

B.C.-Alberta Social Economy Research Alliance (BALTA)

SERC 1 WorkPlan – 2007-2008 Fiscal Year

General

1. SERC ID: SERC 1

2. SERC members involved in developing the workplan:

The following SERC members attended the initial workplan meeting in Vancouver in January: Martin Garber-Conrad, Mike Gismondi, Jenny Kain, Bob McKeon, Carol Murray, John Restakis and Norma Strachan. The following SERC members were involved in the subsequent workplan development and input: Michelle Colussi, Martin Garber-Conrad, Jenny Kain, Bob McKeon, Carol Murray, John Restakis and Jorge Sousa. Specific project proposals and Annex As were prepared by:

A1	Carol Murray	with input from Jenny Kain & Bob McKeon
A2	John Restakis	
A4	Bob McKeon	

Some work has also been done on Annex A3 by Jenny Kain and Martin Garber-Conrad, but it is not yet ready for inclusion with this workplan. It will be submitted later for approval.

3. Has the workplan been ratified by the SERC?

The workplan has been ratified by SERC 1 and the BALTA steering committee.

4. New SERC members (if any):

Anna Bubel has been approved as an advisory collaborator.

SERC 1 has identified a need for additional academics as members and will be exploring options in this regard over the coming year.

5. New co-investigators (if any) being proposed:

In addition to the current co-investigators in SERC 3 (Gismondi & Restakis), several other SERC members will be playing direct roles in leading and managing SSHRC-funded research. Martin-Garber-Conrad is also playing a BALTA leadership role as SERC co-chair and co-chair of the Advisory Council. Thus, the following individuals have been approved as co-investigators:

Martin Garber-Conrad, Jenny Kain, Carol Murray

6. Statement of strategic vision for the SERC and its work for the balance of the project (February 2011). Include priorities, broad outcomes projected and rationale, making reference to BALTA's analytical domains, central research questions and strategic research priorities as relevant.

SERC 1 approved the following vision statement for its work over the next four years:

A larger, more self-aware and productive social economy with improved practice and a more positive policy environment through research, knowledge transfer, education and networking in human services and affordable housing.

Beyond this, SERC 1 chose for this first workplan to focus on a small number of research priorities and a few projects over the next 1-2 years. The intention was that we would learn from this first year of research and will develop a longer term plan based on this learning, including further priorities and projected outcomes, as part of our planning for the 2008-2009 year.

SERC 1's mandate includes both housing and human/social services. The research priorities reflect a balance of both issues as well as several cross-cutting issues. The agreed research priorities are:

1. The role of community based organizations in the provision of affordable housing;
2. The use of housing co-operative assets, both to create more affordable housing and to leverage other CED projects;
3. The role of co-operatives in providing social care (e.g. elder care);
4. The role of faith based organizations in the social economy;
5. Non-profit sector capital markets; and
6. Labour issues – e.g. labour market measurement, impact of unionization.

These reflect both areas that were seen as being of critical strategic importance/opportunity and 'low hanging fruit', i.e. areas where specific SERC members have research interests and are prepared to lead initial research.

In each of these cases, and reflecting the BALTA research domains and key research questions, it was agreed that we need to use research to understand the current state of the social economy and to identify what is needed to strengthen and to scale up and out the sector. It was agreed that research needs to look not just at individual enterprises, but at the systems, policies and supports necessary to the effective development of the social economy. Where our research agenda looks beyond Alberta and B.C., we will be looking both at what models/experience from elsewhere can contribute to our context and at what models/experience from Alberta and B.C. can contribute to broader social economy development and theory.

Several cross-cutting issues were identified as 'lenses' to be applied to examine the impact of the social economy with respect to the various research foci. These included: gender; culture & race; new Canadians, location (e.g. rural versus urban). It was also agreed that we need to examine both intended and unintended outcomes that benefit diverse populations. Two other issues that were identified by SERC 3 – legal structures and leadership capacity – were also seen as factors that we might want to examine with respect to some of our specific research foci.

SERC 1 agreed that it was very important to focus some attention on considering the future of the social economy vis a vis housing and social services, i.e. how it is evolving and how we can potentially influence how it is evolving. It is proposed that

one of the annual BALTA colloquia focus on this subject, either specific to the future of the social economy in housing and social services or more broadly to reflect the interests of all SERCs.

Several other areas of potential research interest were proposed and may find their way into longer term plans when the SERC meets to plan for 2008-2009 and beyond.

7. Preliminary plan for organizing of the SERC's work over the next four years to reach the projected outcomes.

SERC 1 has not yet developed a four year plan. However, of the six research priorities identified in Section 6, four have been chosen for work in the 2007-2008 year:

1. The use of housing co-operative assets, both to create more affordable housing and to leverage other CED projects;
2. The role of co-operatives in providing social care (e.g. elder care);
3. The non-profit sector capital market
4. The role of faith based organizations in the social economy; and

A basic research project proposal (Annex A) has been developed for each of these research priorities and they will form the basic work focus of this SERC for the next year. The rest of this workplan and the attached annexes elaborate upon the research and other activities that will take place in 2007-2008.

It is likely that further research on some of these initial priorities will emerge for the 2008-2009 year. In addition, research will begin on the remaining two priorities:

5. The role of community based organizations in the provision of affordable housing; and
6. Labour issues – The focus of the research would be the particular role of labour with respect to their position as a key sector within the social economy.

Research Priority 5

Housing costs are rising, particularly in urban Alberta and B.C., placing additional pressure on the availability of affordable housing. In some places this is being called a crisis. Although government funding (primarily federal and provincial) comprises the majority of the dollars invested in affordable housing, especially at the "social housing" end of the spectrum, community-based organizations often supplement government funding from a variety of sources. As a result, community-based organizations contribute much to the availability of affordable housing in communities. Our impression is that the totality of their contribution to housing lower-income Canadians, including their subsidiary contributions to the larger social economy, is under researched and therefore neither well understood or appreciated.

We would expect to see differences in the kind and magnitude of these supplementary contributions between Alberta and B.C., as well as different roles for community-based organizations in the two provinces. Further, different types of community-based organizations (e.g., co-ops, pure housing organizations, and

organizations with wider mandates) take on different roles in different times and places.

The research would attempt to explore, categorize and quantify the several roles that community-based organizations play in the provision of affordable housing and the contributions—financial and otherwise—this makes to the larger social economy. Our hope is that a better understanding the nature and magnitude of this contribution would suggest policy directions and other capacity building initiatives that could enhance the effectiveness of community-based organizations in the provision of affordable housing.

Research Priority 6

The research on labour issues related to the social economy will address such questions as:

1. What is organized labour's current stance and understanding of labour's role within the social economy? What are the varieties of perspective that exist within labour on this question?
2. What is labour's perspective on the potential and role of the social economy to take on aspects of social care delivery and the management of public goods and services that were once the traditional role of government? Are there models or strategies that they could support?
3. What is labour's potential to actively support and develop projects that expand the role of the social economy – for example the creation of health care co-ops, social co-ops, home care and elder care co-ops and other forms of job creating social enterprises?
4. What are the prospects and opportunities for leveraging labour assets such as pension funds for the development of the social economy in general and projects such as elder care in particular?

8. What priorities has the SERC identified for mapping?

SERC 1 spent considerable time discussing mapping and has communicated its various ideas and suggestions to the mapping team. SERC 1 felt that the mapping should begin by working with readily accessible (geographically, sectorally) networks and work out from that. It was emphasized that the mapping needs to consider such factors as urban-rural dichotomy, gender, immigration and new Canadians.

9. Identify SERC members who are prepared to play a role in supporting the mapping program.

Mike Gismondi will be playing a leading role in steering the mapping program and is a member of the Portraiture Committee. Jenny Kain is this SERC's liaison representative to the Portraiture Committee. Other members of the SERC are prepared to be consulted with respect to identifying targets and potential partners/intermediaries for mapping. Some members of the SERC may be prepared to play a role in supporting the mapping, e.g. supervising students. This would need to be negotiated in specific cases.

Detailed 2007-2008 WorkPlan

10. One year priorities for research development and a rationale for these in terms of the criteria for assessment of workplans (see workplans policy).

Four research projects, reflecting the four research priorities selected for 2007-2008, have been developed:

- C1 Innovative Use of Housing Co-operative Assets
- C2 Co-operative Models of Social Care
- C3 The Non-Profit Sector Capital Market in B.C. and Alberta
- C4 Role of Faith Based organizations in the Social Economy

Project C3 is still in development. Its Annex A will be submitted for approval at a later date and will involve a request for student funding and other resources. At this point, the completed Annex A project proposals represent less than the budget resources available to SERC 1.

The first three of these projects reflect research foci that were given the highest priority by the SERC members present in Vancouver. The fourth represents an area that was a priority for one SERC member, Bob McKeon, with some interest from at least one other SERC member. As Bob was keen to do research in this area and prepared to lead the research without initially drawing on significant BALTA resources, it was seen as an example of 'low hanging fruit', i.e. research that could prove to be useful and could take place at minimum cost for BALTA. It was approved by the rest of the SERC on that basis.

The Co-operative Models of Social Care project (A2) is another example of 'low hanging fruit'. While this area of research was seen as a high priority in general by SERC members, this specific initial project takes advantage of and builds upon research already undertaken by SERC member, John Restakis.

Reflecting the broad mandate of SERC 1, these projects address all of the BALTA domains and strategic research questions, speaking to the first five criteria for assessment of SERC workplans.

1. *The impact of inserting social processes of reciprocity, solidarity, and sustainability into economic life – Addressed in all projects.*
Projects A1 and A2 specifically look at approaches to housing and social care, the foci of this SERC, on a reciprocity and social economy basis. Both of these projects, as well as project A3 look at aspects of resourcing and sustainability with respect to addressing human needs through the social economy. Project A4 will also address these questions as they intersect with the role of faith based organizations with respect to the social economy.
2. *How territorial (CED) and social economy (enterprise) approaches can interact to enhance the overall potency of the social economy – Potentially addressed in all projects.*

While all four of these projects take as their point of departure a sector focused orientation, all will also be looking at how the sector can contribute to and be supported by broader CED approaches.

3. *The social economy as it exists – Addressed in all projects.*
All of the proposed work contributes in various ways to this goal of understanding the social economy and its support systems as they exist.
4. *The characteristics of exemplary practice wherever it occurs, i.e. what is working and why; and*
5. *Key issues, opportunities, and constraints for adapting and scaling up what is working in B.C. and Alberta – Addressed in all projects.*
All four projects will be examining cases of exemplary practice, both within Alberta and B.C. and in other locations, with a view to establishing what approaches and models have been most successful to date, what lessons can be drawn from this experience, and what opportunities exist for scaling up what is working. All four projects place a strong emphasis on identifying opportunities and approaches for expanding and increasing the impact of the social economy. Project A1 is targeted specifically on an area where opportunities for scaling up are seen to be present.

The projects are also intended to enable BALTA to leverage strategic benefits, as addressed in assessment criteria 6-8.

6. *Being directly relevant, even if only modestly, to addressing major cross-cutting trends and issues relevant to Canadians – Addressed directly in Project A2 and indirectly in other projects.*
The Co-operative Models of Social Care project (A2) specifically addresses ways in which the social economy can contribute to addressing demographic challenges, e.g. elder-care. The other three projects address questions of resourcing for the social economy, approaches which can potentially identify creative new strategies for enabling the social economy to address some of these major cross-cutting trends and issues.
7. *Leveraging current social economy assets and resources to scale up exemplary practices and stimulate social innovation – Addressed in all projects, most directly in A1, A3 and A4.*
These projects look specifically at ways to leverage both current and potential new resources for the social economy.
8. *Contributing to the building of strategic relationships and alliances relevant to the central purpose of BALTA – Addressed in all projects, most notably in A1, A3 and A4.*
These projects examine the potential of specific allies to contribute to the strengthening and expansion of the social economy.

This should be a manageable workplan for the coming year. Project A2 is a continuation of work already in process by John Restakis. Other projects are well defined in the annexes in terms of objectives, plans, outputs and outcomes (criterion 9). Each project has also identified the necessary human and financial resources and plans for managing the work (criterion 10).

The resource requirements have been clearly specified and are generally manageable within the notional budgets given to the SERC (criterion 12). There is a request for travel support which will need to be considered by the steering committee. Most of the projects include significant in-kind contributions. In those projects that involve students, BALTA's policy on student employment and management is being followed, and the roles described for students provide substantial opportunities for student learning and other benefits (criterion 13).

11. Brief summary of each proposed research project/activity. Append project summary for each project (see Annex A template).

See next page.

Project Description	Budget, Resources and Other Support Requested from BALTA	In-Kind and Cash Support Provided from Other Sources (where known)
<p>A1 – Innovative Use of Housing Co-operative Assets The project will examine the actual and potential use of mortgage free co-op housing assets to leverage funding for financing of new co-op housing and other social economy purposes.</p>	<p>Student - \$10,000 Support costs - \$1,000 Travel - \$3,000</p> <p>Support in organizing a tele-seminar to share research results</p> <p>Total = \$14,000</p>	<p>Time contributed by the project lead - \$8,000</p> <p>Total = \$8,000 in-kind</p>
<p>A2 – Co-operative Models of Social Care The project will examine the increasing role of co-ops in the design and delivery of social care and issues related to this.</p>	<p>Student - \$7,500 \$10,000 in salary replacement to support John Restakis' work on this project already budgeted by BALTA Total = \$7,500 + \$10,000</p>	<p>Student - \$2,500 Support costs - \$5,000 from CDI Travel - \$6,500 from Elder Care Task Force Various in-kind supports re dissemination Total = \$14,000 + in-kind</p>
<p>A3 – The Non-Profit Sector Capital Market in B.C. and Alberta The project will look at a range of current and potential financing options for the social economy.</p>	<p>Student - \$5,000</p> <p>Total = \$5,000</p>	<p>Time contributed by the project lead In-kind support costs from City of Edmonton - \$1,000</p>
<p>A4 – The Role of Faith Based Organizations in the Social Economy This project will look at aspects of the current and potential role of faith based organizations with respect to the social economy.</p>	<p>Student - \$2,500</p> <p>Total = \$2,500</p>	<p>Time contributed by the lead researcher and other SERC members</p> <p>Total = ?? in-kind</p>
<p>Total Budget Requested from BALTA</p>	<p>Students - \$25,000 Support costs - \$1,000 Travel - \$3,000</p> <p>Total = \$29,000</p>	

12. Identification of research and activity roles for those SERC members involved in research, including projects and activities identified under #8. Include which SERC members will lead and/or be involved with each project/activity.

Project	SERC Members Involved	Role Played
<p>A1 – Innovative Use of Housing Co-operative Assets A research report and a research paper will be produced by March 2008. One or more presentations, including a tele-seminar, are also planned.</p>	<p>Carol Murray</p> <p>John Restakis, Jenny Kain & Bob McKeon</p>	<p>Co-lead, principal researcher and student supervisor Input to the project</p>
<p>A2 – Co-operative Models of Social Care A research report and a published research paper will result. A later output is intended to be a book based on the research.</p>	<p>John Restakis</p>	<p>Project lead and researcher Supervision of student(s)</p>
<p>A3 – The Non-Profit Sector Capital Market in B.C. and Alberta A literature review and research report will be produced.</p>	<p>Jenny Kain</p> <p>Martin Garber-Conrad</p>	<p>Project lead and student supervision Extensive involvement in various aspects of the project</p>
<p>A4 – The Role of Faith Based Organizations in the Social Economy This project will begin with some preliminary work in 2007-2008 and expand in the second year.</p>	<p>Bob McKeon Martin Garber-Conrad</p>	<p>Project lead and researcher Input into project</p>

13. In projects where SERC members will not be responsible for developing and managing the project, identify how requests for proposals from researchers will be solicited and how the project relationship will be managed to ensure that such projects meet the priorities and research needs of the SERC.

All projects will be led by SERC 1 members.

14. Explanation of how research results will be gathered, documented, stored, etc.

Each project will have specific research methodologies and methods of data gathering and analysis. These are outlined to some extent in the Annex A for each project and will be further elaborated in the detailed project plans developed after projects are approved. Each project specifies outputs in the Annex A, including some form of research report. Several projects include the development of one or more papers. Research reports and papers will all be stored on the database being developed for BALTA and will be accessible through the BALTA website.

15. Explanation of communication, dissemination and learning/animation plans/needs during the first year and what support would be needed from BALTA to assist with this.

A1 – A research report and a published paper have been identified as outputs. At this point, BALTA support has only been identified as far as posting these on the BALTA website and database. BALTA has been asked to organize a tele-seminar to facilitate sharing of the research results.

A2 – Several research outputs (research report, published paper and eventual book) have been identified and specific dissemination strategies and partners have also been identified (B.C. Institute for Co-operative Studies to publish research paper, Task Force on Co-op Elder Care to disseminate relevant portions of research, B.C. Co-operatives Association to disseminate research results in several ways). A need for BALTA support in further disseminating the research results has been noted, but specific methods will need to be determined later.

A3 – No dissemination strategy, beyond posting research report(s) on the BALTA website, has been identified to date. Further work on this will need to be undertaken as part of project planning.

A4 – Only preliminary research will be begun in 2007-2008. No dissemination needs are anticipated.

16. General plan for monitoring and evaluation of the research activities of the SERC. (Specific arrangements for monitoring and evaluation will be worked out with BALTA's Monitoring & Evaluation Coordinator after approval of workplans.)

Monitoring and evaluation will address both evaluation of the research projects and project results as well as evaluation of the students' performance, student learnings and potential impact on the students and their future careers. It is assumed that this will include a mix of written and other reporting, as outlined in BALTA's emerging approach to monitoring and evaluation. A specific plan and tools will be worked out with BALTA's evaluation coordinator, but will include such elements as:

- a. Written final reports on each project;
- b. Written interim reports near fiscal year-end for projects extending beyond the year-end;
- c. Written evaluations for each student employed, both self-assessments and supervisor assessments (Projects A1, A2 and A3);
- d. Some follow-up evaluation interviews and focus group sessions to explore other evaluation aspects;
- e. Some form of collective evaluation by the SERC of research results, SERC functioning, etc.

17. Describe how students involved in the proposed plan and projects will be adequately supervised and supported, and what steps will be taken to ensure a clear benefit to all students in terms of learning.

All projects involving students have already identified a lead researcher or researchers and specific arrangements to ensure effective student supervision (see Annexes A1, A2 and A4). BALTA's Academic Coordinator will work with individual supervisors to ensure that each student contract and project makes provision for addressing learning objectives.

18. Explain how the workplan addresses issues of academic/practitioner balance, gender equity and diversity in decisions about SERC membership, project identification and student recruitment.

A need to increase the number of academics on SERC 1 has been identified and opportunities to do this will be explored in the coming year. Subsequent to the January meeting, Jorge Sousa of the University of Alberta was approved as a SERC member, an initial step in addressing this problem.

In developing the strategic framework for this SERC's research, SERC 1 has agreed that gender, culture and race, new Canadians, location and potentially other aspects of diversity will serve as 'lenses' in considering differential participation and differential impacts of the social economy. There has been no specific attention to date to issues of gender equity or diversity in either the SERC membership or plans for student recruitment, though student recruitment will be monitored with respect to these parameters.