005. A new research project will provide a detailed picture of Arctic Co-operatives—a social economy group that operates in many remote Northern communities

Language, Place and Governance in Deline, Northwest Territories: Monitoring Persistence and Change in the Social Economy

Research Team—Deborah Simmons and Sarah Gordon

The social economy of the over 100 small, predominantly Aboriginal communities of Canada's north is distinctive. It is sustained in part by some of the same institutions that dominate the southern social economy (cooperatives, small and not-for-profit enterprises, volunteer and charitable organizations and practices). Underlying these organizational forms and far more important for the sustenance of the social economy of small communities is the northern mixed economy. This study will examine how narratives can illuminate the nature of the social economy in Deline.

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- * **Jerald Sabin** is a PhD Candidate in Political Science at the University of Toronto. In May 2010, under the supervision of Dr. Frances Abele, a draft report was released titled "Yellowknife's Voluntary and Nonprofit Sector: A Portrait of a Northern Social Economy", through the Carleton Centre for Innovation at Carleton University. The report formed part of the community-led initiative started in June 2009, to examine the state of Yellowknife's social economy, assess its current structure and organization, and explore its evolving relationships with Government of Canada, the Government of the Northwest Territories, and the City of Yellowknife.
- * **Danielle McLean** completed her Masters at Lakehead University looking at levels of social economy development in Northern Canadian Communities. This study offers a preliminary analysis of the role specific social factors have on social economy development in the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Because of the marked differences in levels of social economy development in Northern Canadian communities, this research attempts to explain these variations through an examination of social variables that have been identified as impacting levels of development. **Thesis posted on dl.yukoncollege.yk.ca/sernnoca/project1a**
- * **Tomiko Hoshizaki** just completed her Masters at Lakehead University under the supervision of Dr. Chris Southcott. Her research examined factors that motivate women to work in the social economy. This thesis looks at the importance of women in the social economy in Whitehorse and the motivations influencing women's participation in this sector of the economy. Women's involvement in the traditional economy has been very different from that of men; historically women have been largely excluded from paid labour. The focus of her thesis was on identifying the important and unique role of women in this northern social economy and to identify the motivations to their involvement as well as the issues women face working in this sector. **Thesis posted on dl.yukoncollege.yk.ca/sernnoca/project1b**
- * **Kim Hardy** has recently completed an MBA in Community Economic Development through Cape Breton University with her research work examining the environment for co-operative development in the Yukon. Kim is an active member of the Canadian Community Economic Development Network participating on the BC/Yukon Council. **Thesis posted on [SERNNOCa website](http://sernnoca.ca).**
- * **Nathan Bennett** completed the MES program at Lakehead University. Nathan's thesis is titled "Northern and Community Perspectives on the Relationship Between Community Development and Park Creation: A Case Study of Lutsel K'e and the East Arm National Park." This qualitative and collaborative project focused on community and northern perspectives on conservation, local social and economic development goals and objectives and the role of social economy organizations in facilitating development relating to the creation of a new national park in Lutsel K'e, Northwest Territories. The project was developed in conjunction with the Thaidene Nene Parks Working Group and the Chief and Council of the Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation. **For more information check out the project website <http://lutselkeandthaidenenene.wordpress.com/>**

A Northern Summit on the Social Economy is being planned for late Fall 2010. Details coming soon or email sernnoca@yukoncollege.yk.ca if you would like more information.

We welcome any comments or suggestions you have on the research and areas you might want to see featured in our newsletter.

Social Economy Research Network of Northern Canada



Research Partners organizations

Northern Research Institute/Yukon College

Aurora Research Institute/Aurora College

Nunavut Research Institute/Nunavut Arctic College

Lakehead University

Carleton University

Memorial University of Newfoundland

University of Alberta

University of Laval

Université du Québec à Montréal

University of Saskatchewan

University of Victoria

Labrador Institute

Makivik Corporation

Arctic Cooperatives

Cape Breton University

University of Manitoba

Institute for Circumpolar Health Research

Arctic Health Research Network—Yukon

Centre for Northern Families

The Social Economy Research Network of Northern Canada is part of a National 5 year research program funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). The main objective of the program is to establish partnerships of university/college researchers and community organizations to conduct research relevant to the social economy in Canada's North.

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More Information? Check our website

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