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Chris Southcott and Val Walker

One of the main research goals of the Social Economy Research Network for Northern Canada was to understand the general situation of the social economy as it existed in the Canadian North. A common theme of the social economy research conducted across Canada was to provide a “portrait” of the various non-profit, voluntary, and co-operative sectors of each region. The objective of this portrait was to identify the number of these organizations, their relative importance for the region, their main activities, whether there were significant regional differences, whether these groups were growing, and whether they were facing important challenges.

In the case of Northern Canada this was done through the use of several surveys of these organizations. This process was accomplished in a number of steps. Initially researchers reviewed the regional data coming from a national survey of non-profit and voluntary organizations. Following this, a list of identified social economy organizations was developed that would serve as both the basis for partnership work for SERNNNoCa and as a sampling frame for questionnaire surveys. Two separate surveys were conducted during the initial period of SERNNNoCa from 2007 to 2010. The first was a lengthy detailed questionnaire that had a relatively low response rate. The second was a much shorter, concise questionnaire modeled on a questionnaire used to survey social economy organizations in Quebec and which was able to achieve a higher response rate.

The research identified that social economy organizations represent an important part of communities in Canada’s North. During the initial phases of the research close to 1,900 organizations were identified in the Yukon, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Nunavik, and Labrador and this despite the fact that the combined regions have less than 140,000 people. Research conducted showed that these organizations are active in all sectors of the regional economy and contribute a significant percentage of regional revenues and employment. Profile research was able to identify that the importance of these organizations is increasing as most organizations are seeing a growth in membership and levels of activities.

In terms of challenges, finding funding was the most serious issue identified by all groups. Finding volunteers and training were also identified as important issues but with regional differences in the degree of these problems. While we have a tendency to portray the north of Canada as a homogenous entity, the portraiture research shows evidence of important differences among the regions that make up Canada’s North. The social economy in Nunavut seems especially different from that of the other regions but especially from that of the Yukon.

### **The Social Economy and Development in the Canadian North**

A proper understanding of the social economy of the Canadian North should start with a discussion of the region’s historical development. The hunting and gathering economy was the

first economic system that existed in the region. It is still practiced to varying degrees by almost all of the communities and, as is pointed out in the chapter in this volume by Abele, is at the heart of the “mixed” economy of the region. It is the economic system that, in most cases, is portrayed as giving the Indigenous communities the greatest autonomy from outside human interference, an autonomy that is often compromised by a heavy dependence on environmental conditions. In his portrayal of hunting and gathering society, which he called “the original affluent society”, Sahlins tried to show that these communities in this society were not constantly suffering from starvation but were quite enriched by what he called the social economy (Sahlins, 1972). Sahlins notes how primitive exchange in these hunting and gathering societies was based on values of sharing that are fundamentally different from the profit-oriented values of contemporary capitalism.

The creation of a demand for furs in a market largely controlled by Europeans had a profound impact on northern communities. The fur trade introduced a new system of relations to the region that can best be called pre-industrial colonialism (Southcott, 2010). Under this system, the Indigenous peoples of the Canadian North came to be much more influenced by outside forces: forces shaped primarily by the economic demands of European peoples. In the North, pre-industrial colonialism was made up of two main activities: the fur trade and whaling. The unique aspect of this particular system was that it introduced European domination while maintaining some aspects of traditional activities. Pre-industrial colonialism did not put an end to the traditional hunting and gathering economy. It transformed that system to meet the needs of European and other consumers.

Pre-industrial colonialism impacted communities in Canada’s North soon after the establishment of Europeans in North America. Indigenous peoples such as the Ottawas and the Hurons had started trading with the French as early as 1550, bringing furs from the northern interior to the rendezvous at Tadoussac in the northern part of the St. Lawrence Valley. From the 1670s to the 1820s the trade was characterized by a competition between a French, and later Northwest Company system, that was based on inland trade routes stretching from the Great Lakes to the Mackenzie River valley in the Northwest Territories, and a Hudson’s Bay Company system based on posts established at the mouths of rivers flowing in Hudson’s Bay and James Bay. Competition between the two companies eventually led to a forced merger between the two in 1821. Following the merger the new Hudson’s Bay Company expanded operations into the Yukon and the Mackenzie Delta in order to deal with competition from the Russian American Fur Company based in Russian-occupied Alaska.

No matter which company dominated trade in the Canadian North, similar tactics were used in order to ensure that furs were harvested. The most important of these was the creation of a dependence on European goods, and later European foods, for the survival of these people (Innis, 1961). The Indigenous peoples of Canada’s Northwest would spend progressively more and more of their time harvesting furs in order to meet the demands of international markets. This meant a smaller proportion of time spent following the traditional subsistence activities upon which they had depended for their survival in the past. While the Inuit of Northern Canada escaped the earlier period of the Canadian fur trade relatively unscathed due to the markets’ preference for furs from Boreal forest-based animals, when the Arctic fox became a fashionable fur in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, they too were exposed to the same changes that the Indigenous peoples of the Canadian sub-arctic had been exposed to earlier (Damas, 2002).

Pre-industrial colonialism was not only based on the harvest of furs. Whaling was an important economic activity in the region starting in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. At that time world markets

started to develop an increased demand for whale products. While production started in the 1700s in the Davis Strait, by the 1840s it was centered around Cumberland Sound. By the 1860s American whalers had expanded into Hudson's Bay. Whaling was never centered in any area for a long period of time as whale stocks quickly became depleted and new areas had to be found. Initially, contact with the Inuit was sporadic. At first the Inuit saw little need for the goods that the whalers tried to trade but as time went on they started to learn how to use these products and as such develop a desire for them (Eber, 1989: 11).

In the Western North American Arctic, American whalers first arrived in the Bering Strait in 1848. By the 1890s they had arrived at the areas north of the Mackenzie Delta and had established a base at Herschel Island. In the western part of the Canadian Arctic, an extensive and relatively constant cooperative relationship was established with existing peoples, although the exploitive nature of the whaling industry meant that as one area was depleted, the Inuit had to abandon traditional areas and move with the whalers in order to continue these exchanges. As well, because of the intensity of contact, exchanges were sometimes more destructive to the Inuit in the west than was the situation in the Eastern Arctic (Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, 2011). By 1907 whaling in the North American Arctic had collapsed. The impact on the Inuit was considerable although it would have been worse had not an Arctic fur trade emerged at this time.

During pre-industrial colonialism, communities in the Canadian North were significantly transformed. This transformation is characterized by a shift from a subsistence-based economy to one which combines subsistence with a dependence on servicing the economic needs of primarily European populations. The activities that make up these services are not however foreign to these Indigenous peoples. Trapping for the fur trade, whaling, and associated activities such as clothes production are all extensions of activities that are part of traditional hunting and gathering society. The lifestyles do change as dependence is increased but it is a fundamentally different situation from that brought about by industrialism where these traditional activities became devalued.

The industrialism that was introduced into the Canadian North was fundamentally different from the individualistic entrepreneurial capitalism that is often associated with the frontier development described by the American historian Frederick Jackson Turner. In Canada, historians have pointed out how rational planning and close government-industry cooperation was utilized to ensure that both government and industry would maximize benefits. (Nelles, 2005; Zaslow, 1971). Mining operations started to develop when international markets opened up for these raw materials and when foreign capital became available to develop these operations. Senior levels of government played a major role in coordinating these developments.

When gold was discovered in the Dawson area of the Yukon in the 1896 it brought a rush of at least 30,000 non-indigenous people in the region in a space of a few years. While the rush resulted in a short term mining development based on individually owned stakes, after a few years the initial 'American frontier' situation had changed considerably (Zaslow, 1989). The need for new technology to rationalize the production process meant that the government had to work closely with international investors who had the capital to purchase and utilize this technology. This meant granting a "virtual monopoly" of mineral production to these investors (Coates and Morrison, 2005: 158). Less than 10 years after the initial discovery of gold, industrial activity in the Canadian North was dominated by a new logic based on close cooperation and planning between the national government and international capital.

This was the logic followed in later industrial developments in the Canadian North such as silver and lead mining in the Mayo-Keno region of the Yukon starting in 1906, radium mining

in the Great Bear Lake area in the 1930s, and gold mining in the Yellowknife area starting in the 1930s. This logic became even more prevalent following World War II when American government actions, with some help from Canada, had rapidly established new transportation systems in the Canadian North such as the Alaska Highway and a series of northern landing strips and airbases. The success of these transportation projects legitimized in the eyes of many the superior nature of industrial developments planned by both government officials and industrial interests. Following the war, industrial activity in the Territorial North of Canada became almost entirely controlled by the federal government as the region became “the bureaucrat’s north”. (Coates, 1985: 191) The 1950s and early 1960s saw an increased pace of highway construction, a railway to Great Slave Lake, and the opening up a new lead/zinc mine at Pine Point as well as several other mining developments. In the 1960s, when it became apparent that large oil and gas deposits existed in the Mackenzie Delta region, the government ensured that any development would be largely controlled from Ottawa.

In the Canadian North, industrialism did not initially have a direct effect on Indigenous communities. Most industrial developments resulted in separate communities: single industry resource towns constructed specifically to serve the needs of that particular industrial project. Indigenous communities often were completely isolated from these developments. The fur trading industry and the government first thought it best to keep the original population as isolated as possible from the forces of change (Damas, 2002). Continued dependence on their traditional activities was considered to be the best option for these peoples. During the 1950s the federal government reversed its policy on the issue and decided that as Canadian citizens, the Indigenous peoples of the North had a right to basic services such as education, health, and social services. These could best be provided by establishing permanent settlements for the Indigenous peoples of the region. This resulted in the arrival in the North of a new type of non-indigenous migrant – one who would provide the necessary services to this new urbanized northern society.

It was recognized from the beginning of this movement into permanent settlements that the North would not be simply an extension of the southern parts of Canada. The communal and sharing culture that was the basis of Indigenous communities should be maintained by special approaches to development. As pointed out by McPherson in this volume, co-operatives and community economic development initiatives were highlighted (see also Pell, 1990; Lotz, 1982). With the assistance of the federal government, Indigenous people established co-operatives as the main vehicles for economic development in their communities. By using community-based initiatives, the people of the region tried to ensure that traditional ways and values became part of their communities’ economic development. With the negotiation and signing of new treaties, these alternative approaches became institutionalized as Indigenous peoples created structures to maintain traditional activities and traditional values. Indeed, the new comprehensive treaties that have been signed by the Indigenous peoples of the region since 1976 have generally been portrayed as significantly empowering northern peoples (Saku, 2002).

The history of the region helps to understand the development of Indigenous-non-indigenous relations in the region. Originally one of non-indigenous dependence on Indigenous peoples, the fur trade and whaling industry ensured a slowly increasing dependence of the original peoples on the newcomers. The initial experiences of industrialism served to devalue the economic importance of the Indigenous peoples and to largely exclude them from production processes. At the same time, the extension of social, educational, and health services into the region created a non-indigenous population whose primary purpose was to service the needs of the existing local population. The political mobilization of Indigenous peoples in Canada starting

in the 1960s lead to more politically empowered Indigenous populations in the Canadian North. New comprehensive treaties created a situation where these communities are increasingly active in the economic and social aspects of the region.

### A Socio-economic Profile of the Canadian North

The unique history of the region has resulted in a society with many socio-economic characteristics that are different from the Canadian norm. Figure 1 shows the population history for the three Canadian territories. While the population has increased fairly regularly since 1911, in the years from 1941 to 1991 this increase was primarily due to an increase in the non-indigenous population.<sup>1</sup> Building on the transportation infrastructure established during World War II, resource developments resulted in an inflow of people from the south. This was combined with the expansion of government services in the 1960s and 1970s. After 1991 we see a decrease in the non-indigenous population as rationalization of resource sector employment and government budgetary reductions results in fewer employment opportunities. High birth rates mean that the Indigenous population continues to grow however. While changes in the census means that it is more difficult for us to be certain of the size of the Indigenous population in 2011, it is likely that the commodities boom of the past 10 years has resulted in an increase in the non-indigenous population from 2001 to 2011 (Yukon, 2011).

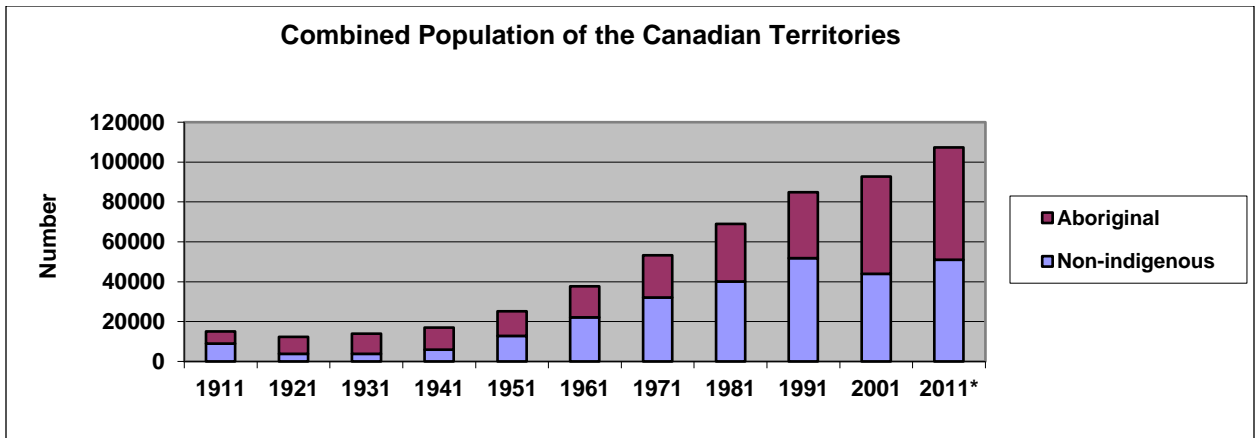


Figure 1 Source: Census of Canada 1911 to 2011. \*Figures for Aboriginal and non-indigenous population in 2011 are from the National Household Survey and are less reliable than Census figures. It is likely that the Aboriginal population is underrepresented.

As pointed out in the introduction to this volume, there are five main jurisdictions that make up the area of Northern Canada dealt with by SERNNNoCa – the three territories, the Nunavik region of Quebec, and Labrador. As shown in Table 1, each region is different but there are similar common traits shared by all. As is common in areas dependent on resource production, there are generally higher numbers of males to females in the North (Southcott, 2006). In terms of age differences, the North has a higher percentage of youth and a lower number of elderly. Recent high birth rates among the Indigenous population are the main reason for the large percentage of

<sup>1</sup> Canadian census data for Aboriginal people is has been shown to be problematic for a number of reasons. See Southcott, 2006; Saku, 1999. Despite this it is still relatively useful for discerning demographic trends.

youth while both the employment structure of resource industries and higher death rates among the Indigenous population explain why there are fewer elderly.

**Table 1 Socio-economic Characteristics of Northern Canada**

	<i>Canada</i>	<i>Yukon Territory</i>	<i>Northwest Territories</i>	<i>Nunavut</i>	<i>Nunavik</i>	<i>Labrador</i>
<b>Population in 2011</b>	33,476,688	33,897	41,462	31,906	12,090	26,728
<b>Population in 2006</b>	31,612,897	30,372	41,464	29,474	10,802	26,364
<b>Percentage Change in the Population - 2006 to 2011</b>	5.9	11.6	0.0	8.3	11.9	1.4
<b>Percentage of Males to Females - 2006</b>	0.96	1.01	1.05	1.05	1.03	1.03
<b>Percentage of the Population 14 years of age and under - 2006</b>	17.7	18.8	23.9	33.9	36.4	20.6
<b>Percentage of the Population 65 years of age and over - 2006</b>	13.7	7.5	4.8	2.8	3.1	6.3
<b>Aboriginal Identity Population as a Percentage of Total Population - 2006</b>	3.8	25.1	50.3	85.0	89.4	38.0
<b>Average Number of People per Private Household -2006</b>	2.5	2.4	2.9	3.7	4.1	2.8
<b>Migrants over the last 5 years as a Percentage of the Population - 2006</b>	18.9	19.9	24.0	16.5	9.7	16.6
<b>Unemployment Rate - 2006</b>	6.6	9.4	10.4	15.6	18.1	18.5
<b>Percentage of Population 25 to 64 years of age with no certificate, diploma, or degree -2006</b>	15.4	15.3	23.0	45.9	49.8	25.1
<b>Percentage of Population 25 to 64 years of age with university certificate or degree - 2006</b>	22.9	22.2	20.0	12.8	9.7	10.3

<b>Average Income for individuals with income - 2005</b>	\$35,498	\$38,687	\$44,422	\$34,182	\$30,392	\$34,434
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Source: Census of Canada, 2011.

All regions of the North have large percentages of Aboriginal people as part their populations. The average for all of Canada is 3.8% while in the North the percentages range from 25.1% in the Yukon to 89.4% in Nunavik. With the exception of the Yukon, housing is more crowded in the North and unemployment rates are higher. Other than in the Yukon, the percentage of people who have not finished high school is higher in the North and there are much fewer people who have university degrees. Incomes in both the Yukon and the Northwest Territories are higher than for Canada as a whole.

**Table 2: The Economic Structure of the Canadian Territories: Major industrial employment categories as a Percentage of Total Employment**

<i>Industrial Employment Categories</i>	<i>Canada</i>	<i>Territorial Norths</i>
<b>11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting</b>	3.1	1.0
<b>21 Mining and oil and gas extraction</b>	1.4	4.5
<b>31-33 Manufacturing</b>	11.9	1.7
<b>41 Wholesale trade</b>	4.4	1.5
<b>44-45 Retail trade</b>	11.4	10.2
<b>48-49 Transportation and warehousing</b>	4.9	6.4
<b>52 Finance and insurance</b>	4.1	1.4
<b>54 Professional, scientific and technical services</b>	6.7	3.8
<b>56 Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services</b>	4.3	3.1
<b>61 Educational services</b>	6.8	8.3
<b>62 Health care and social assistance</b>	10.2	9.1
<b>72 Accommodation and food services</b>	6.7	6.8
<b>81 Other services (except public administration)</b>	4.9	3.8
<b>91 Public administration</b>	5.8	23.7

Source: Census of Canada, 2006.

Table 2 shows the economic characteristics of the region by comparing employment categories for Canada as a whole with those of the Territories. The two most important differences from a percentage difference point of view concern employment in mining in oil and gas extraction and employment in public administration. Employment in mining and oil and gas is 220% more important in the Territories than for Canada as a whole. Employment in public administration is 308% more important in the Territories than for Canada as a whole.

Generally speaking there are three main types of communities in each of the five regions. (Southcott, 2003). Most of the population live in the largest urban centres whose economies are focused around the provision of services to the surrounding area. The largest of these is Whitehorse, with a population of 23,274, Yellowknife with 19,234, Happy Valley-Goose Bay has 7,522, and Iqaluit with a population of 6,699 (Census of Canada, 2011). These urban centres

tend to have the highest percentages of non-indigenous residents and the highest levels of education. The next most important type of communities are Indigenous communities. These tend to be more isolated and have populations that are almost entirely Aboriginal. It is these communities that have the most overcrowded housing, the highest rates of unemployment, and the lowest levels of formal education. It is also these communities where you find high rates of “social pathologies” (Bjerregaard and Young, 1998).

The third type of communities are resource dependent communities. In the past these were company towns where the population was based around a particular resource extraction industry. They were almost entirely non-indigenous and had a male-oriented and highly mobile population (Lucas, 1971). These communities are in decline in the Canadian North as governments, in partnership with industry, prefer to use Fly In/Fly Out work camps rather than establishing and maintaining new communities. For governments, the political and social cost of shutting down these communities has become too great. (Storey, 2001). The existing communities are changing as there is a continual process of convergence between these communities and Indigenous communities (Southcott, 2006). As the chapter by Parlee in this volume points out, while resource dependent communities are changing, the resource sector remains important in the region and the social economy plays an important part in helping communities adapt to issues created by these industries.

### **The Condition of the Social Economy in the North: The National Survey of Non-profit and Voluntary Organizations**

As was noted in the introduction to this volume, Indigenous traditions linked to the mixed economy, the role of the state, and dependence on natural resource exploitation can be expected to have an impact on the type, form, operation, and development of social economy organization in the Canadian North. Each of these factors impact the social economy in different ways. It is not a simple matter of saying that this factor will have a positive impact or that factor will have a negative impact. The reality will be much more complex.

Indeed, we can discover initial clues to this complexity in the findings of one of the most important attempts to describe the social economy in Canada – the 2003 National Survey of Non-profit and Voluntary Organizations. While this data does not allow in-depth investigations into social economy organizations in the North, a 2005 report from this study did list some relevant statistics regarding the situation of non-profit and voluntary organizations in the three northern territories (Statistics Canada, 2005). It should be pointed out that this data does not include all social economy organizations and practices. In particular cooperatives, an important part of many communities in parts of the North, were not included in the 2003 survey; nor is the Indigenous traditional economy accounted for.

The study counted 851 organizations in the Territories. It is interesting to note that this was the highest percentage of social economy organization per population in Canada. At 825 organizations per 100,000 population, the percentage was significantly more than the Canadian average of 508 per 100,000 population (Statistics Canada, 2005:19). Only a minority of these organizations are Registered Charities. At 37% this rate is the lowest in the country and significantly less than the national average of 56% of organizations that are Registered Charities (20). Not surprisingly, compared to the provinces, the Territories had the highest percentage of non-profit or voluntary organizations serving Aboriginal communities (20).



The study listed interesting financial characteristics of social economy organizations in the North. Organizations in the Territories had average revenues of \$1.4 million. This was higher than the average of organizations in all other provinces in the country (Statistics Canada, 2005:30). Compared to the provinces, social economy organizations in the Territories had the highest percentage of income from 'Earned income' – fees for goods and services. This source comprised 57% of all income for these organizations in the North.

Data showed that social economy organizations in the North varied from other provinces by primary activity. The Territories had the highest percentage of organizations involved in Law, Advocacy, and Politics (Statistics Canada, 2005:19). The region also had higher than average percentages of organizations involved in Arts and culture, Sports and recreation, Education and research, the Environment, and Business and professional associations and unions. The region had lower percentages of organizations involved in Health, Social services, Development and housing, Grant-making, fundraising, and voluntarism promotion, and Religion.

The study also showed that social economy organizations in the Territories were most likely to report problems related to organizational capacity (Statistics Canada, 2005:53). Interestingly the one capacity area where they did not have problems was difficulty obtaining board members. Northern organizations are also far more likely to report problems, such as difficulty providing training to board members (52% in the territories versus 34% in Canada); difficulty providing staff training and development (45% versus 27%); and difficulty obtaining the type of paid staff the organization needs (44% versus 28%).

### **A Census of Social Economy Organizations in Northern Canada**

One of the first projects to be undertaken by SERNNNoCa was the development of an initial inventory of the social economy in Northern Canada. This first attempt at a mapping of the social economy of the Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Nunavik and Labrador involved three stages. The first was a 'census' of all social economy organizations in the Canadian North. A list of all possible social economy organizations with their main activity and location was constructed. The second was an initial questionnaire survey in order to uncover some of the basic characteristics of these organizations in comparison with other regions of Canada. Finally, a second survey was conducted to further refine initial findings.

Much of the social economy activity in the region is not undertaken by the formal organizations that this portraiture work deals with. Especially in smaller northern Indigenous communities that rely heavily on the mixed economy, much of this activity is done in a more informal manner that can only be studied using more qualitative techniques. Other research projects undertaken by SERNNNoCa, and dealt with in this volume, address this aspect of the social economy in the North (Natcher, this volume; Abele, this volume; Simmons et al, this volume). The research discussed here deals with only the formal aspects of the regional social economy. It is concerned with organizations that have prescribed structures – structures that allow them to obtain resources they can use to achieve their particular goals. The research discussed here looked at these organizations in order to find out how extensive their activities are in northern communities, what activities they are engaged in, whether they are growing or declining in importance, whether they have important challenges, and if they differed by region. No single list exists for all social economy organizations in the North. As a result, an important first step in the portraiture process was the construction of this list. Before it could be assembled researchers had to decide on a definition of what constitutes a social economy organization. The

mapping exercise used in this project is based upon a broad definition of social economy that refers to activities which focus on serving the community rather than generating profits. The focus is on economic activities that are not primarily state-driven and not primarily profit driven and which include the traditional social economies of Indigenous populations of the North (Natcher, 2009). While a literature review of definitions was conducted, the project leaned most heavily on the definitions contained in Bouchard et al. (2006).

Each of the three northern offices was responsible for compiling a list of northern social economy organizations in their respective region. This involved searching the internet, phoning and emailing key contacts, reviewing existing documents and resources, and a review of materials at the legal registry offices. It should be pointed out that the list of social economy organizations in the Canadian North is continually being updated. Whether an organization should be included as a social economy organization was often difficult to determine.

Researchers found that there are many groups which need to be researched in more depth before a decision is made whether to include them as a social economy organization. This was particularly the case with many Aboriginal organizations that undertake activities similar to social economy organizations but that are the products of treaties giving sovereign power to these communities. As pointed out by at least one respondent, to include these organizations as social economy organizations would be to deny the legitimacy of these self-government initiatives. In most instances if the organization carried out similar activities to that of a government or state organization then they were excluded from the list.

Provisional lists of social economy organizations were established in 2006 and 2007 to serve as the sample frame for the initial questionnaire survey and to guide partnership work undertaken by SERNNOCa. These first lists were as inclusive as possible. They included all potential social economy organizations. It was recognized at the time that the final census list of social economy organizations would be smaller.

Information packages were distributed to as many potential groups as possible. These packages described the social economy, the research network in the North, the upcoming questionnaire, and requesting input and guidance from these organizations. These mailings were also a means to highlight ways that they might benefit from the research program as well as to ensure that we have listed them appropriately as a social economy group. Information packages were also sent to organizations and government departments that provide support to social economy groups in the hopes that they would be able to assist in ensuring that all social economy groups were identified.

The construction of the list of social economy organizations gave researchers information about northern social economy organizations independent of that gathered from the questionnaire. It was discovered that an extensive amount of information about these organizations could be gathered indirectly from sources such as the internet. Our initial sampling frame was limited to the Territories.<sup>2</sup> As of May 2008, there were 1,190 organizations identified as social economy operations (Southcott and Walker, 2009). The Yukon had 516, the Northwest Territories 379, and Nunavut 295. This was the list that served as the sampling frame for the initial survey. Further work identifying social economy organizations would lead to larger lists in

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<sup>2</sup> Problems were encountered with developing the lists for both Nunavik and Labrador. Discussions regarding results from these two regions would be premature at this point. The lack of a coordination office in these regions meant that the lists were harder to validate. In addition, a decision was made to delay work on the list in Labrador and to first go through the scientific licensing process that was being put in place by the new Nunatsiavut government.

both the Yukon and the Northwest Territories but this initial list was sufficiently representative to allow us to ensure an adequate initial sample. This initial list became the first SERNNNoCa census of social economy organizations in the Territories.

### The Activities of Social Economy Organizations

Internet-based and other unobtrusive research done on groups listed in the 2008 SERNNNoCa census allowed researchers to identify the main activity of all but 28 organizations. These results are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3 Social Economy Organizations in the Territorial North by Main Activity: SERNNNoCa Census**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Nunavut</b>		<b>Northwest Territories</b>		<b>Yukon</b>		<b>Total Territories</b>	
	<i>Total No.</i>	<i>Pct of Total</i>	<i>Total No.</i>	<i>Pct of Total</i>	<i>Total No.</i>	<i>Pct of Total</i>	<i>Total No.</i>	<i>Pct of Total</i>
<b>Manufacturing, Processing and/or construction</b>	1	0.3	0	0.0	2	0.4	3	0.3
<b>Trade, Finance and/or Insurance</b>	29	9.8	8	2.1	3	0.6	40	3.4
<b>Development and Housing</b>	30	10.2	19	5.0	25	4.8	74	6.2
<b>Sports &amp; Recreation, Tourism</b>	39	13.2	32	8.4	128	24.8	199	16.7
<b>Arts &amp; Culture</b>	44	14.9	33	8.7	82	15.9	159	13.4
<b>Education and Research</b>	7	2.4	12	3.2	13	2.5	32	2.7
<b>Health</b>	11	3.7	19	5.0	15	2.9	45	3.8
<b>Social Services</b>	45	15.3	49	12.9	80	15.5	174	14.6
<b>Environment</b>	7	2.4	21	5.5	27	5.2	55	4.6
<b>Law, Advocacy and Politics</b>	14	4.7	70	18.5	49	9.5	133	11.2
<b>Grant-making, Fundraising and Voluntarism Promotion</b>	3	1.0	7	1.8	8	1.6	18	1.5
<b>Religion</b>	15	5.1	49	12.9	43	8.3	107	9.0
<b>Business Association, a Professional Association or a Union</b>	48	16.3	34	9.0	41	7.9	123	10.3
<b>Unknown</b>	2	0.7	26	6.9	0	0	28	2.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>295</b>		<b>379</b>		<b>516</b>		<b>1190</b>	
<b>Undetermined Aboriginal</b>	0		21		31		52	

Source: SERNNNoCa 2008 Census of Social Economy Organizations

The figures in Table 3 show that social economy organizations are involved in all the main economic activities of the region. Apart from Manufacturing, Processing and/or construction there are an important number of organizations represented in all the above economic categories. At the same time we notice several important differences in the types of social economy organizations that exist in each of the territories. Compared to the averages for the Territorial

North, Nunavut has a much higher percentage of social economy organizations engaged in trade, finance and/or insurance. This is due primarily to the importance of co-operatives in the retail trade sector in Nunavut compared to the Northwest Territories and especially the Yukon. Another important difference concerning the social economy in Nunavut is the relative absence of organizations engaged in law, advocacy, and politics. This can be partially explained by the fact that many of the national advocacy groups have not established branches in Nunavut. Finally, Nunavut has a larger than average number of organizations that are business associations, professional associations, or unions. The main reason for this is that each community in Nunavut has a hunters and trappers association. As well, there are more arts and crafts business associations in Nunavut than in the other territories.

### **The First Survey**

The initial census served as the sampling frame for the 2008 questionnaire survey.<sup>3</sup> In order to ensure that comparisons were eventually possible across Canada, the construction of the first questionnaire was loosely based on a questionnaire designed by the social economy networks in both Atlantic Canada and Southern Ontario. Elements were later borrowed from a questionnaire developed by the social economy network in British Columbia and Alberta. Once the initial questionnaire was constructed a pilot test was done with a few non-profit organizations in the North. Based on comments from this pilot test the questionnaire was modified to produce its final form.

Following construction of the questionnaire, attention shifted to how best to deliver it. The dispersed nature of communities in the North meant that it was cost prohibitive to complete the questionnaires through personal interviews. It was decided to deliver the questionnaire using e-mail where possible and mail where this was not possible. Looking at the results for the three Territories it can be seen that a total of 153 questionnaires were returned from respondents identified as social economy organizations. This represents a response rate of 13%. Looking at each of the territories, the Yukon had a response rate of 14%, Nunavut had a response rate of 13%, and the Northwest Territories of 11%. There are several explanations for the relatively low response rates for this initial questionnaire but one of the most likely is that the project had just started and very few organizations were familiar with the notion of the social economy let alone SERNNNoCa. As well, it is likely that the questionnaire was too long for many respondents.

The relatively low response rate from the questionnaire survey meant that results from the survey may not be representative of all social economy organizations in the Territories. At the same time there is at least one indicator which suggests that the results could be fairly representative.<sup>4</sup> As noted above, we do have main activity statistics for the entire territories. When these are compared to the activity statistics for the questionnaire respondents we see that results for the two groups are remarkably similar (Southcott and Walker, 2009).<sup>5</sup>

While the low number of respondents may weaken the ability to use these results as being representative of all social economy organizations in the North, this data was useful as a means of getting an initial impression of the sector in order to guide future research. Table 4 shows the

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<sup>3</sup> The surveys were first sent out in 2008 but with a follow up in 2009.

<sup>4</sup> As the survey was not based on random sampling, probability theory-based indicators of representivity can not be used.

<sup>5</sup> It should be noted that the main activity responses for the questionnaire respondents were recoded according to the criteria used for evaluating main activities in the census of social economy groups.

types of organizations that responded to the questionnaire in all three territories. It also shows noticeable differences between Nunavut and the two other territories. Respondents in Nunavut had fewer non-profits, fewer voluntary organizations, and more cooperatives. Looking at the data more closely we see that there were fewer non-profits in Nunavut because some organizations, such as Hunter and Trappers Organizations, are unsure whether they are non-profit or not. The relative importance of organizations created in association with the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA) is a unique aspect of the social economy in Nunavut.

**Table 4 Characteristics of Organizations**

<i>Type of organization: Percentage of all respondents</i>	<i>Nunavut</i>	<i>NWT</i>	<i>Yukon</i>	<i>All territories</i>
<b>Non-profit</b>	81%	92%	96%	91%
<b>Voluntary organization</b>	52%	70%	75%	68%
<b>Cooperative<sup>6</sup></b>	25%	4%	2%	13%
<b>Age of organization (years)</b>	16	21	24	21

Source: SERNNNoCa 2008 Questionnaire Survey (First Survey)

The national survey of non-profit and voluntary organizations done in 2003 showed that, in Canada as a whole, respondent social economy organizations had existed in communities for a long time. The average age of organizations was 29 years. Organizations in Canada's North are much younger than the national average, reflecting the particular historical development of the North. The average age of respondent organizations in all three territories was 21 years. Comparing the three territories we see that Nunavut has the newest organizations, with an average age of 16 years, followed by respondent organizations in the NWT (21 years) and the Yukon (24 years).

Looking at Nunavut's organizations more closely, we see that co-operatives are by far the oldest organizations. The average age of Nunavut's co-operative respondents was 34 years. Some Hunter and Trappers Organizations, though reorganized following implementation of the NLCA, also reported that they had existed for 30 years or longer. Almost 40% of Nunavut respondent organizations have been in existence for less than 10 years while almost 75% have been in existence for less than 25 years.

Generally speaking, social economy organizations are run by smaller groups of individuals who are more involved in guiding the activities of these organizations. This smaller group of individuals is generally known as a governing Board. Given their relative importance for the organizations, information about the activities and composition of Boards can help us better understand the nature of social economy organizations. It is interesting to note that 55% percent of Board members in Nunavut are either First Nation, Métis, or Inuit while the corresponding figure for all the territories is 31%. Less than 15% of Board members in the Yukon are Aboriginal. This reflects the differing percentage of Aboriginal people within each territory. It is also interesting to note that a majority of Board members in all the territories are female, with the exception of Nunavut where only 35.2% of the members are women.

<sup>6</sup> Only one cooperative in the NWT responded. In the Yukon only one responded as well although 5 others mistakenly listed themselves as a cooperative.

The initial survey revealed several important differences between Nunavut and the other territories. One of these is that fewer social economy organizations in Nunavut use volunteers for their activities. While 78.9% of respondents in all the territories use volunteers only 55.3% of Nunavut respondents do. Corresponding percentages for the NWT are 84% and the Yukon 88%. In both Nunavut and the other territories approximately 46% of respondents reported that their organizations had no paid employees and therefore issued no T4 slips. Of the remaining 54% of respondents there was a significant difference between Nunavut and the rest of the territories in terms of the average number of employees per organizations. The average number of employees in respondent organizations in all the territories was 6.5 while in Nunavut the average was much higher at 12.

Respondents were asked if they had human resource problems. Results are shown in Table 5. The most serious problems in this area relate to obtaining and retaining paid staff. Just over 30% of respondents in all territories said it was an issue that did not apply to them. Generally this was because these particular organizations do not have paid staff. Just over 40% stated that this was either a serious or moderate problem. In Nunavut just under 30% stated it was a serious problem. Next in importance came training. Just under 38% of Nunavut respondents listed providing staff training and development as a serious or moderate problem against 22% who said it was not a problem.

As shown in Table 5, obtaining and retaining Board members does not seem to be that much of a problem in the North. This is especially the case in Nunavut. While 30% of respondents agreed that it was either a serious or moderate problem, 38% said it was not a problem. Providing training to board members is the least serious problem. In Nunavut less than 30% of respondents claimed it was a serious or moderate problem compared to over 40% who said it was not a problem.

**Table 5 Human Resource Issues as a Percentage of all respondents All Territories**

<i>Issue</i>	<i>A moderate problem</i>	<i>A serious problem</i>	<i>A small problem</i>	<i>Does not apply</i>	<i>Not a problem</i>	<i>Total Respondents</i>
<b>Obtaining and retaining staff</b>	19.0	20.9	11.8	30.1	17.0	151
<b>Providing Staff training and development</b>	20.9	13.7	18.3	21.6	23.5	150
<b>Obtaining and retaining board members</b>	20.9	13.7	24.2	8.5	30.7	150
<b>Providing training to board members</b>	20.3	11.8	22.9	12.4	30.7	150

Source: SERNNNoCa 2008 Questionnaire Survey (First Survey)

The respondents were also asked if a series of financial issues identified in previous research were a problem for their particular organization. Of all the issues listed, the most serious for northern social economy organizations was reductions in government funding. In all the territories 44.8% of respondents stated that it was a serious or moderate problem. Obtaining

funding from organizations such as government, foundations or corporations was the second most important problem followed by the reporting requirements of funders. Earning revenues through the sale of goods and/or services was the least important problem for organizations in all the territories. Organizations were also asked if their organization made a surplus profit last year from the sales of goods or services. In this regard there was a significant difference between the respondents in Nunavut and those in the other territories. Only 21.1% of respondents in all territories stated that they earned a surplus last year whereas 38.3% of respondents from Nunavut did.

While not many social economy organizations generate a surplus, respondents were asked what would happen if a surplus was generated. The most popular direction of distribution is back into the organization – an option identified by slightly more than half of respondents. The next most popular direction of distribution is to hold it in reserve for community benefit or in a community trust. In all the territories 17% of the respondents favored this option while only 4.6% of the respondents indicated they would distribute the surplus to individual members.

The respondents were asked a series of questions about issues related to their general needs. These are listed in Table 6. A separate preliminary question asked how much collaboration each organization has with other social economy organizations such as non-profits, voluntary organizations, or co-operatives. Most organizations have some degree of collaboration. At the same time there is variation across the territories. There is less collaboration in Nunavut. In all territories 31% of organizations collaborate a lot with similar organizations while in Nunavut this percentage is only 17.6%. This may be due to the lack of a large regional centre.

**Table 6 General Needs of Organizations as a Percentage of All Respondents: All Territories**

<i>Need</i>	<i>A moderate problem</i>	<i>A serious problem</i>	<i>A small problem</i>	<i>Does not apply</i>	<i>Not a problem</i>	<i>Total Respondents</i>
<b>Collaborating with other nonprofits, volunteer groups, or coops</b>	11.1	1.3	15.7	12.4	57.5	150
<b>Internal capacity such as administration, information technology etc.</b>	17.6	13.1	19.0	20.9	27.5	150
<b>Training</b>	22.2	9.8	23.5	11.1	28.1	145
<b>Getting volunteers</b>	26.1	14.4	30.7	10.5	15.7	149
<b>Finding Funding</b>	30.7	22.9	22.9	6.5	15.0	150

Source: SERNNNoCa 2008 Questionnaire Survey (First Survey)

Finding funding was clearly the most important overall need of the social economy organizations responding to the questionnaire. Of all the respondents, 55% listed it as either a moderate or serious problem. Only 15% said it was not a problem. Getting volunteers is the next most serious problem faced by the respondents in all the territories. Of all the respondents, 42% said it was either a serious or moderate problem. Just over 18% said it was not a problem. Providing staff training and development was the third most important for respondents in all the territories. Internal capacity in areas such as internal administrative systems, information technology,

software or databases was clearly not as important an issue as the previous three. The least serious issue for most respondents was collaboration with other social economy groups. While very few organizations stated that it was not a problem that applied to them, only 13% in all the territories said it was a serious or moderate problem.

## **The Second Survey**

Following the 2008 survey, the methods of data collection for the portraiture project were reviewed. Concern was expressed about the low response rate. Post-survey consultation with partners confirmed that many groups did not have the capacity to respond to the e-mailed or mailed questionnaire. Many of the group representatives did not have either the time, information, or the knowledge to fill in the necessary information. The capacity issues of many groups in the Canadian North led to the development of a new data collection strategy. The form of the questionnaire was changed to make it much shorter. In this regard researchers consulted with Quebec social economy researchers and decided to use a questionnaire developed there as a base document for a new northern questionnaire.<sup>7</sup>

The methodology used for the delivery of the survey was also reviewed. Rather than simply e-mail or mail questionnaires to groups it was decided that a range of methods would be used to collect the necessary information. As much as possible data would be obtained using unobtrusive techniques so as to limit the demands that would be placed on groups. In some cases much of the information needed for the questionnaire could be obtained through the internet sites of the organizations. Next steps would involve telephone calls to representatives of the groups in order to gather any additional information that could not be obtained from other sources. For groups whose information could not be obtained using unobtrusive techniques, combined with telephone interviews, a questionnaire would be e-mailed or mailed. An on-line questionnaire was also made available to groups in the Northwest Territories.<sup>8</sup> The time frame for this second survey was also longer than that of the first survey. The collection period started in July 2009 and extended until February 2011.

The combination of these techniques resulted in a higher overall response rate.<sup>9</sup> Questionnaires were filled in for 311 groups or 17% percent of the sampling frame as of 2010.<sup>10</sup> Unlike the first survey, researchers were able to also collect data from groups in Labrador and to a lesser extent Nunavik. Response rates still varied considerably across the North. The highest rates were in the Yukon where responses were received from 153 organizations or 21.4 percent of the sampling frame, and in Labrador with 46 organizations and also 21.4 percent of identified social economy groups. In Nunavut responses were collected from 58 groups or 19.7 percent of the social economy groups in that territory. The Northwest Territories provided information on 47 groups or only 9.3% of social economy groups identified in that territory while researchers were able to gather responses from 7 groups in Nunavik, or 4.9% of identified social economy

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<sup>7</sup> See Bouchard, Marie et al, 2009 for a discussion of the development of this questionnaire along with results of the use of this questionnaire in Montreal.

<sup>8</sup> As was the case in the first survey, the questionnaire was made available in French and the dominant Indigenous languages. All forms of the questionnaire along with cover letters and telephone script are posted on the SERNNocCa website at <http://dl1.yukoncollege.yk.ca/sernnoca/projects/theme1/project1a>.

<sup>9</sup> As the survey was not based on random sampling, probability theory-based indicators of representivity can not be used.

<sup>10</sup> The second survey was structured around a revised census of social economy organizations with 1,834 organizations listed.



groups in that region. Differences in response rates were largely a result of the research capacity in each area. Employee turnover in both the Northwest Territories and Nunavut meant a reduced ability to connect with groups in those territories. In Nunavik the project was unable to identify a researcher in that region and, as a result, the survey was conducted from the main coordination office in Whitehorse.

These varying response rates mean that results from the Yukon, Labrador, and Nunavut are relatively reliable, while the results from the Northwest Territories are less so. Results from Nunavik, while helpful in understanding overall trends, are unable to be considered reliable in terms of giving us a portrait of the social economy in that region. At the same time, in Table 7 we see that in terms of the main type of activities practiced by the organizations, the sample is fairly representative of the “census” list of social economy organizations in the region as a whole.

**Table 7 Comparison of the Type of Activity of the Second Survey Respondents to Sample Frame: Percentage of social economy organizations by activity**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>All Social Economy Groups: Territories *</b>	<b>Respondents to the Second Survey: Territories*</b>	<b>Variation</b>
<b>Manufacturing, Processing and/or construction</b>	0.3	0.4	<b>0.1</b>
<b>Trade, Finance and/or Insurance</b>	3.4	1.9	<b>-1.5</b>
<b>Development and Housing</b>	6.2	5.4	<b>-0.8</b>
<b>Sports &amp; Recreation, Tourism</b>	16.7	16.3	<b>-0.4</b>
<b>Arts &amp; Culture</b>	13.4	15.9	<b>2.5</b>
<b>Education and Research</b>	2.7	5.4	<b>2.7</b>
<b>Health</b>	3.8	5	<b>1.2</b>
<b>Social Services</b>	14.6	16.3	<b>1.7</b>
<b>Environment</b>	4.6	6.6	<b>2</b>
<b>Law, Advocacy and Politics</b>	11.2	7	<b>-4.2</b>
<b>Grant-making, Fundraising and Voluntarism Promotion</b>	1.5	2.7	<b>1.2</b>
<b>Religion</b>	9	5	<b>-4</b>
<b>Business Association, a Professional Association or a Union</b>	10.3	8.5	<b>-1.8</b>
<b>Unknown</b>	2.4	3.5	<b>1.1</b>

Source: \* SERNNNoCa 2008 Census of Social Economy Organizations \*\*SERNNNoCa 2009 Questionnaire Survey (Second Survey)

The average age of organizations that responded to this second survey was 26.8 years. The results from the second survey also indicate that the average age of organizations in the North was younger than the average found for Canada in the 2003 National Survey of Non-profit and Voluntary Organizations. At the same time we see a large variance in average age based on region. Labrador is by far the region with the highest average age but also, when looking at the

standard deviation, the region with the most variety in ages. This high standard deviation is largely due to two religious organizations which have been in the region for several hundred years. When these two organizations are controlled for then Labrador respondents have an average age of 29 years. Nunavut had the youngest organizations responding to the questionnaire along with the smallest variations.

In terms of the characteristics of the responding organizations, 71 percent stated that their organization was officially registered as a non-profit organization while only 50 organizations, 28.4 percent of those answering this question, stated that they were officially registered as a charity. As was noted above, when the National Survey of Non-profit and Voluntary Organizations was conducted, 56 percent of respondents indicated that they received the benefits of being a charitable organization. The findings from this second survey confirm what was found in the first survey in that social economy organizations in the North use charitable status to a lesser extent than elsewhere in the country.

The average number of people on the Board of Directors for these organizations was 8. Of this total an average of 55 percent were women. This percentage was fairly uniform across the regions except in Nunavut where only 47 percent were women. In terms of the gender composition of managers, executive directors or coordinators, 58 percent were women. The Indigenous composition of these Boards varied considerably by region. In Nunavut 74 percent of Board members were Indigenous compared to 53 percent in Labrador, 43 percent in the Northwest Territories, and 20 percent in the Yukon. This means that, compared to their number as a percentage of the total population of the region, the Indigenous population was slightly underrepresented in all regions of the Canadian North apart from Labrador.

The average number of members for all the groups who responded was 228 but there was a considerable variance in the numbers of members depending on the organization.

**Table 8 Financial Aspects of Social Economy Organizations**

		<i>Labrador</i>	<i>Nunavut</i>	<i>NWT</i>	<i>Yukon</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Average annual revenue</b>		\$312,854	\$1,151,701	\$481,302	\$356,064	<b>\$840,905</b>
<b>Percentage of annual revenue from:*</b>	a) Grant or public financial support	40.1	51.2	49.7	49.9	<b>48.4</b>
	b) Service Contracts	2.2	9.0	3.5	8.9	<b>7.5</b>
	c) Sales of goods and/or services	10.8	20.2	14.6	15.2	<b>15.4</b>
	d) Other	47.0	21.3	31.9	25.9	<b>28.9</b>

Source: SERNNNoCa 2009 Questionnaire Survey (Second Survey)

Table 8 lists the financial aspects of organizations that responded to the second survey. Total average revenue for these groups was \$840,905. It should be noted that this is considerably less than the \$1.4 million average annual revenues listed for Territorial organizations in the 2003 National Survey of Non-profit and Voluntary Organizations. This difference is partially explained by the inclusion of data from Labrador where organizations in general have lower annual revenues.

When we compare our sample to the entire sampling frame as concerns types of activities, we can see that our sample is fairly representative of the entire social economy. As

such we can use these numbers to extrapolate numbers for all social economy organizations in the Territories (excluding Labrador and Nunavik<sup>11</sup>). By multiplying the averages for each activity category by the numbers listed in the sampling frame we see that the entire social economy sector in the territories has revenues in excess of \$662 million. Based on the figures for 2010 this represents approximately 7.5% of the entire Gross Domestic Product for the three territories. There is some regional variation in these numbers with Nunavut having substantially higher annual revenues than Labrador, the Northwest Territories, and the Yukon.

Table 8 also lists data regarding the sources of revenue. As was the case in the findings of the 2003 National Survey of Non-profit and Voluntary Organizations, most of the revenue for these organizations comes from the provision of service contracts, sale of goods and services, and other sources and not from grants or public financial support. Social economy organizations in Labrador were the least dependent on public sector funding while over 20% of the revenue for social economy organizations in Nunavut came from the sales of goods or services.

Employment aspects of the responding social economy organizations are listed in Table 9. This table clearly shows that social economy organizations provide a substantial number of jobs to the northern regional economies. On average each social economy organization in our sample provided 8.4 jobs. These numbers vary by activity. Trade, Finance and/or Insurance provides the highest average number of jobs at 70 per organization. Since this includes the substantial employment represented by co-operatives in the region this is not surprising. There was a wide variation in employment figures between organizations and it should not be forgotten that a large number of social economy organizations have no employees and are run entirely by volunteers. Approximately 30% of all organizations that responded to the questions on employment stated they had no employees.

It is possible to estimate the importance of social economy employment for the region as a whole using this data. Table 9 lists the average employment per organization by activity as well as the total number of organizations listed in the SERNNNoCa 2008 Census of social economy organizations. Multiplying the average employment by the number of organizations allows us to estimate the total employment numbers for social economy organizations. Total employment based on these estimates is 10,435 for the Territories. These numbers mean that social economy organizations in Northern Canada likely account for 20 percent of all employment in the region.<sup>12</sup>

**Table 9 Employment Aspects of Social Economy Organizations**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Average employment per organization</b>	<b>Number of Survey respondents</b>	<b>Number from SERNNNoCa 2006 Census</b>	<b>Estimated jobs</b>
<b>Manufacturing, Processing and/or construction</b>	Not available	0	3	Not available
<b>Trade, Finance and/or Insurance</b>	70.0	1	40	2800
<b>Development and Housing</b>	18.7	9	74	1381
<b>Sports &amp; Recreation, Tourism</b>	1.5	13	199	306

<sup>11</sup> Here we are using the data from the 2008 Sampling Frame which excluded both Nunavik and Labrador.

<sup>12</sup> The 2006 Canadian Census listed total employment in the Territories as 49,335 (Census of Canada, 2006).

<b>Arts &amp; Culture</b>	5.4	11	159	853
<b>Education and Research</b>	5.5	4	32	176
<b>Health</b>	8.3	4	45	371
<b>Social Services</b>	12.5	17	174	2170
<b>Environment</b>	4.8	8	55	261
<b>Law, Advocacy and Politics</b>	9.0	10	133	1197
<b>Grant-making, Fundraising and Voluntarism Promotion</b>	2.0	2	18	36
<b>Religion</b>	1.7	3	107	178
<b>Business Association, a Professional Association or a Union</b>	2.9	9	123	355
<b>Other</b>	12.5	4	28	350
<b>Total</b>	8.4*	95	1190	10435

Source: SERNN0Ca 2009 Questionnaire Survey (Second Survey)

The second survey contained a series of questions designed to determine whether social economy organizations were growing or in decline. Since the publication of *Bowling Alone* in 1995 there has been an assumption that organizations which require a large amount of social capital to survive are decreasing in importance (Putnam, 1995). As Table 10 shows, this clearly is not the case with social economy organizations in the Canadian North. When asked if the number of users had increased, decreased, or stayed the same over the past three years, 50 percent of respondents indicated users had increased. Only 7.4 percent indicated a decline in users. For the number of members, one third indicated an increase, 50 percent noted that membership numbers had stayed the same, and less than 11 percent indicated membership numbers had decreased. Regional differences showed that Labrador was the region with the highest percentages of decreases in both users and members while Nunavut and the Yukon had the most growth. When we examine growth rates by type of activity we see that religious-based organizations had the greatest decreases in users and members while education and research-based organizations had the greatest increases.

This growth is also seen in revenue and funding but to a lesser degree. Some 36 percent of respondents listed moderate growth in revenues and funding while a further 4 percent listed fast growth. Just under 14 percent listed fast or moderate decline in revenues and funding while 46 percent listed a stable financial situation.

**Table 10 Growth Indicators**

		<i>Decreased</i>	<i>Don't know</i>	<i>Increased</i>	<i>Stayed about the same</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Over the past three years has the number of users</b>	Number	14	10	94	70	<b>188</b>
	Percentage	7.4	5.3	50.0	37.2	
<b>Over the past three years has the number of members</b>	Number	24	13	75	112	<b>224</b>
	Percentage	10.7	5.8	33.5	50.0	

How would you describe the change of your organization's revenues/funding over the past three years?	Fast Growth	Fast Negative Growth	Growt h	Negativ e Growth	Stabl e	Total
	Number	12	5	99	33	126
Percent	4.4	1.8	36.0	12.0	45.8	<b>100.0</b>

Source: SERNNNoCa 2009 Questionnaire Survey (Second Survey)

The second survey also included a series of questions relating to the major challenges facing social economy organizations. Results for these are contained in Table 11. Finding funding is clearly the most serious of the listed problems facing these groups. Almost 54 percent of respondents stated that finding funding was a serious or moderate problem. Next in importance was finding volunteers with 43 percent of respondents saying that this was a serious or moderate problem. Training was listed last among potential challenges with almost a quarter of respondents listing this as not a problem.

**Table 11 Major Challenges**

<i>For your organization is ...</i>		<i>A moderate problem</i>	<i>A serious problem</i>	<i>A small problem</i>	<i>Does not apply</i>	<i>Not a problem</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Training</b>	Number	68	31	74	39	73	<b>285</b>
	Percent	21.9	10	23.8	12.5	23.5	<b>91.6</b>
<b>Getting Volunteers</b>	Number	87	46	75	33	48	<b>289</b>
	Percent	28	14.8	24.1	10.6	15.4	<b>92.9</b>
<b>Finding Funding</b>	Number	90	77	51	22	50	<b>290</b>
	Percent	28.9	24.8	16.4	7.1	16.1	<b>93.2</b>

Source: SERNNNoCa 2009 Questionnaire Survey (Second Survey)

In terms of regional differences they are slight. For organizations in the Northwest Territories training is more of a problem than the other regions. Finding volunteers is more of a problem in Labrador and the Northwest Territories, less of a problem in the Yukon, and hardly a problem at all in Nunavut where almost 30% of the respondents listed it as not a problem. Finding funding is similar across the region but slightly less so for organizations in Labrador.

The second survey also included an open question asking respondents "What other problems or issues does your organization have?" Roughly two thirds of respondents added comments in response to this question. Most comments referred to an inability to access adequate funding. Of 193 responses 55 could be seen to be related to this issue. Next in importance came the issues of finding volunteers with 21 responses being related to this issue.

Recruitment of staff was a concern listed by 20 respondents. An inability to communicate and or engage the community was a problem listed by 12 respondents. Finally at least 9 respondents referred to the transient nature of their community and outmigration as an issue within their organization.

### **Observations**

The portraiture research of the Social Economy Research Network for Northern Canada has been able to show that social economy organizations represent an important part of northern communities. The indicators available demonstrate that social economy organizations in Northern Canada are more numerous than in other regions of the country. Starting with the findings of the 2003 National Survey of Non-profit and Voluntary Organizations we see that the Territories hosted an average of 825 of these organizations per 100,000 population compared to a national average of 508. The initial 2008 SERNNNoCa Census listed 1,190 social economy organizations. Using the 2006 population figures, and excluding cooperatives which were not part of the 2003 survey, this represents an average of more than 1100 organizations per 100,000 population. The 2010 SERNNNoCa Census listed 1,834 organizations including those in Nunavik and Labrador. Once again using 2006 population figures and excluding cooperatives this represents an average of 1,250 social economy organizations per 100,000 population.

The importance of the social economy in Northern Canada is also shown in the financial and employment information gathered from the portraiture research. The results of the second survey, when generalized to the entire social economy population, indicate that the revenues of social economy organizations represent 7.5% of the gross domestic product of the region. Employment figures indicate that the social economy provides 20 percent of all employment in the region.

The portraiture research also shows that the importance of social economy organizations is growing. Half of the respondents to the second survey indicated that the users of their services had increased over the past 3 years and only 7.4 percent stated users had decreased. Likewise, 33.5 percent of respondents indicated that their membership had increased over the past 3 years and only 10.7 percent indicated that the numbers of members had decreased.

While social economy organizations are growing in importance, the portraiture research also indicated that they face important challenges. Funding is listed most often as the issue that represents the biggest problem for these organizations. Getting volunteers to participate in the activities of these organizations is the next often noted issue followed by the recruitment and retention of staff. While finding volunteers is an issue, the recruitment of people to serve on the Board of Directors for these organizations is rarely mentioned as an issue nor is cooperation with fellow social economy organizations.

While the research indicates that the social economy was important in the region and that this importance was growing, it also showed internal regional differences. These are especially noticeable between Nunavut and the other regions of the Canadian North. It is likely that the unique conditions of a largely homogenous Inuit population combined with the political and economic circumstances of the creation of a new territory can account for these differences.

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