**BALTA Handbook for Case Studies in the Social Economy**

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2008

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Social Sciences and Humanities
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sciences humaines du Canada

Canada

# BALTA HANDBOOK FOR CASE STUDIES IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

## Prepared by Stewart E. Perry

This handbook is intended to be an aid that all BALTA researchers, including student research assistants, can use when they are carrying out <u>any</u> case study of any initiative, organization, or activity in the social economy.  The ultimate goal here is to provide a means by which <u>all</u> BALTA case studies will include a common set of items/issues, no matter how different the intended purpose or target of any particular case study may be.  BALTA will thereby have a collection of relatively comparable cases that can be looked at as a whole.  Thus, even though each case study will, naturally, have its own primary purposes, themes, approaches, styles of reporting, methodologies, etc., all the cases can potentially be subjected to a secondary review for comparative and analytic purposes.

Be assured that we assume, of course, that each researcher will have her/his own way of presenting a case and will make all the decisions about how the case will be reported and what will be included in the case report.  But we seek your collaboration to extend the analytic value of your case as part of a greater whole which can be subjected to a kind of meta-analysis. This is important to our common enterprise of building knowledge that can contribute to strengthening the social economy.

To accomplish this, a cross-BALTA framework for all case studies is set out in this handbook for use by everyone, not in any sense to put a straightjacket on the researcher, but simply to make sure that certain common bits of information have been collected by all BALTA researchers.  It may well be that the researcher will find that one or more of these common elements will not be particularly pertinent to the researcher's own concerns.  So you will not include such elements in your own case report.   Nevertheless, we ask that in the course of your study you collect each piece of information queried in the framework so that you can report it on the framework form that each BALTA researcher is being asked to complete.

Both principal investigators and student research assistants have tested and used this form already, and we estimate that completing it after you have concluded your own case report will take no more than a couple or so hours.  Thus, reaching the BALTA goal of common information on all cases should not appreciably increase the work of any researcher.

An additional benefit of the framework is that it will act as a kind of nudge to each researcher to make sure that certain significant items have indeed been considered and collected. Our experience with the form has demonstrated that it does not tilt a case in any artificial direction.  In fact, in our tests, it allows and even promotes the case researcher's own bent.  For this reason alone, you will find it useful to review this handbook before actually beginning your own case research.

## Some Practicalities

In the course of its preliminary applications, the framework has been worked and re-worked to make it more practical and meaningful.  In the end, we have discovered that it has helped us with our own case inquiries, even though that was not its

original intention.  It has served as a very convenient checklist to make sure that we have effectively covered  a full range of pertinent questions.

The framework questions may be helpful as a convenient checklist to assist your search for supplementary documentation or to construct all or part of an interview guide.  But, of course, it should not be used as an interview guide itself.  The questions in the framework are "data questions," not interview questions, and they would always have to be reformulated to use with any real-life respondent-interviewee.  Again, the form is not intended as any sort of required outline for your own final case report.

The completed framework form should, ultimately, be prepared as an annex to the substantive case report that the researcher produces for her/his own purposes.  It will serve as a kind of index to your case inquiry.  In fact, after completing your own basic case report, you can then answer most of the questions on the form simply by indicating the page(s) in your case report on which the information relevant to that question occurs.  [That means, of course, that your case report has to be in its final format, so that the pages can be accurately ascribed.  In preliminary tests, we have lost time by not recognizing that!]  In the end, then, your completed framework form will be a critical aid to the BALTA researchers who will be doing a secondary analysis of the whole body of BALTA cases.

There are 16 topics in the case framework form.  The form is designed to accommodate a lot of different situations and circumstances, so some of it may <u>not</u> fit your particular case.  Again, it is quite possible that the researcher will not be interested to the same degree in each topic, or in the relevance of a particular question under a topic heading.  We simply ask that you consider the question in the course of your inquiry, so that you can answer that question in the end.  We actually believe that you will find virtually all of the questions under each topic to be fairly relevant to your case, but if not, you can always answer the question with "N/A" – that is, "not applicable."  Often, two or more questions can be answered together; and sometimes they are most easily answered by a discursive comment, rather than some specific fact or formulation.  In responding to the form, you should try only to communicate your best answer as makes most sense to <u>you</u>.

You will find the complete form at the end of this handbook.  Download it for your own purposes of filling it out - or otherwise using it.

### Section by Section

Now, let's proceed through each topic section, to make clear its intent and how it can be fleshed out.

**Section 1 – The Case:**  This is probably the only section that will take some extra thought.  It has two parts.

The first part, 1A, is more discursive than almost all the other sections in the framework; it is intended to make more explicit the significance of your case and of your choice of it as a significant case to be studied.  Such concerns help to highlight the importance of your case and indicate facets that might be overlooked by someone else who is not familiar with the kind of case it is or the issues that have made it important to study.  So we will need your ideas spelled out here.

In Section 1-B, the ordinary identifying data are intended to make this case easy to use for BALTA's overall project of mapping the social economy of BC and AB.

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*Section 1- The Case*

## 1-A  - Preliminary Considerations

How does the case match the BALTA criteria as a part of the "social economy" of BC/AB?

What significance or guiding considerations led to the selection of this case for study?  Do you see this case in any major way as representing a new or emergent trend, force, or the like?

Originally, who actually chose and/or recommended this case for study?  With what in mind?  Who, if any person or group, had indicated an interest in having this case studied <u>before</u> you began the inquiry?

How significant in the overall social economy would you say is the <u>sector</u> (or category) represented by this case?  Why?

What audience(s) is your own final case report designed for?  Who or what sort of groups do you particularly want to read it?

| *1-B - Identifying Data* |
| --- |
| Name of the organization/initiative |
| Full address [if possible, also note a contact person and telephone] |
| Year of incorporation [if formal incorporation came substantially late in the life of the case, or if no incorporation or incorporation is irrelevant, note the circumstances and the date of establishment otherwise] |

**Section 2 - Context:**   These questions you will undoubtedly have dealt with in your case report, and so, clearly, merely citing pages will do here.  The last question may bring up some things you didn't feel were necessary to report for the audience for your own paper. However, they could be useful to a more general audience.

| *Section 2 – Context* |
| --- |
| Location and territory served. Please use these territorial categories: urban, suburban, small urban, rural, First Nation, provincial, national.  Even if the case is of a community of interest , a territorial dimension needs to be specified. |

| What circumstances/factors led to the establishment of the initiative? What problems or opportunities was the initiative intended to resolve or take advantage of? The history of the initiative. |
| --- |
| "Prior market characteristics" – i.e., what might be considered the <u>pre-existing</u> demand that is linked to this initiative/organization and its avowed outputs (be they services, products, community changes, or whatever). |
| Additional information about the context that you believe would help others to understand the meaning and significance of the case – local events, geography, demographics, history of  the category of the focus activity; e.g., resource extraction for fisheries; social housing; day care, etc. |

**Section 3 – Goals/Mandates:** Sometimes it is difficult to sort out the different levels of the organization's intentions and aims.  This section tries to get at that in a variety of different ways.  For example, in re long-term goals, we seek, among other things, any conception of a future society that they may be looking at.

| *Section 3 – Goals/Mandate* |
| --- |
| Why did the organizers adopt a social economy approach for this initiative (as opposed to a private sector or public sector approach)? |
| Main objective(s) of the initiative/organization, in the general terms used by the group.<br>If you obtained explicit vision or mission statements, please attach. |
| Core activity of the initiative.  Limit your description here to actual activities - do not include impacts, which will be dealt with in later sections. |
| Core aims of the initiative – include social, economic, ecological, and other, as relevant to the case. |
| Short, medium, long-term goals – here include anything that sheds light on their ideas about the future |
| Describe the strategies being employed to address the problems behind the establishment of the initiative |
| Specific group/community being targeted  (i.e., unemployed, women, poor, immigrants, or a specific neighborhood, etc.) |
| Has there been any history of significant change in their activity or goals or structure (cf. Section 5)?  Describe. |
| Make sure the information in this Section relates to info in Sections 9-12, and vice versa |

**Section 4 – Partners:** In this section we seek information on the immediate partnerships and close supporters of the case organization/initiative.  That is, we are looking here for those groups, if any, that are actively engaged with your case group, as contrasted with funding relationships with government or private sources.  In short, this is not about financing, although any partners will of course be using financial or other resources in their partnering.

| *Section 4 – Partners* |
| --- |
| Name and rank in importance (with your rationale for the ranking) any active organizational partners in this initiative and explain their roles (include specific contact names, if possible, and identify their roles). |
| Have there been any significant changes in partnership relations?  Describe. |

| Why is the partner involved here – that is, what are they themselves trying to achieve by the partnership? |
|---|
| Has the initiative increased the community's capacity to develop effective partnerships? If yes, how? [Cf. Sec.8] |

**Section 5 – Management Structure/Organizational Format:** Here the actual legal governance and management arrangements are to be identified, as well as details of staffing, volunteers, members.  Also, as relevant to the social economy perspective, we are interested here in your information as to how a democratic participatory format and process is or is not exhibited in your case and how people who are often excluded from participation are or are not brought into the format.

| *Section 5 – Management Structure/Organizational Format* |
|---|
| Legal structure (i.e., non-profit, co-op, division or project of non-profit, for-profit, etc.) |
| If a Board is in place, how is it selected? Describe the make-up of the Board (i.e., all local residents, government representatives, etc.).  Note if any significant turnover, as provided in bylaws or for other reasons. |
| Who/what sponsoring organization, if any, began the initiative and/or is currently leading the initiative/enterprise? Specify how the local community was/is involved. |
| Number of staff:  Break down by full-time, part-time [clearly define categories].  Also, where these would be significant to the initiative, break down by percentage (or numbers) in terms of diversity: disabled, gender, age, ethnicity, education, "new Canadians," other classifications.  Also, if relevant, look at the recruitment/retention picture. |
| Present similar data on volunteers, where these are important participants. |
| Describe the decision-making process within the management structure. [Specify if and how employees, community members, and other participants have been empowered through the initiative]   Consider formal and informal power relations when these are significant. |
| Describe how the initiative has supported people or communities to exert greater control over their economic and social affairs. Indicators must be specified – probably not quantitative, but some indications. |
| Has any use been made of advisory committees and of consultants?  Describe. |
| Describe any specific strategy (including annual revisions of the strategic plan) in place to adapt the activities of the initiative to changing conditions. |
| If membership is a feature, provide numbers and characteristics as well as their relation to the legal structure and their level of engagement. |

**Section 6 – Financial Status:**  This information will be very important for presenting the overall economic place that the social economy sector represents – and for the broad mapping of the BC/AB social economy.   Generally speaking, data on the current year is preferable, but whatever year makes best sense in terms of your case will be appropriate.  If more than one year's data can be provided, that will be good too.  Just be sure to specify the year for the data.

| *Section 6 – Financial Status* |
|---|
| Annual operating budget (specify year, which should be the same for all other data in this section). |

| |
|---|
| Annual sales (in dollars). Differentiate between sales in a general market and sales to a government body. |
| Source(s) of all annual income, and amounts. [Use either percentages or raw figures and provide them by these categories - grants, contracts, market sales of goods or services, gifts, other.] |
| Asset base (basically this is intended to indicate any ready financial capital or real property resources). |
| Wage and salary costs. |
| Is there a policy for the distribution of surpluses or profits? If yes, describe and explain how this policy supports the social and other goals of the initiative. |
| Describe, if appropriate, any plans for self-sufficiency (i.e., to become independent of grants/gifts). |
| Provide examples (if any) of leveraging funding into additional support for the initiative. Be sure to include equity and loans as well as any grants, etc. |
| If volunteer services actually represent a quite significant financial contribution, describe here, but do not include any figures in the above description of income. Perhaps number of hours of service can be cited. |
| Comment on any trends or special events that are significant for understanding financial status. |

**Section 7 – Roles of Government, Foundations, Corporations, Banks:** This section is touches on one dimension of outside financing, but mainly concerns other influences upon the organization by outside agents, both governmental and non-governmental.

| Section 7 – Roles of Government, Foundations, Corporations, Banks |
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| What has been the level of investment (if any) by any of these for the case? [This does not pertain to annual income figures or annual operating grants; include here only loans or equity arrangements and describe what the investor expects as a return, both financial and other.] |
| Describe any joint ventures – that is, businesses jointly owned by the organization and some private or public partner(s). |
| Are there any other significant government or private activities intimately related and interacting with this case? [This is intended to pick up something important that you feel is not otherwise treated, so do not include what is already reported re partnerships in Section 4] |
| What government policies/programs directly impact the initiative? Provide details. (If there are significant policies/programs in the private sector that directly impact the case in ways you think are important to note, describe these too.) |
| Who are the organization's main on-going contacts within governments or corporations, etc., and/or what are their roles in their own organizations? |

**Section 8 – Capacity Building:** This section aims to flesh out any contribution that your case makes to any sort of increase in the capacity of individuals, groups, or the community as a whole to deal with everyday issues. In some instances, this will be the core activity of the case organization, as when a credit union or an intermediary organization is focused on increasing the financial management capacity of local social economy organizations. Use this section to deal with details not handled in Section 3 (Goals/Mandate).

| Section 8 – Capacity Building |
|---|
| Describe the focus of any individual capacity-building activities (e.g., job training) within the initiative. Include both formal and informal (e.g., on-the-job training) activities. |
| If training has occurred, specify the number of individuals trained annually [break down by gender, age, ethnicity, etc., when this would appear a significant feature]. |
| Has the capacity been increased for the local community or for specific organizations within it? If yes, specify how knowledge and skills within the community have been enhanced. |
| Describe any internal capacity challenges (i.e., in terms of technical or management skills) faced by the case organization.  How have these been met or not? |
| Are organization staffers able to access training and skill development opportunities? If yes, describe. |
| Has the organization taken as the whole or a part of its role the improvement of the capacity of other organizations?  If so, describe. |
| Compare and link items in this Section with items in Secs. 3, 9-12. |

**Section 9 - Impacts and Outcomes:**  This and the following three sections are, admittedly, somewhat complex, as is always the case of trying to pin down the effects of some activity.  Try to recognize the BALTA-wide stress on indicators (qualitative and quantitative).  "Impacts" and "Outcomes" are ordinarily distinguished in the field of evaluation studies; here we don't strive for that conceptual distinction, but simply hope to get whatever you can describe as the positive (or negative) effects of the case you studied.  Section 9 is for more general comments, with the later sections singling out more specific kinds of impacts/outcomes.

| Section 9 – Impacts and Outcomes |
|---|
| Does the organization track potential impacts/outcomes of the initiative? If so, how? Include any specific evaluation studies. |
| Describe the general impacts/outcomes of the initiative within the target community in terms of:<br>• Individuals<br>• Households<br>• Own organization/enterprise capacity (note learning from own mistakes/experience)<br>• The broader community (including any systemic changes, improved government relations, etc.)<br>• Ecological conditions<br>For each impact, specify what factors/interventions contributed to the positive impact as well as which interventions were not successful in creating a positive impact. [This description should include details of the role of the initiative in creating the impacts/outcomes – e.g., how it motivated people to continue education, start their own business, etc.] |
| Pay particular attention to distinguishing intended beneficiaries and unintended beneficiaries. |
| Consider any spin-offs (in organizations or functions) or any innovations, new organizations. |

**Section 10 – Social Impacts/Outcomes:** If not brought up in your Section 9, responses, here are some specific issues regarding the social dimension

| Section 10 – Social Impacts/Outcomes |
| --- |
| Has the social capital (i.e., useful relationships) within the target community been enhanced by the initiative, and if so, how? [Use quant. or qual. indicators; e.g., look for increased activities or give examples.] |
| Has the initiative led to other improved community relationships and/or increased collaboration within the community? If yes, provide details. |
| Has the initiative been a force for improved equity and perceptions of equity – i.e., a sense of fairness among groups or sectors. |
| Is there a greater sense of hope and confidence in the future in the community? How is this manifest? |

**Section 11 – Economic Impacts/Outcomes:** Since this is a major issue in the field of social economy, be as thorough and specific as possible for economic impacts and outcomes. Where appropriate, contrast 'before and after' conditions.

| Section 11 – Economic Impacts/Outcomes |
| --- |
| Has the economic well-being/capacity of the community been increased through the initiative? If yes, provide evidence and stats (i.e., increases in incomes or financial assets, new businesses established, new services or products made available, new or improved housing units, etc.). |
| Provide the number of jobs directly created through the initiative. Distinguish these from number of jobs retained and from number of jobs indirectly created. |
| If applicable, describe how barriers to employment have been reduced. |
| Where relevant, consider efficiencies in cost controls. |
| Consider offsets to public costs (decreased welfare benefit needs, etc.) |

**Section 12 – Impacts/Outcomes re Ecology and Community Health/Well-Being:** The ecological impacts are a more generalized benefit for the community as a whole, but there are also other potential overall community benefits that may not have been otherwise highlighted in the section on social benefits or in capacity-building.

| Section 12 – Impacts/Outcomes re Ecology and Community Health/Well-being |
| --- |
| Were there any attempts to deal with ecological issues? Was the physical environment in anyway impacted by the initiative? Describe. |
| Describe how the overall resilience/well-being of the community (or targeted sectors) has been enhanced by the initiative. If it has not, explain why. [Consider resilience as community capacity to adapt to change (e.g., reduce the negatives from externally-caused events such as closing of a railroad station, construction of a highway, potential business closings, weather disasters, etc.); and describe the means of improved resilience (e.g., early warning systems, etc.).] |
| What new institutional resources have been furthered by the initiative that have had an overall community effect—such as opening new pre-natal services with consequent decline in birth problems/fatalities? |

**Section 13 – Participation in Research:**  It is one of the aims of the BALTA project to promote a mutually beneficial relationship between academic and practitioner sectors, so that relevant and high quality research on the social economy is more likely.  This can include an improvement or increase in operational information at the level of the individual organization itself.  In either case, we are interested in any focus upon research at the organization.

| *Section 13 – Participation in Research* |
| --- |
| Does the organization participate in research activities? If yes, what are they? If not, explain (lack of capacity, lack of opportunity, concerns over potential negative effects, etc.).  Include here any systematic attention to tracking outcomes/impacts, if not noted for Section 9. |
| Describe the networks (if any) that the organization relies on for sharing information and learning from other initiatives (conferences, list serves, etc.). |
| What does the organization believe to be key research needs in its area of the social economy, or in general? |
| Note how the organization was related to the case study itself, participated in it. |

**Section 14 – Respondents' Insights:**  Usually a case study can benefit from the self-observations of the participants-actors in the organization under study.  And these insights can be explicitly elicited by the researcher.  Here we suggest some specific questions that might be addressed to selected informants in the process of the case inquiry.

| *Section 14 – Respondents' Insights* |
| --- |
| "What have been the main challenges faced in the creation and functioning of this project?" |
| "What might have been done differently (presumably better) in initiating the project and in the type of strategies that were employed?" |
| "What do you identify as the main barriers to growth or performance of the project over the past year?" [It may be necessary to provide categories and probes for the respondent, such as "Besides inadequate funding?" or "Internal factors?", etc.] |
| "What would you identify as the main barriers to growth or performance of the project over the coming year or so?" [Again, provide categories, as needed.] |
| "What would you stress to an outsider (I mean someone like a government officer, or another Social Economy practitioner, or newspaper reporter, or a major corporation representative) as the most significant conclusions to draw from the experience of your organization/initiative?"  [Note: respondent may see different stresses as appropriate for different audiences.] |

**Section 15 – Methodological Observations:**  How the study was actually conducted may, in some instances, be an important factor in our use of the case for comparisons and contrasts and for aggregating data from several cases.  So we would like to know how you gathered the information for your case report.

| *Section 15 – Methodological Observations* |
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| Who was interviewed (by what means and for what length of time), and what were their roles in re this initiative or organization?  [Include and specify those with whom communication was by email.] |

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| How 'accessible' [candid, free, available] were the respondents? (whenever significant, include variations among respondents and provide your interpretation for the variety.) |
| What differences in perspectives or factual items arose? (And how might these be interpreted?) |
| Aside from formal/informal interviews, explain and describe your use of any observational methods (e.g., attending meetings at the organization)? What was their significance for the case study? |
| What other sources of information were used (documents, press accounts, etc.), and what was their significance? |
| Before you began this study, were any major/unusual obstacles foreseen in gathering the information? How did that turn out? What about any major/unusual obstacles encountered that were not foreseen? |

**Section 16 - Implications:** Here we seek your own interpretation of the upshot of your case inquiry. It would naturally flow from your aims in doing the study in the first place. Mostly you probably have already expressed your conclusions and views in your case report and so will normally merely cite here those pages from your final report.

| *Section 16 – Implications* |
|---|
| Here should be a discussion that in essence gives the reporter's own views on that question in Section 14 that was posed to the organizational respondents ("What would you stress to an outsider…"). |
| Also, we need your discussion of what this report holds for the whole idea of strengthening and scaling up social economy activities – i.e., the central overall aim of the BALTA project. |

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*Section 1- The Case*

## 1-A  - Preliminary Considerations

How does the case match the BALTA criteria as a part of the "social economy" of BC/AB?

What significance or guiding considerations led to the selection of this case for study?  Do you see this case in any major way as representing a new or emergent trend, force, or the like?

Originally, who actually chose and/or recommended this case for study?  With what in mind?  Who, if any person or group, had indicated an interest in having this case studied <u>before</u> you began the inquiry?

How significant in the overall social economy would you say is the <u>sector</u> (or category) represented by this case?  Why?

What audience(s) is your own final case report designed for?  Who or what sort of groups do you particularly want to read it?

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| *1-B - Identifying Data* |
| Name of the organization/initiative |
| Full address [if possible, also note a contact person and telephone] |
| Year of incorporation [if formal incorporation came substantially late in the life of the case, or if no incorporation or incorporation is irrelevant, note the circumstances and the date of establishment otherwise] |
| *Section 2 – Context* |
| Location and territory served. Please use these territorial categories: urban, suburban, small urban, rural, First Nation, provincial, national.  Even if the case is of a community of interest , a territorial dimension needs to be specified. |
| What circumstances/factors led to the establishment of the initiative? What problems or opportunities was the initiative intended to resolve or take advantage of?  The history of the initiative. |
| "Prior market characteristics" – i.e., what might be considered the <u>pre-existing</u> demand that is linked to this initiative/organization and its avowed outputs (be they services, products, community changes, or whatever). |

| |
|---|
| Additional information about the context that you believe would help others to understand the meaning and significance of the case – local events, geography, demographics, history of the category of the focus activity; e.g., resource extraction for fisheries; social housing; day care, etc. |
| *Section 3 – Goals/Mandate* |
| Why did the organizers adopt a social economy approach for this initiative (as opposed to a private sector or public sector approach)? |
| Main objective(s) of the initiative/organization, in the general terms used by the group. If you obtained explicit vision or mission statements, please attach. |
| Core activity of the initiative [for enterprises, use Stats Can terminology to ensure comparability]. Limit your description here to actual activities - do not include impacts, which will be dealt with in later sections. |
| Core aims of the initiative – include social, economic, ecological, and other, as relevant to the case. |
| Short, medium, long-term goals – here include anything that sheds light on their ideas about the future |
| Describe the strategies being employed to address the problems behind the establishment of the initiative |
| Specific group/community being targeted  (i.e., unemployed, women, poor, immigrants, or a specific neighborhood, etc.) |
| Has there been any history of significant change in their activity or goals or structure (cf. Section 5)?  Describe. |
| Make sure the information in this Section relates to info in Sections 9-12, and vice versa |
| *Section 4 – Partners* |
| Name and rank in importance (with your rationale for the ranking) any active organizational partners in this initiative and explain their roles (include specific contact names, if possible, and identify their roles). |
| Have there been any significant changes in partnership relations?  Describe. |
| Why is the partner involved here – that is, what are they themselves trying to achieve by the partnership? |
| Has the initiative increased the community's capacity to develop effective partnerships? If yes, how? [Cf. Sec.8] |
| *Section 5 – Management Structure/Organizational Format* |
| Legal structure (i.e., non-profit, co-op, division or project of non-profit, for-profit, etc.) |
| If a Board is in place, how is it selected? Describe the make-up of the Board (i.e., all local residents, government representatives, etc.).  Note if any significant turnover, as provided in bylaws or for other reasons. |
| Who/what sponsoring organization, if any, began the initiative and/or is currently leading the initiative/enterprise? Specify how the local community was/is involved. |
| Number of staff:  Break down by full-time, part-time [clearly define categories]. Also, where these would be significant to the initiative, break down by percentage (or numbers) in terms of diversity: disabled, gender, age, ethnicity, education, "new Canadians," other classifications [use census data categories where possible].  Also, if relevant, look at the recruitment/retention picture. |
| Present similar data on volunteers, where these are important participants. |

| |
|---|
| Describe the decision-making process within the management structure. [Specify if and how employees, community members, and other participants have been empowered through the initiative]   Consider formal and informal power relations when these are significant. |
| Describe how the initiative has supported people or communities to exert greater control over their economic and social affairs. Indicators must be specified – probably not quantitative, but some indications. |
| Has any use been made of advisory committees and of consultants?  Describe. |
| Describe any specific strategy (including annual revisions of the strategic plan) in place to adapt the activities of the initiative to changing conditions. |
| If membership is a feature, provide numbers and characteristics as well as their relation to the legal structure and their level of engagement. |
| *Section 6 – Financial Status* |
| Annual operating budget (specify year, which should be the same for all other data in this section). |
| Annual sales (in dollars).  Differentiate between sales in a general market and sales to a government body. |
| Source(s) of all underline annual income, and amounts.  [Use either percentages or raw figures and provide them by these categories - grants, contracts, market sales of goods or services, gifts, other.] |
| Asset base (basically this is intended to indicate any ready financial capital or real property resources). |
| Wage and salary costs. |
| Is there a policy for the distribution of surpluses or profits? If yes, describe and explain how this policy supports the social and other goals of the initiative. |
| Describe, if appropriate, any plans for self-sufficiency (i.e., to become independent of grants/gifts). |
| Provide examples (if any) of leveraging funding into additional support for the initiative. Be sure to include equity and loans as well as any grants, etc. |
| If volunteer services actually represent a quite significant financial contribution, describe here, but do not include any figures in the above description of income. Perhaps number of hours of service can be cited. |
| Comment on any trends or special events that are significant for understanding financial status. |
| *Section 7 – Roles of Government, Foundations, Corporations, Banks* |
| What has been the level of investment (if any) by any of these for the case?  [This does not pertain to annual income figures or annual operating grants; include here only loans or equity arrangements and describe what the investor expects as a return, both financial and other.] |
| Describe any joint ventures – that is, businesses jointly owned by the organization and some private or public partner(s). |
| Are there any other significant government or private activities intimately related and interacting with this case?  [This is intended to pick up something important that you feel is not otherwise treated, so do not include what is already reported re partnerships in Section 4] |
| What government policies/programs directly impact the initiative? Provide details. (If there are significant policies/programs in the private sector that directly impact the case in ways you think are important to note, describe these too.) |
| Who are the organization's main on-going contacts within governments or corporations, etc., and/or what are their roles in their own organizations? |

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| *Section 8 – Capacity Building* |
| Describe the focus of any individual capacity-building activities (e.g., job training) within the initiative. Include both formal and informal (e.g., on-the-job training) activities. |
| If training has occurred, specify the number of individuals trained annually [break down by gender, age, ethnicity, etc., when this would appear a significant feature]. |
| Has the capacity been increased for the local community or for specific organizations within it? If yes, specify how knowledge and skills within the community have been enhanced. |
| Describe any internal capacity challenges (i.e., in terms of technical or management skills) faced by the case organization.  How have these been met or not? |
| Are organization staffers able to access training and skill development opportunities? If yes, describe. |
| Has the organization taken as the whole or a part of its role the improvement of the capacity of other organizations?  If so, describe. |
| Compare and link items in this Section with items in Secs. 3, 9-12. |
| *Section 9 – Impacts and Outcomes* |
| Does the organization track potential impacts/outcomes of the initiative? If so, how? Include any specific evaluation studies. |
| Describe the general impacts/outcomes of the initiative within the target community in terms of: <br> • Individuals <br> • Households <br> • Own organization/enterprise capacity (note learning from own mistakes/experience) <br> • The broader community (including any systemic changes, improved government relations, etc.) <br> • Ecological conditions <br> For each impact, specify what factors/interventions contributed to the positive impact as well as which interventions were not successful in creating a positive impact. [This description should include details of the role of the initiative in creating the impacts/outcomes – e.g., how it motivated people to continue education, start their own business, etc.] |
| Pay particular attention to distinguishing intended beneficiaries and unintended beneficiaries. |
| Consider any spin-offs (in organizations or functions) or any innovations, new organizations. |
| *Section 10 – Social Impacts/Outcomes* |
| Has the social capital (i.e., useful relationships) within the target community been enhanced by the initiative, and if so, how?  [Use quant. or qual. indicators; e.g., look for increased activities or give examples.] |
| Has the initiative led to other improved community relationships and/or increased collaboration within the community? If yes, provide details. |
| Has the initiative been a force for improved equity and perceptions of equity – i.e., a sense of fairness among groups or sectors. |
| Is there a greater sense of hope and confidence in the future in the community? How is this manifest? |

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| *Section 11 – Economic Impacts/Outcomes* |
| Has the economic well-being/capacity of the community been increased through the initiative? If yes, provide evidence and stats  (i.e., increases in incomes or financial assets, new businesses established, new services or products made available, new or improved housing units, etc.). |
| Provide the number of jobs directly created through the initiative. Distinguish these from number of jobs retained and from number of jobs indirectly created. |
| If applicable, describe how barriers to employment have been reduced. |
| Where relevant, consider efficiencies in cost controls. |
| Consider offsets to public costs (decreased welfare benefit needs, etc.) |
| *Section 12 – Impacts/Outcomes re Ecology and Community Health/Well-being* |
| Were there any attempts to deal with ecological issues?  Was the physical environment in anyway impacted by the initiative? Describe. |
| Describe how the overall resilience/well-being of the community (or targeted sectors) has been enhanced by the initiative. If it has not, explain why.  [Consider resilience as community capacity to adapt to change (e.g., reduce the negatives from externally-caused events such as closing of a railroad station, construction of a highway, potential business closings, weather disasters, etc.); and describe the means of improved resilience (e.g., early warning systems, etc.).] |
| What new institutional resources have been furthered by the initiative that have had an overall community effect—such as opening new pre-natal services with consequent decline in birth problems/fatalities? |
| *Section 13 – Participation in Research* |
| Does the organization participate in research activities? If yes, what are they? If not, explain (lack of capacity, lack of opportunity, concerns over potential negative effects, etc.).  Include here any systematic attention to tracking outcomes/impacts, if not noted for Section 9. |
| Describe the networks (if any) that the organization relies on for sharing information and learning from other initiatives (conferences, list serves, etc.). |
| What does the organization believe to be key research needs in its area of the social economy, or in general? |
| Note how the organization was related to the case study itself, participated in it. |
| *Section 14 – Respondents' Insights* |
| "What have been the main challenges faced in the creation and functioning of this project?" |
| "What might have been done differently (presumably better) in initiating the project and in the type of strategies that were employed?" |
| "What do you identify as the main barriers to growth or performance of the project over the past year?" [It may be necessary to provide categories and probes for the respondent, such as "Besides inadequate funding?" or "Internal factors?", etc.] |
| "What would you identify as the main barriers to growth or performance of the project over the coming year or so?" [Again, provide categories, as needed.] |
| "What would you stress to an outsider (I mean someone like a government officer, or another Social Economy practitioner, or newspaper reporter, or a major corporation representative) as the most significant conclusions to draw from the experience of your organization/initiative?"  [Note: respondent may see different stresses as appropriate for different audiences.] |

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| *Section 15 – Methodological Observations* |
| Who was interviewed (by what means and for what length of time), and what were their roles in re this initiative or organization?  [Include and specify those with whom communication was by email.] |
| How 'accessible' [candid, free, available] were the respondents?  (whenever significant, include variations among respondents and provide your interpretation for the variety.) |
| What differences in perspectives or factual items arose? (And how might these be interpreted?) |
| Aside from formal/informal interviews, explain and describe your use of any observational methods (e.g., attending meetings at the organization)?  What was their significance for the case study? |
| What other sources of information were used (documents, press accounts, etc.), and what was their significance? |
| Before you began this study, were any major/unusual obstacles foreseen in gathering the information? How did that turn out?  What about any major/unusual obstacles encountered that were not foreseen? |
| *Section 16 – Implications* |
| Here should be a discussion that in essence gives the reporter's own views on that question in Section 14 that was posed to the organizational respondents ("What would you stress to an outsider…"). |
| Also, we need your discussion of what this report holds for the whole idea of strengthening and scaling up social economy activities – i.e., the central overall aim of the BALTA project. |

[Note: This version of the framework form differs slightly from the final, somewhat revised version as provided in Appendix A. The differences are not significant for looking at it as an example of how a case report can be "indexed" with the form.]

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| *Section 1A - Preliminary Considerations* **Pp.1-4** <br><br> Does the case match BALTA criteria as a part of the "social economy" of BC/AB or elsewhere? How? <br><br> What guiding considerations led to the selection of this case for study? <br><br> How significant is the sector (or category) represented by this case? <br><br> How significant was the organization/initiative seen to be before it was selected, and why and by whom? <br><br> Does this case in any major way represent an emergent trend, force, or the like? <br><br> Who, if any person or group, has indicated an interest in this case study? What audience(s) is the case report designed for? <br><br> Before beginning this study, were any major obstacles foreseen in gathering the information intended by the questions in this checklist? And afterwards? **No** | | | |
| *Section 1B – Identification* | | | |
| Name of the organization/initiative **p.1** | | | |
| Full address and contact info [to support physical mapping] **32383 South Fraser Way, Abbotsford, B.C. V2T 1W7 (Phone Stacey Corriveau: 604-864-5770-x-307** | | | |
| Year of establishment [note any later year of registration] **Feb. 1, 2005 was start of Centre's feasibility study; actual operations began at end of that year.** | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| *Section 2 – Context* ***pp.1-3*** | | | |
| Location and territory served (urban, small urban, rural, First Nation, provincial, national) **small urban & rural** | | | |
| What circumstances/factors led to the establishment of the initiative? What problem(s) was/were the initiative intended to resolve? | | | |
| History of the initiative | | | |
| Additional information about the context – history, geography, demographics, history of service type as appropriate for each SERC; e.g., history of resource extraction for fisheries or forestry; history of social housing for housing; day care, etc. | | | |
| "Market characteristics" – i.e., what might be considered the pre-existing demand(s) for this initiative/organization and its avowed outputs (services, products, community changes, etc.)  **There appeared to be no visible** | | | |

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| **demand before the Centre's own feasibility study in a sense created some, but in the process a forum in June 2005 established a definite demand.** | | |
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| *Section 3 – Goals/Mandate* | | |
| Why was a social economy approach adopted for this initiative (as opposed to private sector, public sector)? **Inherent in the initiative** | | |
| Main objective(s) of the initiative p**p.4-5** | | |
| Core activity of the initiative [look at Stats Can terminology to ensure comparability?] **"management consultation" – business development counseling** | | |
| Core social aim of the initiative (should also address any environmental aims) **strengthening community service NPs through their social enterprise development** | | |
| Short, medium, long-term goals **pp. 4-5, 10** | | |
| Describe the strategies being employed to address the problems behind the establishment of the initiative **pp. 4-9** | | |
| Specific group/community being targeted (i.e., unemployed, women, poor, immigrants, etc.) **NPs providing community services** | | |
| Has there been any history of significant change in activity or goals or structure?  Describe. **P. 9** | | |
| *Section 4 – Partners/Supporters* | | |
| Rank (with rationale) partners in this initiative and their roles (include specific contact names for partner orgs to enable follow-up with additional questions) **p. 2n ; Ron vanWyk (rvanwyk@mccbc.com)** | | |
| New/improved partnerships/collaboration through this initiative? If yes, describe  **p.5** | | |
| Has the initiative increased the community's capacity to develop effective partnerships? If yes, how? [Cf. Sec.8]  **pp.5-6 see also Sec. 5** | | |
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| | | |
| *Section 5 – Management Structure/Organizational Form* | | |
| Legal structure (i.e., non-profit, co-op, division or project of non-profit, for-profit, etc.) **p.1 (proj of non-profit CF)** | | |
| If a Board is in place, how is it selected? Describe the make-up of the Board (i.e., local, etc.).  Note any turnover, planned or otherwise. **N/A** | | |
| Who/what organization: 1) began the initiative and 2) is currently leading the initiative/enterprise? Specify how the local community was/is involved **Pp.1-2** | | |
| Number of staff:  Break down by full-time, part-time, volunteer participation [clearly define categories]; provide break down by gender, age, ethnicity, education, other classifications [according to census data categories], if these are significant to the initiative.  Also, if relevant, look at the recruitment/retention picture. **P.2** | | |
| Describe the decision-making process within the management structure; [specify if and how employees, community members and participants have been empowered through the initiative]   Consider formal and informal power relations when these are significant. **This was essentially a one-person outfit (mgr only), with general support of a community-based board of the CF sponsor and more specific support from a community-based advisory committee** | | |

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| Describe how the initiative has supported communities to exert greater control over their economic and social affairs. Indicators must be specified – not necessarily quantitative, but some indications<br><br>Mgr **was key in promoting work of Imagine Abbotsford (a community-based advocacy group for community improvement) to get city council to support neighborhood associations - a tool that the council had previously rejected, when it had been proposed to them as necessary to deal with large in-migration** | | | |
| Consider the use of advisory committees and of consultants **-** One consultant was used briefly on co-op legal/organizational status. Advis Comm has offered general support, provided some background research; but has not provided needed aid in fund-raising efforts | | | |
| | | | |
| *Section 6 – Financial status- should include financial history as well as current, to show trends* | | | |
| Annual operating budget   **Av. $80K/yr** | | | |
| Annual sales **– (actual receipts, but addtnl definite for next quarter) Conf. surplus & misc.  svcs: $13.5K (2005)  TA fees:  $5K (2006)**; **$12K (2007)** | | | |
| Source(s) of funds and amount [provide categories - i.e., grants, contracts, sales of goods, etc.]  **Federal grant; fees-for-TA; conference surplus; misc.** | | | |
| Asset base – **none** | | | |
| Wage and salary costs  **[Only FTE staff member's annual salary: $53K plus benefits (12%), but only half of the FTE was supported by the FVCSE grant,]** | | | |
| Is there a policy for the distribution of surpluses? If yes, describe and explain how this policy supports the social and other goals of the initiative  **N/A** | | | |
| Describe any plans for self-sufficiency  **p.10** | | | |
| Provide examples (if any) of leveraging funding into additional support for the initiative – **none** | | | |
| | | | |
| *Section 7 – Role of Government/External agencies* | | | |
| Which government policies/programs directly impact the initiative? Provide details. **Pp.1, 2, 8-10 (plus issues of making general business support extendable to social enterprises)** | | | |
| Who are the main contacts within government and other external agencies relevant to this organization? (enables follow-up questions outside the organization)   **Current contacts are only for required reports, though otherwise supportive: Garth Stiller, Mgr, Rural Sustainable Communities Unit, WD – BC Region (garth.stiller@wd.gc.ca)** | | | |
| What has been the level of investment (if any) by these agencies in the initiative? **P. 2** | | | |
| | | | |
| *Section 8 – Capacity Building* **TA activities, the work of the Centre, are per se capacity bldg, so presumably entire report is on this topic** | | | |
| Describe the focus of any capacity-building activities ( e.g., job training) within the initiative. Include both formal and informal (i.e., on- the- job training) activities. | | | |
| Has the capacity of the local community been increased? If yes, specify how knowledge and skills within the community have been enhanced. | | | |

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| If training has occurred, specify the number of individuals trained [break down by gender, age, ethnicity, etc., when this would appear a significant feature] | | | |
| Describe any internal capacity challenges (i.e., in terms of technical or management skills) faced by the organization leading the initiative. | | | |
| Are organization staff able to access training and skill development opportunities? If yes, describe. | | | |
| Compare and link items in this Section with items in Secs. 3, 9-12. | | | |
| | | | |
| *Section 9 – Impacts [This and following sections are particularly problematic, so they need to be recognized/interpreted broadly, although within the BALTA-wide stress on indicators (qual. & quant.)]* | | | |
| Does the organization track potential impacts of the initiative? If so, how? Does not systematically track impacts **No** | | | |
| Describe any specific strategy (including annual revisions of the strategic plan) in place to adapt the activities of the initiative to changing conditions. **Seeking priv sector funds to replace loss of govt grant program. See pp. 10-11** | | | |
| Describe the impacts of the initiative within the target community on:<br>• Individuals **none yet as no SEs launched**<br>• Households **ditto**<br>• Organization/Enterprise capacity (note learning from own mistakes/experience) **NPs are helped to look at selves from standpoint of SE development – but until SEs are launched the impact may be minor**<br>• The broader community (including any systemic changes) **see Sec. 5 above**<br>• Ecological **none**<br>For each impact, specify what factors/interventions contributed to the positive impact as well as which interventions were not successful in creating a positive impact. [these may be time-consuming to address but should have indications of, e.g., the role of the initiative in motivating people to continue education, start their own business, etc.)<br>**Note that impacts might be assigned to non-SE activities of the mgr. (cf. pp. 2, 5, 6)** | | | |
| Pay particular attention to specification of intended beneficiaries and unintended beneficiaries | | | |
| Consider any spin-offs (in organizations or functions) | | | |
| | | | |
| *Section 10 – Social Impacts* **see Sec 5 above** | | | |
| Has the social capital within the target community been enhanced by the initiative, and if so, how? [Use quant. or qual. indicators, e.g., look for increased activities/examples?] | | | |
| Has the initiative led to improved community relationships and/or increased collaboration within the community? If yes, provide details. **See Sec 4 & 8** | | | |
| Equity and perceptions of equity – i.e., fairness as a community benefit **N/A** | | | |
| | | | |
| Section 11 – *Economic Impacts* **None as yet, but could be expected via improved performance of NPs assisted and actual launch of SEs** | | | |
| Has the economic well-being/capacity of the community been increased through the initiative? If yes, provide examples (i.e., increases in incomes or financial assets, new businesses established, etc.) | | | |

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| If job creation was a goal, provide the number of jobs created/retained/accessed through the initiative. | | | |
| If applicable, describe how barriers to employment have been reduced. | | | |
| Consider efficiencies in cost controls in re benefits | | | |
| | | | |
| *Section 12 – Community Health and Well-being* **none as yet, but could be expected via improved performance of NPs assisted** | | | |
| Describe how the resilience and well-being of the community (or targeted sectors) has been enhanced by the initiative. If it has not, explain why. | | | |
| | | | |
| *Section 13 – Participation in Research* **p.6** | | | |
| Does the organization participate in research activities? If yes, what are they? If not, explain (lack of capacity, lack of opportunity, concerns over potential negative outcomes, etc.). | | | |
| Describe the networks (if any) the organization relies on for sharing information and learning from other initiatives (could be conferences, list serves, etc.) | | | |
| What does the organization believe to be key research needs in the area of the social economy? | | | |
| Note how the organization was related to the case study itself, participated in it **Mgr took special interest in the study, was especially helpful, accessible** | | | |
| *Section 14 – Respondents' Insights* **pp. 6-8, 11** | | | |
| "What have been the main challenges faced in the creation and functioning of this project?" | | | |
| "What might have been done differently (presumably better) in initiating the project and in the type of strategies that were employed? If so, what?" | | | |
| "What do you identify as the main barriers to growth of the project over the past year?" [It may be necessary to provide categories for the respondent] | | | |
| "What would you identify as the main barriers to growth of the initiative over the coming year?" [provide categories?] | | | |
| "What would you stress to an outsider (such as a govt officer, other Soc Econ practitioners, press/media, or major corporate representative) as the most significant conclusions to draw from the experience of this organization/initiative? [Note, different stresses may be appropriate for different audiences.] **Recommends to any other TA provider: don't bother with ordinary library, use website for materials to be available to clients** | | | |
| | | | |
| *Section 15 – Methodological Observations* | | | |
| Who was interviewed (by what means and for what length of time), and what were their roles in re this initiative or organization?  [Include and specify those with whom communication was by email.]  **[times here are very approx.] Manager of the centre (in person, by phone, and email) for a total of 4 hrs; genl mgr of sponsoring organization, in person and by phone, 1 hr; three advisory committee members (group in person for 1.5 hrs); Centre clients (three individually for 45 mins each; one by phone for 30 mins); CCE personnel at outset and later (phone and email), 1 hr)** | | | |

How 'accessible' [candid, free, available] were the respondents? (Include variations among respondents and provide interpretations) **All seemed very responsive and eager to participate**

What differences in perspectives or factual items arose? (And how might these be interpreted?)
**none**
Aside from formal/informal interviews, explain and describe any observational methods used in this report? What was their significance?
**none**
What other sources of information were used (documents, press accounts, etc.), and what was their significance?
**Minutes of Centre and related meetings, feasibility study reports (including of Centre itself), newsletters, background papers by CCE, etc.**
*Section 16 – Implications (as determined by the criteria for selection of the case studied)* **Pp. 3, 11-16**
Here should also be a discussion that in essence gives the reporter's own views on a question posed to the organizational respondents ("What would you stress to an outsider…").

## Appendix C – **THE FRASER VALLEY CENTRE FOR SOCIAL ENTERPRISE**

Exploring the Requirements for Successfully Offering Technical Assistance

to Social Enterprises

### *Stewart E. Perry*
Centre for Community Enterprise

Abstract:  A case study of the Fraser Valley Centre for Social Enterprise was made in order to gain insight into what is required to assure ongoing technical assistance resources for developing social enterprises.  The study concludes, first, that a provider of such services will require financial support quite apart from fees that may be earned by the services.  Aside from dedicated, flexible, and capable staff and a favourable organizational and community context, a centre will also need access to pre-tested resource materials and some support from other experienced social enterprise developers.  A full year of preliminary community-based public education, networking, and marketing of the idea of social enterprise is likely necessary before a prospective client base can be developed.  In the end, even a highly qualified provider will struggle against challenging odds without a positive public and policy environment that recognizes the significant contribution that social enterprises can and should make to the overall national economy.

The Fraser Valley Centre for Social Enterprise (hereafter the Centre) in Abbotsford, B.C., is a project sponsored by Community Futures South Fraser (CF) and operated within its organizational framework.  It evolved out of the CF's division for Community Economic Development (CED).  In contrast to most Community Futures in British Columbia or elsewhere in the nation, the South Fraser CF views CED as a necessary counterpart to the traditional Community Futures program (technical assistance and loan financing for local entrepreneurs in rural/small town areas).

Thus some five years ago, with enthusiastic support from the general manager, the CF board authorized creating a specific division of the organization to carry out CED activities.  However, this resulted in budgeting only for one half-time staff member, who would also have half-time duties in the business counseling division. The CED division, in time, came to promote and secure funds for such projects as a local farmers' market and an arts marketing co-operative of prison inmates.  It might be noted here that nine of the ten federal correctional institutions in B.C. are located throughout the Fraser Valley region, and so they represent a significant economic feature of the region (which is more or less the entire area southeast of Vancouver and its suburbs to the U.S. border).

In 2004, the Canadian Prime Minister announced his government's commitment to fostering the social economy generally and social enterprise (SE) in particular, through its federal Social Economy Initiative (SEI).  While bureaucratic processes delayed the government from offering direct funding through its economic development agencies except in Quebec, these could use their CED budgets for such purposes.  As it happened, the CF's specialist for CED, Stacey Corriveau, had taken a two-day workshop on SE at Simon Fraser University's CED program that year, and the same year had attended the first national conference on SE.

By the end of the year, she prepared a concept paper for Western Diversification (the federal agency responsible for B.C. and three other provinces), in which she envisioned opening the Centre.  When that received a favourable reception at WD, she submitted an application by the CF for support for the Centre as a function of its CED division.[*]  WD awarded $198,000 for an initial phase that was essentially a feasibility study (begun February 1, 2005, and completed in October 2005), as well as for an operational  phase through March 2008.

The Abbotsford-based CF was in fact the only one out of 33 CFs in British Columbia to apply for any grant monies at all to support fostering local SE activities (although the CF originally foresaw other regional SE assistance centers in B.C.).  WD asked the Fraser Valley group to invite two other nearby CFs to participate in the Advisory Committee for the Centre since it planned to offer its services to the entire North and South Fraser Valley area, an extensive rural/small town region adjacent to its own immediate target area.  Nevertheless, the operational grant was modest, amounting to only one-half the salary of a single staff member, plus some supportive expenses.  The CF continued to underwrite Corriveau's other half time out of its CED budget.  Corriveau continued her work with the art cooperative, for example, and other broader CED concerns, but in actuality most of her efforts (including a lot of unpaid time) were focused on the Centre.

However, within a few months after receiving the WD funds something happened that had actually been cited as a potential threat in the feasibility analysis – that the federal government could change and social economy support would completely cease.  This indeed happened, with the result that projections for Centre revenue through fee-for-service consulting to social enterprises were no longer reasonable since projected program funds for technical assistance now would never roll out from the SEI.  Moreover, it became clear that neither WD nor any other federal agency would thereafter entertain proposals for support of anything related to the social economy.

The Centre is now nearing the end of its core funding, but Corriveau insists that even without further funding she will continue the work, no matter what.   She had been the first CED division staff person for the CF, coming from the business advisory division of CF.   She has received certification for "Small Business Counseling" and

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[*] In concept, the Centre was originally to have been a joint project of the CF and the B.C. Mennonite Central Committee's Employment and Community Development division.  The early support of a partner was helpful in the feasibility phase, but soon after that the MCC dropped its participation, on the ground of competing demands upon its time.  This meant that all the responsibility fell to the one CF staff person, Corriveau.

for "CED Professionals".  In 1996, she started (and still operates) her own successful business bookkeeping service.  And before becoming a CF staff member she had been a member of the CF board, representing the Abbotsford business sector.  Her initial instincts when she was asked to take on the CED responsibility were, she reports, not to shift her work from traditional business development, and she resisted the assignment.  But, she says, now she would wish to do nothing else, and she is particularly committed to the task of promoting social enterprise development.  It is something that is more challenging, she thinks, and provides more opportunity for innovation and sectoral impacts than the more conventional work with traditional businesses.

In summary:  Even with a highly committed director and full support from the CF, the Centre would appear to represent a very iffy proposition.  From the beginning, the Centre chose to be responsible for contributing to the development of a region far greater than the CF's own target area that it was already familiar with.  It also projected that it would become self-sustaining by the end of its grant (as its feasibility study had suggested was possible through the sale of its services and other support) and promised to show its effectiveness by helping to launch a minimum of five social enterprises.  The resources to carry out these responsibilities (and more general SE promotion responsibilities) were, however, limited to the efforts of the one CF staff person.  These three features of the Centre's beginning are key to deciphering one answer to the question that has animated this case study: Namely, <u>what does it take to make an enduring and effective technical assistance program for fostering social enterprise development?</u>


## The Impetus for This Study

In recent years, many non-profit organizations that have provided essential community services have become increasingly vulnerable financially since there is less and less government support.  As that trend continues, many non-profits (NPs), in order to continue high quality work (or even to survive), must diversify their revenue sources, potentially through the mechanism of social enterprises.  In addition, some core services will have to continue to be organized as new social enterprises, since neither the private nor the public sectors is willing to do the job. There is no doubt that social enterprise as such can help fill the large, well-recognized gap in the financing and availability of needed community services, by combining a market perspective with community goals.  There is sufficient evidence of that by now.[*]  This raises the general question: how can social enterprises be promoted more systematically and effectively and at an increasing scale?   And that question leads to the specific issue for this report: how to provide adequate and sustained technical assistance for social enterprise development.

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[*] See, for example, a report on one Canadian SE that has been in operation since 1983: Anne-Marie Mottet, "A Day in the Life of Le Boulot Vers," *Making Waves* (2004) 15,4:31-36.  For a searching view of the prospect for SEs, see Marty Donkervoort, "Success without Succession: Reflections on the Building and Sustaining of Social Enterprise," *Making Waves* (2006) 17,3:20-24.  Two long-term examples from the U.S. employ hundreds of workers and exhibit higher than industry wages:  Sherman Kreiner, "Sectoral Strategies in CED," *Making Waves* (2003) 14,3: 4-10.  However, no 'industry-wide' evaluation study has been conducted.

The case study was requested as a part of an on-going program of SE promotion by the Centre for Community Enterprise (CCE) that has been underwritten by the federal Rural Secretariat. The aim of CCE's Rural Secretariat 'Development Wheel' project is to promote effective technical assistance for social enterprises through modeling the training and enabling of regionally based, regionally focused groups to provide a proven technical assistance (TA) approach / curriculum, known as the Development Wheel. To date, such training activities have been carried on in francophone Ontario and Newfoundland, as well as British Columbia. There is also recent interest in the curriculum from organizations in Nunavut.

In British Columbia, CCE initially wanted to establish partnerships with three regionally based agencies: two Community Futures groups and a Skills Centre. The goal was to fully equip the three geographically dispersed groups to act as regional technical assistance resources for assisting potential or existing social enterprises. The project would involve, for example, training the staff to work with non-profits, delivering preliminary workshops for their regions, and providing assistance in developing strategies for publicizing the promotional workshops that the agencies themselves would deliver, and passing on the results of research conducted by CCE and others. But in short order it became evident that the day-to-day demands on agency staff members did not allow two of the organizations to maintain a commitment to the extra work that this implied. Only one of the three, the South Fraser CF remained active with CCE. It had, after all, specifically established the Centre to focus on social enterprises before it began a relationship with CCE. (The Skills Centre had hoped to get funds for SE development work, but by the time it applied for them at WD, the government had changed and would not countenance support for social enterprises.)

From Corriveau's point of view, what CCE offered to the Centre was a pre-designed and practical training curriculum that could provide skills for NP staff exploring the potential of a social enterprise. She jumped at the prospect of being trained in the use of the Development Wheel. Corriveau herself stresses the importance of having the Development Wheel manuals and curriculum available to her. She notes that anyone who seeks to establish a regional TA center and recognizes that business counseling tasks are quite specialized for working with non-profit community groups will save time and gain great benefit from using the established techniques. In short, it is not necessary to re-invent the Development Wheel.

## Mission and Goals of the FVCSE (the "Centre")

"The vision of the Fraser Valley Centre for Social Enterprise is of communities (of both geography and interest) that are vibrant and inclusive, and engaged in pursuing their own economic, social, and environmental sustainability by embracing change and community capacity building, and creating a culture of abundance and collaboration."

No more specific "Mission Statement" was developed, but the grant application laid out a set of goals that included: aiding non-profit organizations to become more self-reliant financially; promoting local buy-in of the social enterprise approach (this was particularly focused on the business sector, as potentially offering mentoring aid and investment to social enterprises); community improvements in poverty and its associated ills (via strengthening the local non-profits that serve those at risk);

positioning the Centre to expand its functions in SE; sharing resources and assisting other communities to create their own SE centres; and finally, helping to launch five social enterprises.

According to Corriveau, within the context of the CF itself, the Centre was viewed as a project to be spun off eventually (as other CED projects like the farmers' market were spun off). Thus the Centre was not seen as an integral part of the CF, though, interestingly enough, such projects are seen as potential job creation opportunities for CF staff, in the sense that the CF is always looking for ways to underwrite its staff expenses. Herb Thiessen, general manager of the CF, notes that although the Centre became a specific project under Corriveau's initiative, the CF board had in any case been concerned about the financial struggle that local NPs were having and saw support for them as a meaningful goal for the CF. At this point the CF considers social enterprises to be as eligible for credit or equity investments as the local conventional businesses. Thiessen believes, moreover, that despite the lack of government support for the social economy, the CF's WD contract will continue to include the freedom to work with social enterprises.

## Promotion and Networking

As the Centre moved into its operational phase, it engaged in a range of general developmental activities. Among these was establishing and maintaining a website on social enterprise, which is used nationwide and even by others outside Canada, and is now among the most developed in the field.[*] The Centre also built a database of contacts, all of whom receive a regular E-Bulletin on SE. Corriveau carried out a range of public information activities, speaking in various venues in B.C. and elsewhere. She spent much time with traditional businesspeople, including fellow leaders / members of the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce, in an effort to enlist the local business sector in the initiative, especially to be able to aid and mentor social enterprises. She reports that her efforts have not paid off well at all, despite the aid of the entrepreneur on her Advisory Committee who has pioneered for-profit collaboration with a non-profit social enterprise. Both she and members of her Advisory Committee explain (and complain) that the local business sector is extremely conservative. While Corriveau's fellow businesspeople would listen to her politely, they were never convinced that helping to create social enterprises was a task for them. Looking back on it, she feels she spent too much time trying to involve people who could not be recruited for any of what she saw as the three key roles they might play as mentors, investors, or part owners.

Nevertheless, within the Development Wheel approach, such work is highlighted as necessary attention to the local context of any TA organization or program or individual workshop. It is seen as fundamental to legitimizing the social enterprise idea and creating and maintaining the demand for TA, but it is also, of course, directly related to the growth of the social economy in general. And Corriveau, for the Centre, did not neglect that function, even though it would apparently have only long-term and hard-to-see results.

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[*] Until very recently, a Canadian Google search yielded the Centre as the top-ranked selection for "social enterprise." It was overtaken by ENP in December 2007. The Centre now holds the second position in the nation.

Among other promotional activities, Corriveau attended many networking functions in the Valley and elsewhere. She made presentations to individual non-profits, as well as to more general groups. The Centre (Corriveau and her steering committee) secured several government and private sources to support a successful Fraser Valley conference on the social economy; and, as part of her broader CED responsibilities, she has vigorously supported two new local social economy projects, Imagine Abbotsford and Vibrant Abbotsford. In addition, she chairs a working group for Abbotsford neighborhood associations.

As to relationships with local non-profits, the Centre urged the local non-profit organizations to share their challenges concerning both the basic idea and the detailed tasks of launching a social enterprise. Corriveau found, however, that the "Munch and Mutter" monthly networking meetings she convened, petered out for lack of attendance. She traces this to what she sees as over-stretched NP staff, and it worries her that the lack of their staff time will also interfere with starting and running any social enterprise they might try to support.

As of now, she sees the non-profit landscape as inhabited by two sorts of groups. One includes the larger well-established organizations, and the other is comprised of smaller struggling organizations. The latter were the special focus of her attention, since they clearly were the most vulnerable to financial stress and thus could benefit most from a supportive revenue stream from a social business. These indeed were the main participants of the key promotional device, public workshops on the Development Wheel approach. The first of these attracted about 60 people, and Corriveau took the time to follow up with the participants to see how she might be useful, trying to get them to move on the idea of social enterprise as a financial and service support. This, she discovered, was a time-consuming yet necessary and preliminary step to any likelihood of providing specific assistance on exploring a particular SE prospect.

Corriveau continues to participate in the R&D efforts of CCE. She is a member of CCE's advisory committee for the Rural Secretariat project, and she shares experience and perspectives with others who are convened by CCE for meetings to review SE issues.
Currently she believes that research should concentrate on finding ways to measure and demonstrate the impact of social enterprises; on how to use the model of the UK approach (including a separate legal structure) for social enterprises; and, especially, on sharing lessons learned by those in the field generally.

## Training and Technical Assistance for SE

As for the task of providing specific technical assistance to the non-profits, she now confesses, "I was naïve. I thought that technical assistance for social enterprises would be as straight forward as helping traditional entrepreneurs. It would be just what we were already doing [in the Community Futures], but with a different client." So it seemed reasonable to her from her other business development counseling experience, that she could help launch five social ventures within the timeframe of the grant.

She says that she soon came to recognize that there are a host of differences in the tasks of social enterprise development compared to standard business development. These are generally associated with the basic nature of a non-profit organization. Most particular is the necessary major shift in perspective for the non-profit's

decision-makers to recognize that making a profit (and other aspects of running a business) can be acceptable for a non-profit organization. About half of the potential clients that Corriveau encountered actually believed that it was illegal for their group to generate a surplus. Shifting the language (and thinking) from 'surplus' to 'profit' is only one example of the culture shift required.

Comments from members of the Centre's Advisory Committee and from clients of the Centre align with Corriveau's as to the complexity of social enterprise counseling and therefore the extra demands on any business counselor. In an interview, one client, the director of a non-profit, recommended that a place like the Centre should have a staff person devoted just to working with board members to help them understand the social enterprise approach and help them shift their perspective so that an enterprise becomes a reasonable vision. The respondents for this study (including a client board member interviewee) see NP board members as a major target for SE training, while their staff persons may be more readily able to make the shift (even if with considerable time and effort). A comment from the client board member was especially enlightening: She noted that she and colleagues who had attended a distant workshop with other NP leaders from other communities got turned on, but could not transfer their excitement to their colleagues when they got home. She said that a workshop just for the organization would have worked (one finally did), and thereafter it would have been helpful for a few to participate in a more broadly attended workshop to compare notes with other NPs.

Meanwhile, the Centre has been listed by Enterprising Non-Profits (ENP) as one of only a few high quality TA providers in British Columbia. ENP is an organization that offers preliminary technical assistance and awards grants for technical assistance for social enterprise development, and it had discovered that NPs were wasting their money on consultant work from sources that were not helpful enough – for example, only looking at the business elements and not how they would accomplish social goals. So ENP sought to steer its grantees toward experienced and effective TA providers.

However, even the possibility of an ENP grant for technical assistance was not enough to speed up the creation of a social business. Here, recognizing the segmentation of the non-profit scene is critical, Corriveau says. On the one hand, it is the smaller groups that need the most attention, but they are less likely to follow through on the tasks they need to do, mostly because they are over-stretched and under-resourced for their basic duties anyway. On the other hand, when the larger organizations decide to explore the social enterprise option (and that can be pretty much on their own without Corriveau's urging), they are relatively easy to work with. In one instance, a larger group simply sought to establish a profitable business without any real relationship to its mission. They commissioned a feasibility study on their business idea and paid for it with ENP grant funds. The result was a decision not to enter the business for which the organization really had no expertise; and Corriveau recommended that they could enhance their finances better simply by prudent investment of their reserves. But smaller, cash-strapped groups did not seem able to find the time even to apply for a grant to cover the costs of a feasibility study. Corriveau found herself preparing grant proposals on their behalf.

The Centre (that is, Corriveau, for of course she was the only staff member) provided some preliminary (unpaid) services to perhaps 30 potential clients among the smaller (or newly organized) groups, with almost no results. For two of these she has written and successfully shopped a grant proposal to cover costs of a

feasibility study – each of them for enterprises combined with services for ex-prison inmates.  Like all the clients interviewed for this study, they express high praise for the aid they have received, but the process of helping one of them to get to this point has taken over a year. Corriveau muses that she could have completed a gratis feasibility study for this client in the time that it took her to secure a grant (after three proposals) to perform feasibility work.

One of the relatively small groups, the local John Howard Society, is working on the idea of a business that would promote and market arts/crafts wood products of ex-prisoners.  This idea mirrors a social venture that Corriveau herself (pre-Centre) had been helping inmates to launch – a marketing co-operative that sells art objects made in the prisons.[*]   Although Corriveau procured ENP funding for a feasibility study for the Society, its director is struggling to find the time to provide some essential elements for it, and so progress has been slow.  In contrast, another larger group, serving the developmentally disabled, submitted a successful grant application to ENP with the Centre's assistance, then provided needed staff time and data for the full feasibility study that Corriveau has completed for them.

Corriveau says that she is just now (late 2007) reaping the effects of her developmental work (essentially begun with her feasibility study for the Centre in early 2005).  She is beginning to get client inquiries from among the larger NPs.  But she estimates that she probably wasted the equivalent of six months full time (not including plenty of unpaid time) on many struggling NPs who were not really equipped to use the SE approach.  "I took too much of a social service perspective," because they were indeed needy organizations.  Now she believes that the Centre's major contribution will be with more established NPs who can use her help more readily (and in many instances might have taken the social enterprise path even without the Centre's presence, seeking TA from other sources, such as a businessperson contact).  At the same time, she ventures that she could not have started the Centre without spending a good deal of time in pro bono work, as a promotional and credibility-building device.  And importantly, a technical assistance program will always entail a great deal of free work if it expects to do anything useful with the smaller organizations, which, after all, cannot be ignored in any basic effort to promote social enterprise development.  That essential preliminary work must usually focus on helping any NP to assess its own readiness and identify potential venture opportunities for exploration.  Corriveau notes though that one must set boundaries around the amount of effort devoted to the smaller groups, maybe even declining to provide much assistance at all.  She compares this to the situation in which an inquiring entrepreneur asks for help but cannot afford the fee for a business license: if they cannot afford the $120 business license, they likely should not be in business in the first place.

## Public Policy Activities

The early disappearance of federal interest in SE activities (including the SEI) propelled Corriveau into an additional field of effort.  To her it was obvious that the Centre had to engage more strenuously in policy-oriented activities, building toward creating an accepting and supportive environment, especially in relevant federal

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[*] See Stacey Corriveau, "A Passion for Renewal: Cooperation and Commerce within Prison Walls,"

*Making Waves* (2007) 18, 2:5-8.  http://www.centreforsocialenterprise.com/f/A_Passion_for_Renewal.pdf

agencies that could offer grants and other supports to non-profits.  One specific policy problem stood out:  Canadian law actually does not countenance the creation and management of a for-profit business by a registered charity, even though Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) has taken the point of view that non-profits can maintain their charitable status if their businesses are an integral part of their charitable missions.  In short, then, despite CRA, any social enterprise is likely to be vulnerable if, for some reason (perhaps a fear of competition by just one firm in the local private sector), it is challenged in court. Addressing that issue, Sid Gould, a businessperson serving on the Centre's Advisory Committee, produced a research paper for the Centre and presented it at social enterprise conferences; it sought to design a special legal structure for social enterprises, which could be enacted by Parliament to clarify the situation.  The model is based on that of the so-called Community Interest Companies in the UK.[*]

Other government policy issues also arose in the Centre's work. One projected SE co-op was intended to serve the sponsoring NP's developmentally disabled clients, but to employ them at the legal minimum wage would likely not be feasible. So the NP needed to side step that ordinary requirement for conventional employment. Corriveau argues that as a co-op however, members are self-employed, and as such, are not bound to BC Employment Standards regulations for minimum wage, but rather share in the profits of the co-op.  She notes that realistically, the venture must accept lesser productivity and spend more on training for each worker member. Currently, marginalized people are working for free, or being fired after a three year stint in a 'training business' scenario: the NP seeks to find a more long-term employment solution that pays workers consistently. At this point, the lower wage is an integral feature of its feasibility study; and the NP intends to convene deeper talks within the sector during the business plan stage.

Another policy problem arose from the lack of legal clarity about the tax status of a non-profit cooperative whose enterprise is a social venture versus a for-profit cooperative organized for its members' financial benefit.  When the economic activity has a social purpose (as in aiding ex-offenders to re-integrate into the outside society), will a non-profit co-op be taxed on its business revenue?  This is, of course, related to the wider problem of the legal status / tax implications of any social enterprise.

Of course, the wider policy issue for the Centre is simply regaining general federal support for SE activities, as a part of a national environment for strengthening the social economy.  This, Corriveau has posited, would require a nation-wide network of people who would provide the political impetus for that change.  She has sought to position the Centre as a tool for organizing such a network of social entrepreneurs and, as a base for this, to expand the Centre's activities far outside of B.C.  The Centre's website already provides a tool; it is visited by interested people throughout the country and outside it as well.  However, she has felt that her other efforts in this broader venue have been discouraged by others in B.C. who felt that such a specialized approach was premature or untenable, especially given the fact that the

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[*] Sid Gould, "Social Enterprise and Business Structures in Canada," www.centreforsocialenterprise.com.

For the UK model, see www.cicregulator.gov.uk/

Canadian CED Network already includes those interested in SE and, furthermore, had been in fact integrally involved in designing the original federal SE and social economy program. Taking on the wider organizational tasks of creating a unified force for social enterprise development remains a challenging part of her job.

## Centre Sustainability

It is true that two very powerful B.C. credit unions (Coast Capital and VanCity) are generous throughout the province in financial support for a range of social economy initiatives, including especially grants to non-profits to pay for their technical assistance contracts. For example, VanCity is one of eight underwriters of the activities of Enterprising Non-Profits. But the limited private dollars available from these and other sources cannot sustain the level of activity that had been anticipated and required by non-profits and those generally promoting social enterprise, including the Centre itself. In short, the Centre is now faced with an unsustainable task, without even the low level of funding that it has managed on so far.

The Centre had, after all, been conceived from the beginning as something more than simply a regional source of technical assistance to NPs. The original proposal to WD said that the Centre "will foster and advance the culture of social enterprise and the social economy through fostering a community of knowledge sharing, education, advocacy, and business modeling." And it would be "a leading resource for information, assisting other Centres to develop." Given the collapse in the policy environment (and with the strong encouragement of her Advisory Committee), Corriveau has moved to expand the Centre's corollary aims and vision to meet the new conditions, exploring how to conceive itself as more than a regional center, but rather as an influential player in the national social enterprise scene, especially on the national policy front – and thereby deserving and seeking broader support.

All this aside, the Centre is still faced with the fact that its basic operational funding expires in a few months. The CF, according to its general manager, Herb Thiessen, can continue to provide the half-time slot from its CED division work that would underwrite the Centre's activities, but it can do no more than that within its own budgetary limitations. He remains supportive of the idea of the Centre and encourages Corriveau to continue to explore means to establish the Centre as a significant actor in the field.

Corriveau herself feels frustrated in this task because she has existing commitments to the clients with whom she is currently working, which prevent her from finding other 'core' funding. Still, she concedes that even were clients in general able to pay for TA from the Centre, with her other Centre and CF responsibilities, she estimates that she would be unable to provide substantive help to more than three clients a year, with revenues from $5000 to $15,000 per client – simply not enough to maintain the Centre – and even that level of consistent revenue is not secure today. She estimates that only about half of the Centre's expenses could be met by fee-for-service operations. The other half will always have to be grant-supported, unless perhaps the Centre diversifies its work and scales it up significantly. It might be noted that by far the largest single return earned by the Centre was from organizing and managing a conference on SE.

Corriveau's plan for the immediate future is to use some of the fees so far generated to hire a well-connected CED consultant to design and carry out a fund-raising campaign. That arrangement has been consummated, but of course the results are

unsure.  Other resources, in the persons of Advisory Committee members, might be channels to financial support, but so far this has not worked out.  In short, the Centre remains very vulnerable, despite Corriveau's commitment.

The national need for the kind of assistance that Corriveau provides cannot depend upon such individual decisions and motivation.  It is true that throughout Canada, social enterprises have arisen and still continue from time to time to be launched by dedicated social organization leaders or 'champions', even without systematic help from established and specialized regional TA providers.  It is also true that some TA has been provided on a limited basis for some though not all such initiatives.  The TA may come from a friendly businessperson or from foundation or other funding of a few specialists in different settings – like CCE or independent consultants or university-based consultants, etc., some of whom will be able to provide at least some pro bono help.  Note though that when that help is not regionally available, it entails travel expenses, which is an additional obstacle.  The result is that in all too many instances, technical support is so limited that many a social enterprise will never take shape, or may be aborted, or doomed to an early failure.[*]  Such difficulties and failures are not usually publicized for understandable reasons.

## Analytical Reflection

Confronting the question of how such centres can be sustained, Corriveau came up with a specific analysis and 'wish list'.  Of course, there is the issue of a reasonable financial foundation that would permit not only basic services but also some freedom from having to exercise an extreme scarcity perspective to deny such service, but Corriveau stresses creating and using ways to measure or otherwise assess the quality and effectiveness of services so that they can attract more support.  She also recommends the use of electronic resources, such as video-conferencing, remote workshops, and website literature and materials, all as a means of reducing the costs of geography.  In her assessment she also included the need for more engaged practitioners as well as local recognition of the value of the service.

More broadly, she singled out, on the one hand, a better understanding of the field and the meaning of businesslike operations on the part of the non-profits and, on the other hand, a market for social enterprises inherent in a disposition for social procurement, in both governments and conventional businesses. A variety of conditions that put social enterprises on the map would be necessary, she felt, such as a public recognition (especially by the business sector) of the meaning of social enterprise and of the implications of social return on investment.  Part of the public recognition would be the inclusion of social enterprise as an element in formal business training curricula.

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[*] The exception to this picture is one sector of social enterprises, the co-operatives, which have a range of established regional and national sources of support for development.  That is not to say that new co-ops will always be successful or that the available support is extensive enough.

## Conclusions

In more general terms, drawing from Corriveau's analysis and the general experience of the Centre, what does this case tell us is necessary for the provision of the essential technical assistance for SE development at an accessible regional level? The case at hand is highly limited for that purpose. The Centre, after all, is still in an early stage, having been in operation in a strict sense only for slightly more than two years, and that with only one staff member who was not even full-time. In the most concrete terms, then, its record may not seem fruitful: no social enterprises have yet been launched with its help; only three non-profit agencies have had the Centre complete feasibility studies for them; and two other feasibility studies are on-going. However, the process by which this record has arisen allows some significant conclusions.

Certainly there must be the leader who is trained, competent, dedicated; but that leader will need to have associated colleagues in her/his organization to share and manage the work. Obviously one part-time person cannot do everything, or at least not indefinitely. In short, then, there must be a dependable and adequate source of substantial operational financing for regional TA provision. WD can take satisfaction that its innovative grant for the Centre has borne fruit by documenting this while at the same time having established a Centre process that may well have some long-term effects. Corriveau believes that there will be at least three new local social businesses in operation by another year, fostered by the Centre.

Financing. Still, the first requirement for sustainable technical assistance for social enterprise development is continuing financial support for the competent organizations doing that work. The funding may be totally direct, or it may be partially indirect through awarding dollars to the potential clients to pay for their technical assistance contracts. (The issue of capital availability for the social business is another matter, somewhat tangential here.[*]) As far as governments as a source of financing is concerned, the wide range of motivations and fields that characterize the social enterprise picture suggests that a similarly wide range of government agencies with different missions should ultimately be involved. After all, social enterprises range from waste recycling to housing to consumer facilities in marginal regions to a full range of supportive services for any number of different groupings of special needs citizens. Obviously, such concerns spread across a wide swath of government agencies and their missions.

When considering financing, it is important to recognize that the price and cost of technical assistance will have to include the usual administrative overhead of any consulting firm. As with all businesses, that overhead will include not just offices, computers, and paper clips, but the associated and necessary expenses of networking, self-evaluation, lobbying, marketing, training staff, and the like. These

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[*] See, e.g., "Guide to Financing for Social Enterprise" (www.smallbusinessbc/ca/pdf/guidetofinance). To reiterate, the CF does, in fact, have an investment fund available to provide credit and/or equity for social enterprises in its region. It does not differentiate between traditional business and social enterprise in its loan portfolio.

additional items may not find sympathy in the usual (government or private foundation) funders of non-profits and their initiatives, especially because of a common general aversion to recognizing that social enterprises, despite their social goals, have ordinary business needs - but that leads into the next requirement for sustainable TA.

Public education.  Dependable financial support will arise only from a generally informed and friendly environment.  This is the second essential element for increasing the scale of social enterprise formation and its technical advisory services.  The very idea of a social business is not strongly embedded in the general culture, particularly among related business or even among NPs who would benefit.  The special structures and needs of SE are simply not widely recognized and understood.  Without that broad recognition and understanding, it is easier for policy-makers, especially in the government, to ignore or downgrade what the social economy can do for the overall economy and society (even though in some well documented circumstances[*] it is already contributing); and therefore it is not hard to understand why financial support is very limited.  Corriveau's efforts, in line with the Development Wheel approach, illustrate some of the tactics for public education activities.

It will be necessary to concentrate special attention on the business sector, both nationally and locally.  But if non-profits have a hard time reconciling the demands of a profit-making perspective, so too the for-profits have a hard time recognizing what non-profits are doing (and are capable of doing) in the business world (and may claim 'unfair competition' objections). This sort of education and bridge-building involves undertaking difficult campaigns, as Corriveau has discovered.

Networking.  Public education must begin with the efforts of social enterprise developers themselves.  But individual efforts must be combined, and partnerships forged. Social entrepreneurs and their collaborators may for the time being continue this task nationally within the context of CCEDNet as the closest possible and strongest ally, but eventually it is likely that a group specialized to deal with issues of the individual enterprise will be needed, as the prime concerns of place-based development (CED in the most general sense) are different.

A national social enterprise network can focus on national issues (such as the problem of the SE legal structure), but local and regional networks will also find plenty of work to do – for example, undertaking joint marketing and purchasing, exploring the potential of purchasing portals, etc.  People will need to find ways to learn from and strengthen each other, as well as to conduct public educational activities with the local business sector, etc.  If Corriveau's attempts (with the monthly "Munch and Mutter" dinners / evening dessert events) to get NPs to build helpful relationships among themselves failed when people simply did not continue to show up, it suggests a demand for creativity in networking efforts with time-pressed NPs.  In short, the sorts of skills needed for a successful TA program are not limited to business counseling.

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[*] A paper by Mike Lewis offers statistics from a 20-year project in Montreal and in Quebec generally.  See his  "Constructing a Sustainable Future," a working paper from the B.C./Alberta Social Economy Research Alliance, August 2007.

Culture change in the non-profit sector.  Assisting community organizations to recognize the potentials of more business-like thinking and operating is a part of self-education for those non-profits.  Even if they do not start social businesses, this can be helpful for more efficient and effective operations, but it is fundamental to the social enterprise approach.  It is, of course, one of the tasks of the TA provider to help non-profits understand this, but it is also something that the non-profit world must confront with its own resources.  A successful TA provider will manage to do this work with its clients, but that is a long drawn-out process with individual NPs and thus costly.  How much easier would that task be if there were more sophistication within the non-profit sector?   The Imagine projects (linking businesses and non-profits in community improvement efforts) throughout Canada may be an effective tool for this purpose.  But the various national associations of charitable organizations should conduct their own educational programs.  Imagine projects would help to jump-start that sort of activity.

Marketing.  If Corriveau is correct in her analysis of the segmentation of the non-profit sector, technical assistance services will have to be marketed, in the first instance, to the more established NPs, as having a base capacity for launching and managing a social enterprise.  They will at least be able to finance a feasibility study of their ideas or to find grant monies for that purpose.  Those NPs of lesser strength, however, include some that can ultimately benefit from a centre's assistance, but that will necessarily extend over a longer period of time and involve a lot of preliminary pro bono work.   The introductory Development Wheel workshop can be used to qualify potential clients and especially to spread the word about the social enterprise approach, but some of the clients and potential clients will still require much more attention than others, and without compensation for many of the tasks required.  In any case, it is safe to assume that at this juncture in Canada any technical assistance centre may need at least as much as a year of preliminary groundwork to publicize the potential of social enterprises for the non-profit sector before it will find even a few clients that are prepared to move effectively.  A good deal of that preliminary work might be focused on publicizing the process to organizations that will not in the end be able to make good use of the centre's services.

Tools and curriculum.  If Corriveau was "naïve," as she said, then those who will be providing the TA will need more than a few days of specialized training.  There are not already a lot of competent providers, as ENP discovered.  Successful TA will depend upon accessible resources for training established business counselors (and others) for work with non-profit community organizations.  For Fraser Valley, the availability of CCE was crucial to getting necessary orientation, as were Corriveau's own efforts to engage with non-profits and intentionally immerse herself in their culture.

Capacity building support for TA providers will be required nationwide.  Business schools and other training programs in community development must recognize and promulgate technical knowledge in the area of social enterprise development.

In addition, the TA providers should use specialized teaching tools to orient their NP clients.  Again through CCE, there was a curriculum already available.  Its meaningfulness in other venues besides B.C. is being demonstrated.  However, even though the Development Wheel materials have been in use for some years (as an organizational development tool) and have been tested in different provincial settings for community-based business development, it is still true that in the course

of the current Rural Secretariat project, they have been subject to revision for adaptation to different uses.  That should always be expected.  Different communities will engender tailored approaches.  While a successful TA centre will need to base its work on the previous efforts of others, as with the Development Wheel materials and consultants, both TA providers and trainers of providers should consider the continued evolution of the techniques that help community organizations examine and use the option of social enterprise as a tool for social benefits.

Choosing a regional provider organization.  In the Rural Secretariat project and in general, the choice of Community Futures organizations as a system of potential providers has a clear rationale:  There are already a lot of them around the country; they are already focused on serving rural/small town areas that need business development resources; their staffs include competent business counselors; full services are rarely available from other readily accessible sources; they are embedded in their communities and know their way around; they have associated investment funds for business development; and expansion of their mission to include social enterprise development ought not to be an impossible stretch.  Having said this, one can nevertheless recognize that even CFs will have liabilities for this work.  The levels of competence can vary a great deal; the perspectives of the staff and boards may not be readily expandable to include social enterprises; and their own business communities may not be friendly to the idea.

This suggests that selecting an organization, even a CF, to equip as a potential provider, ought to be guided by an initial expression of strong interest from it (and, in the best case scenario, passion embodied in a specific 'champion', as is advised in social enterprise development itself).  While strong general interest alone may suffice as in the case of the Fraser Valley Centre, some organizations will also see a strategic link between SE and their other specialized regional issues/goals, and this could be a meaningful criterion.  In any case, any expression of interest should include the presentation of potential local resources (for example, aspects of a community history favorable to promoting social enterprise) that would augur a good chance of success.  In the instance of the Centre, there was already an organizational tradition of CED activity, and the executive and board were ready to support new initiatives.

Note that regional providers need not be competent to handle all the technical assistance tasks.  Any organization may have to call on local or more distant specialists for short-term help.  A readiness to do so will be another signal of provider capacity.

Functional diversity. Working with clients means more than mentoring and helping them in the venture selection processes, feasibility studies, and business plans.  As Corriveau discovered, besides these tasks, there are many other functions inherent in providing technical assistance to NPs.  Not the least of these is informing them of how and where to get financial assistance in their social enterprise endeavors, sometimes actually writing proposals for preliminary financing.  Clearly, conducting a fundamental orientation process to the whole world of business process and profit making will often be a key part of assistance.  These and other tasks in work with clients are paralleled by the whole gamut of public education activities directed toward other sectors of society, including policy advocacy.  Governments will not be the only policy targets for the TA provider.  Policies in the private sector such as procurement and credit procedures affect the potential of the social enterprise and

deserve attention.  TA providers cannot separate themselves from their clients in this respect; they will have to join clients in advocacy activities.  All this implies that a widely diverse set of functions must be accepted as part of the role of the technical assistance provider.

## In sum

The Fraser Valley experience does not offer any sort of step-by-step direction for how regional centres can be established and maintained.  As in any community-based initiative, each centre will undoubtedly be both handicapped and enabled by its local history and resources, both human and material.  At the same time, the Centre certainly provides a basic insight into the requisites for successful regional promotion of social enterprise formation.  These include dedicated leadership, a favourable organizational context, sufficient continued financial support beyond what any fees-for-service can provide, prepared staff, technical resources that are adaptable to the local setting together with supportive technical assistance to the centre itself, flexibility in addressing a wide ranging set of tasks, and a time perspective that allows for a substantial period of preliminary networking, public education, and promotion.  The experience also suggests that a favourable government and private sector policy environment is, in the end, essential to a healthy system of such centres and their clients.

*- December 2007*