



BUILDING COMMUNITY WEALTH

A social enterprise is a revenue-generating business with primarily social objectives that reinvests its surplus for the benefit of the community.

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The Development Wheel Project—Slow and Steady Progress

In the last five months, over 200 people have been directly involved in the Development Wheel Project, either through the provincial steering groups or as participants in the workshops.

The workshops have introduced the BC and Ontario regional partners to a range of community-based groups and organizations that are keen to gain a better understanding of social enterprise and its benefits and challenges.

With the summer lull beginning to take hold, and with the second meetings of

the BC and Ontario provincial steering groups just completed, it is time to share a bit of what we are learning. This issue of *Building Community Wealth* highlights some of the promise and challenges that have emerged to date.

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Workshops Receive Rave Reviews

The two-hour introductory workshops introduce social enterprise. The day-long workshops were designed to help community organizations and groups assess their readiness and identify next steps. Judging by the response we've received, both have been very popular. Even the approximately 50% of participants who decided social enterprise was not for them, gave the workshop content, delivery, and overall usefulness a 4.7 out of 5 rating.

Word of the workshops is getting around, far beyond the project sites. In Ontario, for example, where the project is working with francophones, interest is growing to have the workshops available for anglophones.

Annie Dell, director of RDÉE, the regional partner in southern Ontario, witnesses why interest is growing there:

In four different groups of women immigrants working to set up social enterprise co-ops, it was fascinating to see the improved approach after a single 7-hour workshop. In fact, they were so impressed by the workshop's insights that they asked to have it run again for their own groups and board members.

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Interest is Growing

The March newsletter introduced the project, the training resources being tested, and the approach to the research. We estimate the first edition reached at least 3000 readers (see www.cedworks.com). From across Canada and several English- and French-speaking countries, interest is growing in the project. The Centre for Community Enterprise (CCE) is currently working on a "Training-the-Trainers" package that will become available to parties outside of the formal project sometime this fall.

OUR REGIONAL PARTNERS—Signs of Progress, Funding Challenges in BC

There are five project sites: two in BC and three in francophone Ontario. Each site has a lead regional partner. These organizations are the centrepieces of the Development Wheel Project. The focus on building their capacity to promote and deliver workshops has occupied the first several months in 2006, and will likely be completed by late fall. While this phase is completed, the focus will gradually shift to coaching regional staff to improve their skills in various aspects of organizational and enterprise development (what the project calls technical assistance).

Stacey Corriveau, of the Fraser Valley Centre for Social Enterprise (FVCSE), is the first to graduate into taking full responsibility for workshop delivery. Her collaboration in our “test as we go” evolution of the “Training-the-Trainers” package has been invaluable. This package consists of several steps: observation of a workshop delivery, study of the Facilitators’ Manual, attendance at an intense one-day “Training-the-Trainers” session, study of a 100-page reading package, completion of an exercise designed by CCE to test trainee understanding of the application of the Development Wheel in a community context, preparation for and delivery of all or part of the two workshops (with coaching from CCE project staff in BC), and receiving critical feedback on her performance. Stacey received an average 4.5 out of 5 rating by participants. Congratulations!

Stacey is also moving fast on other fronts: integrating features of the Development Wheel curriculum with other workshops she delivers, designing new curricula in response to project participants’ stated interests, and identifying possible technical assistance providers in her region who could augment the capacity of the Fraser Valley Centre.

Along with the great progress being made, some challenges have emerged. This is particularly the case in British Columbia, where Western Economic Diversification (WED) has declined funding in contrast to the solid support provided by FedNor, their Ontario counterpart. This means the two BC organizations will not have the \$60,000 for technical assistance grants budgeted for social enterprise proponents in each of their regions. It also means less coaching and support from CCE. In short, it means more strain on the people doing the work in the trenches.

The FVCSE has one half-time person. The Nadina Community Futures Development Corporation (in BC’s northwest) has some staff time carved out of an already full time allocated position. As a result of WED’s lack of support, they had to cut the time for the person designated to take the project lead in their region. How much promotion, training, and follow-up technical assistance can be delivered within these constraints? While both organizations are committed to continuing, there are limits and always the danger of burn-out.

Stacey Corriveau is both enthusiastic and worried. “The learning is amazing and the value of pre-developed curriculum I am able to test is huge. However, the lack of paid staff time means that our promotional activity has to focus on the low-hanging fruit.” She adds: “While there are clear opportunities to connect with many sectors that have emerged from the promotion and workshops, there simply isn’t time to build the relationships required to engage them.” Ω



“Training-the-trainers” session at the Fraser Valley Centre for Social Development. Photo: Mike Lewis

Trillium announces \$223,000 for Development Wheel Project in Ontario

The board of Ontario’s Trillium Foundation has approved the last piece of financing for projects in Ontario. Coupled with the \$124,000 from FedNor, all the projected costs, including \$180,000 in technical assistance grants, are now assured.

Mike Lewis, co-director of the project, says, “From the standpoint of the research goals of the Rural Secretariat Models Program, we now have a very interesting situation. With the regional development agency in BC (WED) refusing funding, significant cuts to the BC projects were required. This means there will be no technical assistance grants for community groups and reduced support from CCE staff. What the impact will be on the respective results achieved in the two provinces is something we will be probing through the research component of the project. We should learn a lot.” Ω

The final drafting of *Building Community Wealth: A Resource for Social Enterprise Development* and the *Facilitators’ Manual* for the two workshops was delayed to take advantage of further refining of these much-appreciated resources. They will be completed in August and posted on the CCE website social enterprise bar [www.cedworks.com]. A new resource for training trainers is a CD that presents the live delivery of the one-day workshop. Future trainers will be able to follow each module using the Facilitators’ Manual and the live delivery feature of the CD to cut the time it will take to become effective in delivering this curriculum.

Lots of Workshops Scheduled for Fall 2006

All sites will have their own capacity to deliver the workshops before the end of 2006. There will be lots of opportunities for practice! We expect that 16 workshops will be delivered between September and the end of November. Keep your eye on www.cedworks.com for information on upcoming workshops near you.

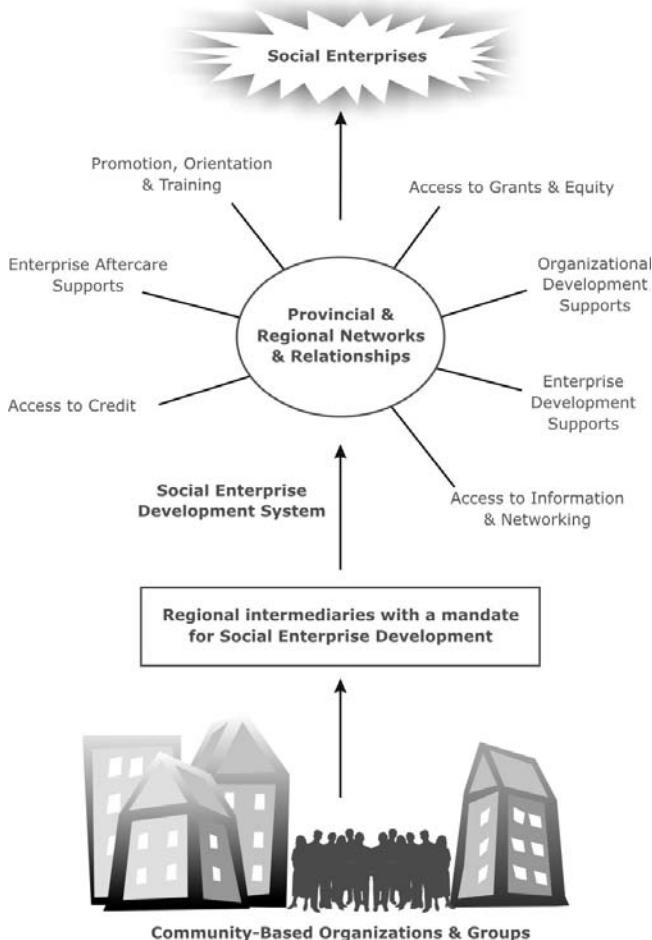
1. The time required to implement a Development Wheel project. If RDÉE is to actively support the preparation, planning, and development of a project following the DW guidelines, project planning must be relatively long term. This may not always fit into the criteria of the subsidy programs an organization may need to access.

2. Community organizations, to date, have tended to be "short term and subsidy" oriented (with some laudable exceptions). For many, it is a matter of survival. There is a culture change needed in such cases, and although this is possible, they cannot occur overnight.

Stay tuned. Ω

OUR PARTNERS

- ◆ BC Cooperative Association
- ◆ VanCity Enterprising Non-Profits Program
- ◆ VanCity Capital Corporation
- ◆ Coast Capital Credit Union
- ◆ Fraser Valley Centre for Social Enterprise
- ◆ Mennonite Central Committee
- ◆ Community Futures South Fraser
- ◆ Nadina Community Futures Development Corporation
- ◆ Volunteer BC
- ◆ Société de développement économique de la Colombie-Britannique
- ◆ Société de développement communautaire de Prescott-Russell
- ◆ Conseil de la Coopération de l'Ontario
- ◆ RDÉE Ontario – provincial (*inclus AFMO, CCO, UCFO, Collèges*) et Centre sud-ouest, est, et nord
- ◆ Économie solidaire de l'Ontario
- ◆ L'Union culturelle des Franco-Ontariennes
- ◆ CESOC
- ◆ Collège Boréal
- ◆ Société d'aide au développement des collectivités
- ◆ CCEDNET
- ◆ FedNor, Région du nord de l'Ontario
- ◆ Fondation Trillium
- ◆ Secrétariat rural



Canada



Partenariat rural canadien

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We Want to HEAR from YOU!!!

We strongly encourage you to add your reflections on impacts and learning that your participation in the project has facilitated...or not! We undertake to share the good, the bad, and the ugly with the expanding network of project participants, as well as with other readers. Communications should be sent in French or English to Mike Lewis at ccelewis@island.net.

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For workbooks and a range of other resources, please visit our website: www.cedworks.com