



BC-Alberta Social Economy Research Alliance

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# BALTA Priorities Shift to Dissemination and Engagement in 2010-2011

by Stuart Wulff

With BALTA's multi-year funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada ending in 2011, the focus of attention will shift towards greater attention on dissemination of research results and engagement with various sectors of the social economy regarding how to use those results to support the sector.

BALTA will be employing a wide range of strategies to accomplish this: conference presentations, workshops, publications to popularize the research and make it more user-friendly for particular audiences, books, tele-seminars, targeted meetings, media outreach, etc.

Some research will continue into the early part of 2011, including several projects previously approved and still in process and several new research projects. The new research will include:

- Further research on land trusts and their applicability in supporting affordable housing, agriculture and other sectors.
- Factors influencing the survival of newly incorporated co-operatives.
- Housing needs for seniors living in rural areas.
- The role of social enterprises in employment services.

Other action research will arise from engagement with particular sectors in looking at how to use BALTA's research results to meet the needs of particular sectors.

A sample of intended dissemination and engagement initiatives includes:

- Several books: a book by SERC 1 member, John Restakis, on the role of co-operatives in social care; a book by SERC 2 members highlighting research on the role of the

*(Continued on page 2)*

## National Summit 2010

The National Summit on a People Centred Economy is fast approaching.

Social economy and community economic development supporters from across Canada will gather in Ottawa from May 30 to June 1 to showcase

the social economy, unite social economy sectors under a common umbrella, and engage in strategizing for how to strengthen the sector and its contributions to constructing an economy that is ecologically, socially and economically vital and accountable.



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# BALTA Plans for 2010-2011

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social economy in rural revitalization and development; and a book by Mike Lewis and Pat Conaty on *The Great Transition: Navigating Social, Economic, Ecological Change in Turbulent Times*.

- Participation in regional and national conferences that provide opportunities to disseminate BALTA research and engage with key sectors. This will include co-sponsorship of the 2010 National Summit on a People Centred Economy and multiple BALTA presentations at the 2010 and 2011 conferences of the Association for Nonprofit and Social Economy Research (ANSER).
- Development of course modules and new foundation courses in the social economy at Athabasca University and the University of Alberta. BALTA has also been a key participant in the development of a new master's level program in community development at the

University of Victoria.

- Workshops co-sponsored with key community based organizations to engage specific sectors in examining the results of BALTA research and considering implications for their sectors.
- Sponsoring a special issue of Making Waves magazine on housing.
- SERC 3 member, Jorge Sousa, will be co-editing special social economy issues of the Canadian Journal of Social Policy and the journal Canadian

Public Policy.

- BALTA participation in the National Conservancy Trust's 2010 conference to introduce BALTA land trust research and recruit participants.
- A series of tele-seminars highlighting specific areas of BALTA research and discussing how to apply specific learnings within the Alberta and BC social economies.
- A wrap-up BALTA symposium in 2011.

**See pages 3-5 for more detail about planned activities.**



*XÁ:YTEM, an archaeological site and museum managed by the Stó:lō First Nation, includes a social enterprise gift shop. Photo provided by ENP. Brian Harris, Photographer*

## National Summit 2010

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The Summit will take place at Carleton University. BALTA and its sister networks in the Canadian Social Economy Research Partnerships will be supporting the summit and using it as a venue for sharing some of the results of our research programs.

For further information and to register, go to:

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

The Summit will be immediately followed by the annual conferences, in Montreal, of the Association for Nonprofit and Social Economy Research (ANSER) and the Canadian Association for Studies in Co-operation (CASC). For further information, go to:

<http://www.anser-ares.ca/conference.html>

<http://www.coopresearch.coop/>



## SE Practitioner of the Month



The Canadian CED Network is celebrating Marichu Antonio, Executive Director of the The Ethno-Cultural Council of Calgary as their Social Economy Story Practitioner of the Month for April.

For the full story visit: <http://www.ccednet-rcdec.ca/en/node/9388>

## Sustainable Communities Conference Presentations Online

On February 10-12, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities held a Sustainable Communities Conference in Ottawa. Presentations from the conference are now online at:

[http://gmf.fcm.ca/Sustainable\\_Communities\\_Conferences/FCM-2010-Conference/default.asp](http://gmf.fcm.ca/Sustainable_Communities_Conferences/FCM-2010-Conference/default.asp)

Photo courtesy of CCEDNET

## SERC 1 to Investigate Co-op Survival Factors and Seniors Housing

by Carol Murray

The strategic vision and priorities for SERC 1 are as follows:

- Affordable housing;
- Co-op sector development, especially with reference to human services and housing;
- Financing for the social economy and

- A secondary research focus being the role of the faith based community in supporting the social economy.

Greater attention will be paid to dissemination and engagement with relevant social economy sectors during this next phase. Two new research projects are proposed, both consistent with SERC 1's earlier work and priorities, though also

extending into new areas of inquiry.

One project will investigate factors impacting on the success and development of newly incorporated co-operatives, while the other will look at factors shaping affordable housing choices for seniors in rural areas.

Another main objective is to complete four research projects approved for the 2009-2010 fiscal year and

## SERC 2 Plans for 2010-2011 Focus on a Book

BALTA research cluster (SERC) 2, which focuses on the role of the social economy in rural revitalization and development, will turn its energies to development of a book as a legacy of its work.

The book will bring together the various strands of research that have been conducted by SERC 2 members and likely some related contributions from other sources.

Further details about the book will be available after the initial

planning workshop in late June.

SERC 2 will also wrap up several existing research projects during 2010, including research into farmers' markets and green energy.



The SERC 2 book initiative will be led by Mike Gismondi (left), Mark Roseland (right) and Mary Beckie and Sean Markey (not pictured)

Photo by Stuart Wulff



## SERC 3 Shifts Focus to Dissemination and Application of BALTA Research

by Jorge Sousa  
& David LePage

**A**s BALTA enters into the final year of work, an important consideration for SERC 3 is to address how best to leverage BALTA's research to support and strengthen an infrastructure supporting the social economy.

Our focus will be to develop practitioner and academic friendly resources based on the results of BALTA's various research projects and broad engagement activities with targeted sectors.

Any new research in the coming year will be directed towards supporting this approach, either through identifying gaps in knowledge/tools that BALTA's work can help to

fill or through action/engagement with specific sectors around applying BALTA research findings.

At this point we are planning a number of initiatives with respect to publishing and dissemination of existing SERC 3 research.

We are sponsoring a Special Edition Journal of the Canadian

*(Continued on page 8)*

## Mapping Program for 2010-2011

by Mike Gismondi

**T**he Mapping and Portraiture Group has gained new momentum to move this project to completion.

Given the poor response rate to the initial online survey (258 responses ending Fall 2009), we are initiating 2 adapted strategies to ensure successful outcomes for this foundational aspect of the BALTA program.

First, incorporation of survey results from other SERC projects including A8, C16, A6 and A4.

The Mapping group has collaborated with these researchers to incorporate a number of survey questions providing data relevant to both.

Second, two new research assistants have been hired, Ashley Smith of SFU and Juanita Marois, MA at Athabasca University to implement a telephone survey.

The overall goal is to increase the number of completed surveys to 450 by July 2010.

We encourage each of you to share our Online survey link with your colleagues to increase the response rate of the BALTA Social Economy Survey!

<http://www.socialeconomy-bcalberta.ca/mapping.html>

Once the data collection is completed and data has been incorporated, the

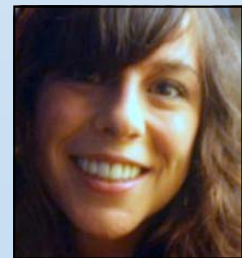
Group's efforts will turn to dissemination of results through conference papers, publications in academic journals and popular media, along with the development of resources for practitioner use.

Exemplary examples will also be drawn from the survey results for follow-up with case study research for more comparative works.

### Mapping Student

**A**shley Smith recently became a research assistant for the BC-Alberta Social Economy Research Alliance. She is presently finishing her Masters in Resource and Environmental Management at SFU with a research focus on the viability of community forestry as an alternative to industrial forestry in

BC. Ms. Smith is working closely with Mike Gismondi and Lynda Ross on their community mapping project and looks forward to learning more about and contributing to BALTA's meaningful work in the future.







## ANSER Conference

The Association of Nonprofit and Social Economy Research In Conjunction with the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences will be holding their third annual conference from June 2-4, 2010 at Concordia University, in Montreal, Quebec.

Henry Mintzberg of McGill University will be the keynote speaker, Wednesday, June 2nd, at 4 pm.

The ANSER conference will include panels of about 200 leading researchers.

For more information visit their website at <http://www.anser-ares.ca/conference.html>

## Have an Idea? We Need Great Photographs!

of both BALTA research in action and of the social economy sectors / organizations that BALTA is researching. Contact Jennifer Lee Jones [jljones@cedworks.com](mailto:jljones@cedworks.com)

## BALTA Co-Sponsors Symposium on Working in the Social Economy

by Stuart Wullf

The symposium took place in Edmonton on April 27, bringing together over 70 participants. SERC 3's co-chair, Jorge Sousa of the University of Alberta's Faculty of Education, organized and moderated the symposium.

Topics addressed in the presentations and discussion included:

- Key trends and issues impacting on the sector.
- An overview of BALTA's mapping research on the social economy sector.
- Attraction and retention – positioning the sector as a choice employer.
- The public policy context for social economy employment, including funding cutbacks.
- Innovations in non-profit sharing of services.
- The Community Disability Services Recruitment and Retention Campaign and initiatives to promote diversity in the workplace..
- An overview of the Alberta Non-Profit/Voluntary Sector initiative and workforce strategy.

The symposium was co-sponsored by the Work and Learning Network, the Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations, and Alberta Employment and Immigration.

## Course Development

by Mike Gismondi & Mary Beckie

The purpose of this project is to develop a collaborative inter-university course on the social economy in order to promote the integration of social economy learning into existing academic institutions and programs within BC and Alberta.

At the BALTA Steering Committee meetings in Spring 2009, the idea of creating a university-level course on the social economy was discussed.

A lively discussion followed resulting in a brainstorm of

ideas, and an agreement that this was a project worth exploring further. Lena Soots conducted preliminary interviews with BALTA academics and a few practitioners in order to develop a more focused framework for discussion at the November Symposium.

Out of the fall symposium, Mary Beckie (University of Alberta Extension) and Mike Gismondi (Athabasca University) agreed to co-fund this course development project in order to advance the idea. Mary and Mike plan to integrate the materials into university level course offerings at their institutions.

Over the summer, Mary and Mike will be working with Lena to develop a full proposal outlining a range of modules/learning materials including suggestions for course design, course readings, assessment and projects, and options for the use of these materials by BALTA partners.

The working group will be circulating a course materials draft for feedback to BALTA collaborators during the summer. Our hope is to collect critical reflection, and confirm a design and develop the learning materials by the end of the summer 2010.

# New Co-op Research Items

by John Restakis

## International Year of Co-ops

The United Nations General Assembly has proclaimed 2012 as the International Year of Co-operatives. The year will provide co-operators in Canada and around the world with an opportunity to promote the social and economic contributions of the co-op sector.

Canada supported the resolution when it came before the General Assembly on December 18, 2009. On December 3, 2009 the Honourable Jean-Pierre Blackburn, Minister of National Revenue and Minister of State for Agriculture, held a news conference in Ottawa announcing the federal government's support for the International Year.

## CCA Awarded \$1 M to study Impact of Co-operatives on Community

Canada's co-operative sector, in partnership with four Canadian universities, has been awarded funding of \$1 million over five years to conduct research on the social, economic and environmental impact of co-operatives. The funds have been awarded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). The research that will be conducted through the CURA aims to examine the full impact of co-operatives on Canada's social,

economic and environmental fabric, and demonstrate their value to Canadian communities.

CCA applied for the CURA in partnership with Saint Mary's University, the University of Saskatchewan, the University of Victoria, and Mount Saint Vincent University, all of which are well-known for their research on co-operatives and the social economy. More than a dozen other co-operative associations, co-ops, credit unions and academic researchers will also participate in the CURA.

The CURA's research team, headed by Dr. Sonja Novkovic, professor of economics at Saint Mary's University, will create a network of national and regional research clusters that will develop measurement tools and study topics such as the nature of the "co-operative difference" as it relates to social responsibility and accountability, the impact of member and employee participation on a co-operative's performance and the role of credit unions in building wealth. Additional topics will examine infrastructure support for co-operative development, how to replicate co-operative innovation and co-operative responses to market failures.

For more information about the CURA, go to [www.coopscanada.coop/en/info\\_resources/CURA](http://www.coopscanada.coop/en/info_resources/CURA).

## BALTA Research on the Survival Rate of Co-ops in BC and Alberta

A new research project focusing on the trends of recent co-op development and the survival rate of co-operatives in BC and Alberta has been approved by BALTA as part of the SERC 1 research program.

The BC Co-operative Association and the Alberta Community and Co-operative Association will jointly administer the project which will review the co-ops incorporated in the two provinces over the last decade, determine how many of the co-ops are still in operation, and examine the reasons why certain co-ops have stopped operating.

Although research has been conducted on the survival rate of co-ops in Quebec, this is the first opportunity to learn about the survival rate of co-ops in BC and Alberta, and is the first time research will be conducted to determine the factors leading to failure or success of new co-op development in the two provinces. The results of this project will also be folded into the data related to the BALTA mapping of the social economy in BC and Alberta.



# New BALTA Project Surveys Social Enterprises

**S**ERC 3 researchers, Dr. Peter Hall of Simon Fraser University and Dr. Peter Elson of Mount Royal University, are leading a research project that is surveying social enterprises in Alberta and BC. The research is being supported by three new BALTA student researchers (see below).

The project aims to achieve:

1. An improved understanding of the nature, scope and socio-economic contribution of social enterprise activity in British Columbia and Alberta;
2. An improved understanding of the networking of social enterprises, including their relationships with

intended support organizations and institutions.

Data gathered from this project will also contribute to enlarging the database of organizations included in BALTA's social economy mapping program (see article on page 4).

A report on the research results will be available in Fall 2010.

For further information, contact:

[pvhall@sfu.ca](mailto:pvhall@sfu.ca)

[pelson@mtroyal.ca](mailto:pelson@mtroyal.ca)



*Potluck Cafe and Catering, a Vancouver social enterprise. Photo provided by ENP. Brian Harris, Photographer*

## New Student Researchers Work on Social Enterprise Survey



Samantha Sadler is currently finishing her third year in the Bachelor of Applied Nonprofit Studies degree at Mount Royal

University.

Previously, she was the Communication and Outreach Assistant for the Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology. After graduation Samantha hopes to pursue a career in international development and foreign aid.



Jessica Baas is majoring in Environmental Sciences at UBC.

She has loved living in Vancouver for

the past five years and is happy to be a part of the BALTA project.

In her free time she enjoys biking around the city, cooking with friends and reading.



Jeremy Arbuthnot lives in Victoria. He holds a degree in Economics and French

and is currently completing a certificate in Sustainable Community Development at SFU. He thinks that researching social enterprises with BALTA has been an "eye-opening" experience and looks forward to future work in this area.

Check us out at: [www.socialeconomy-bcalberta.ca](http://www.socialeconomy-bcalberta.ca)

## BALTA STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mike Lewis, Lead Investigator, Canadian Centre for Community Renewal

Dr. Mary Beckie, Co-Investigator, University of Alberta

Dr. Martin Garber-Conrad, Co-Investigator, Edmonton Community Foundation

Dr. Michael Gismondi, Co-Investigator, Athabasca University

George Penfold, Co-Investigator, Rural Innovation Chair, Selkirk College

Dr. Mark Roseland, Co-Investigator, Simon Fraser University

Lena Soots, BALTA Students' Representative, Simon Fraser University

Stuart Wulff, Staff, Canadian Centre for Community Renewal



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## SERC 3 Shifts Focus to Dissemination and Application of BALTA Research

*(Continued from page 4)*

Review of Social Policy as a SERC 3 initiative, which will be co-edited by Jorge Sousa and Stuart Wulff.

A second initiative is to support a SE HUB sponsored special edition of the Journal Canadian Public Policy, which will be co-edited by Jorge Sousa and Rupert Downing.

We will develop a basic outreach and engagement strategy through a series of 'days of learning' events in both provinces.

The focus of our efforts will be to engage community partners in activities aimed at presenting findings of BALTA research as well as developing practitioner oriented resources.



## BALTA Participates in Parliamentary Forum



BALTA's lead investigator, Mike Lewis, spoke at a recent Parliamentary Round Table on the Social Economy in Ottawa. From left to right: Lynne Markell of the Canadian Co-operative Association, Ethel Côté of the Canadian Centre for Community Renewal, Alexandra Mendes, MP and Liberal critic for the social economy, and Mike Lewis.