

SOCIAL ECONOMY RESEARCH NEWS



THE SOCIAL ECONOMY REFERS TO THE GRASSROOTS VOLUNTARY OR NON-PROFIT SECTOR OUTSIDE BOTH THE GOVERNMENT (PUBLIC) AND PRIVATE FOR-PROFIT SECTORS. IN ADDITION TO NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, INFORMAL COLLECTIVES, SOCIETIES, ASSOCIATIONS, COOPERATIVES, AND CHARITABLE FOUNDATIONS, THE SOCIAL ECONOMY OF THE NORTH ALSO EMBRACES MANY OF THE TRADITIONAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES OF ABORIGINAL SOCIETIES GIVEN ITS FOCUS ON DEMOCRATIC VALUES THAT ENHANCE COMMUNITY LIFE.



A NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIAL ECONOMY RESEARCH NETWORK OF NORTHERN CANADA

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This newsletter highlights the Northwest Territories activities of the Social Economy Research Network of Northern Canada (SERNNoCa), a five-year pan-Northern initiative dedicated to interdisciplinary research in the social economy. For more information and news updates, please visit our website at:

www.social-economy.net

Correspondence can be sent to:
SERNNoCA NWT Secretariat
c/o Institute for Circumpolar Health Research
P.O. Box 11050 • Yellowknife, NT X1A 3X7
Tel: 867-873-9337 • Fax: 867-873-9338

ABOUT SERNNOCA

The Social Economy Research Network of Northern Canada (SERNNoCa) is a network of university and college-based researchers and representatives of community-based organizations is conducting research relevant to the social economy in Canada's North.



The network involves a number of University partners who provide research expertise and direction for the 4 main research themes of the program. Each northern territory and region forms a sub-node of the network which stretches from the Yukon to Labrador. The central office is located at Yukon College in Whitehorse with the NWT subnode housed at the Institute for Circumpolar Health Research in Old Town Yellowknife.

In addition to research seeking to conceptualize and inventory the social economy in the North, the network is investigating the relationships that exist between social economy and indigenous cultures, resource regimes, and the state. Much of the work is being conducted by graduate students whose research efforts in various areas of the social economy are highlighted in this newsletter.

This network is part of the Canadian Social Economy Suite funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) from 2007-2011.



OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS, SERNNOCA HAS FUNDED STUDENTS CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN THE NWT ON VARIOUS TOPICS RELATED TO THE LOCAL SOCIAL ECONOMY

GRADUATE STUDENT PROJECT BRIEFS

THE MEANING OF EDUCATION FOR INUVIALUIT IN TUKTOYAKTUK, NT, CANADA

Raila Maarit Salokangas, MSc Student
University of Alberta

2008-2009

Raila investigated how the meaning of education has changed for the Inuvialuit in Tuktoyaktuk, NT, Canada, over a century. This was done by situating Inuvialuit educational experiences in the context of government policies, socio-economic and cultural changes, and Inuvialuit self-determination. The study found that the meaning of education for the Inuvialuit has been and continues to be centred on acquiring the means to support a family. A change has occurred from learning “the Inuvialuk way” in the 1930s to “striving for the best of both worlds” in the 1970s to the dream of “becoming whatever I want” in the 2000s. Unfortunately, the dreams that youth have are often cut short. Among other things, the level of engagement in formal education by youth and their families is influenced by the family’s past experiences and perceptions of the education system. The study identifies family, community, school, and policy factors that increased student engagement.

FOOD SECURITY IN PAULATUK, NT – OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF A CHANGING COMMUNITY ECONOMY

Zoe Sarah Croucher Todd, MSc Student
University of Alberta

2009-2010

Zoe’s thesis aimed to answer the question: “how does the wage economy affect the ability of individuals to get food from the land and the store in Paulatuk, NT?” Specifically, she looked at a) how individuals are participating in the wage economy and traditional economy in Paulatuk, and in turn, how this influences their ability to get food from the land and b) the impact of income on the ability of residents to get food from the store and through the Food Mail program.

She concluded that the influence of the wage economy on the traditional economy must be considered holistically, and store-bought and country foods must be considered as two equal parts of the food security equation in Paulatuk.



The Coop in Déline (courtesy Arctic Coops)

NORTHERN CO-OPERATIVE GALLERIA

Dr. Ian MacPherson, University of Victoria
Jen Alsop, SERNNOCA researcher (Carleton University)

2010

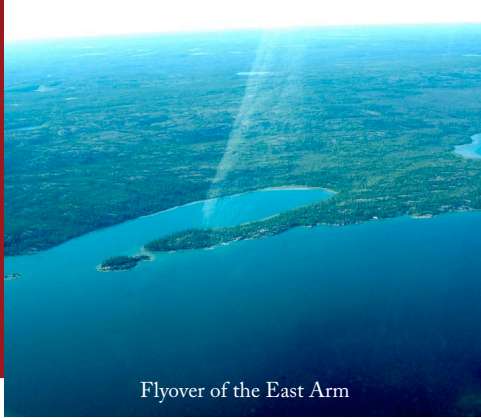
In the late 1950s to early 1970s, then-titled Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) pursued a policy of co-operative development in the newly settled, predominantly Inuit and First Nation communities of the Northwest Territories. Today, the majority of these community-based co-operatives are thriving. This is due to the continued support of Arctic Co-operatives Limited (ACL), the main umbrella co-operative that provides a number of financial services, and support to all community-based co-operatives in the system. Northern community co-operatives continue to supply much-needed goods and services to communities, ensuring that profits remain in the communities, all the while providing a venue for local people to become involved in the economic development planning of their communities. Across NWT and Nunavut, over 800 people are employed in community-based co-operatives. They remain one of the largest private-sector employers in the north. The history, development and continued sustainability of the northern co-operative system, is a fascinating example of the resiliency of the people residing the Canada’s northern territories, and their ability to make ends meet in an isolated, and demanding environmental climate. Most would live their lives no other way, feeling an inextricable connection to the beauty and harshness of the windswept tundra that they call home.

Field-work was undertaken at the headquarters for Arctic Co-operatives Ltd, January 2010, in Winnipeg. Interviews with current and former ACL staff were made, and an extensive document/literature search was conducted of ACL’s files. In addition, a relevant literature search was undertaken at the Indian and Northern Affairs library, as well as at the headquarters of the Canadian Co-operative Association, in Ottawa.

Information gathered through interview and literature/document reviews pertains to individual community co-operatives in the Arctic. In particular, information with regards to both the history of the co-op and the community; biographies of key individuals and the nature of their contributions to the co-op in question; a timeline of key historical events in the community and a bibliography of literature on each community are included.

For more information on this project please visit:

www.learningcentre.coop/content/northern-co-ops-galleria



Flyover of the East Arm



Caribou on the Edna Peninsula
(Gorrie's NWT PAS)

CONSERVATION, COMMUNITY BENEFIT, CAPACITY BUILDING AND THE SOCIAL ECONOMY: A CASE STUDY OF ŁUTSEL K'E, NT AND THE PROPOSED NATIONAL PARK

Nathan Bennett, MSc Student
Lakehead University

2008-2009

The primarily Dene First Nation community of Łutsel K'e, Northwest Territories, located on the East Arm of Great Slave Lake, is questioning the implications of the creation of a national park in their traditional territory and in the local community, as well as how to community members could maximize local benefits from the park. This collaborative research project of Lakehead University and the Thaidene Nene Parks Working Group of the Łutsel K'e Dene First Nation focused on:

1. perceived and desired community development outcomes related to the creation of a national park;
2. capacity-building for the maximization of local benefit; and
3. the role of the social economy in facilitating social and economic development related to park creation.

This research project is complete and a knowledge dissemination website has been prepared to document the research process:

lutselkeandthaidenenene.wordpress.com

Since his master's research in Łutsel K'e, Nathan Bennett has gone to pursue his PhD at the University of Victoria as a Trudeau Scholar. He intends to continue exploring issues such as biodiversity, livelihoods, and climate change in Marine Protected Areas.

STORIES, HARVESTING, AND SOCIAL ECONOMY IN DÉLİŇ, NT

This project has evolved considerably since its first conception to encompass exploration of stories and caribou harvesting as aspects of the social economy in the small Dene community of DélıŇ on Great Bear Lake.

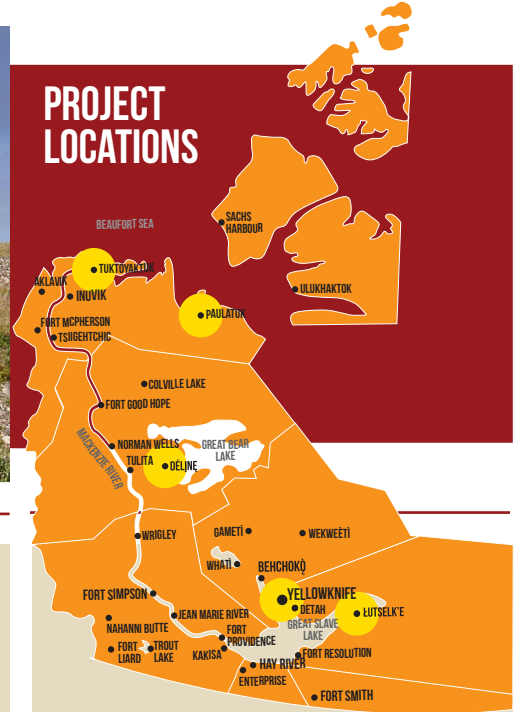
Traditional harvesting and storytelling are both recognized by the people of DélıŇ as important aspects of community health and well-being. Given their strong roots in traditional culture and practices before the existence of the money economy, these two aspects of community life are conceptualized as part of a way of life. This is quite distinct from the standard conception of volunteering that is defined by its opposite – wage labour.

The conditions sustaining these activities have changed since the arrival of the money economy. The two projects explore the ways in which the culture and meaning of harvesting and stories are maintained despite their necessary and uneasy interface with the money economy.

Research led by Walter Bayha (Sahtu Renewable Resources Board), Frances Abele (Carleton University), Ken Caine (University of Alberta), and Deborah Simmons (University of Manitoba) is exploring the role of caribou stories in maintenance of responsible caribou harvesting practices in the context of a reported caribou population decline. Doctoral researcher Sarah Gordon (Indiana University) is focusing on the role of stories and storytelling in shaping what it means to be a healthy community in DélıŇ.

For more information, contact Deborah Simmons, simmons@cc.umanitoba.ca.

PROJECT LOCATIONS



HOUSING AND BEING HOMELESS IN YELLOWKNIFE, NT

Nicholas Falvo, PhD Student
Carleton University

2009-2011

This three-year study is looking at affordable housing in the NWT and visible homelessness in Yellowknife. The project is supervised by Dr. Frances Abele (School of Public Policy and Administration, Carleton University), and in collaboration with Arlene Haché (Yellowknife Women's Society, Centre for Northern Families).

From February 2009, this project has documented the history of government-assisted housing in the NWT, present-day issues around housing in the NWT, and homelessness in Yellowknife. The project's focus has been on the policies, programs, laws and regulations, well as the economic factors, that concern both precarious housing and homelessness.

In November 2010, a short article written by the research team appeared in *Parity*, an Australian publication. The article is entitled "Homeless in the Homeland: A Growing Problem For Indigenous People in Canada's North." It can be accessed online at the following URL:

www.chp.org.au/parity/articles/results.chtml?filename_num=00418

Later this year, an article on present-day housing in the NWT will be featured in *How Ottawa Spends*, published by McGill-Queen's University press.

THE SOCIAL ECONOMY INVENTORY & SURVEY

In 2008, over 400 groups in the NWT were sent a questionnaire via mail, email, and telephone, inviting them to participate in an inventory of Social Economy groups in northern Canada. These groups included non-profit and voluntary organizations, societies, informal associations, co-operatives, credit unions, and other social economy organizations. This survey aimed to determine the characteristics of these organizations, including locations, activities, size, employment, membership, and structure.



SERNNoCa formulated a follow-up questionnaire in order to further examine the impacts and importance of social economy groups in the North. Although the new questionnaire was sent to the same list in 2009 and 2010, we are once again dispatching the questionnaire and cover letter to a corrected list of groups and will be contacting you to complete the survey if not returned to us by late summer 2011.

Participants will also have the option to complete the questionnaire using our online form on the SERNNoCa-NWT Website.

So please if you have not already done so, complete the form for your organization and return to SERNNoCa's secretariat as soon as possible.

Your information and feedback will immeasurably help us gain a greater understanding of the complex issues confronting social economy groups in this period of economic uncertainty and transition.

Thank You!

NORTHERN SUMMIT ON THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

NOVEMBER 22-23, 2011 • YELLOWKNIFE, NT



In 2011, the Social Economy Research Network of Northern Canada will be convening a final Northern Summit on the Social Economy from November 22 to 23 in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories.

Over the past five years, these gatherings have provided participants from all over the North with a forum to share research information, engage in public discussions, and broach a variety of topics relevant to the needs of local social economy organizations. Past gatherings have been held in Inuvik, Iqaluit, Whitehorse, and Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

This summit will also be the last opportunity for SERNNoCa to convene its pan-Northern network as it winds down its activities in early 2012.

Further details about registration and the agenda will be published on the NWT nodal website in the coming months.

If you are interested in being part of a panel discussion or meeting and strategizing with other groups, please contact us at:

Tel: 867.873.9337 | Email: info@social-economy.net

REPORTS RELEASED ON THE YELLOWKNIFE SOCIAL ECONOMY AND HOMELESSNESS IN THE CITY

The Social Economy Research Network of Northern Canada in partnership with the Carleton Centre for Community Innovation at Carleton University, is pleased to announce the release of two reports:



Nick Falvo and Jerry Sabin together in Whitehorse

- » *Yellowknife's Voluntary and Nonprofit Sector: A Portrait of a Northern Social Economy.*
- » *Homelessness in Yellowknife: An Emerging Social Challenge.*
(in collaboration with the Centre for Northern Families)

The participation of so many Northerners in these year-long projects is greatly appreciated. With your help, Jerry Sabin (Social Economy) and Nick Falvo (Homelessness) have prepared two comprehensive documents examining the current state of Yellowknife's voluntary and nonprofit sector and the growing problem of housing and homelessness in the city.

These community-led and peer-reviewed initiatives are a resource for sector organizations, the public, policy makers, and for future research into the sector and its activities as well as broader social issues in the community.

The reports can be found in the *updates* section of the SERNNoCa-NWT website:

www.social-economy.net