



Social Enterprises
Knowledgeable Economies
and Sustainable Communities

Awareness of and Support for the Social Economy in Saskatoon

Opinion Leader Views

Emily Hurd and Louise Clarke

**A research report prepared for the Northern Ontario, Manitoba,
and Saskatchewan Regional Node of the Social Economy Suite**

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Entreprises sociales
économies intelligentes
et communautés durables



AWARENESS OF AND SUPPORT FOR
THE SOCIAL ECONOMY IN SASKATOON

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EMILY HURD AND LOUISE CLARKE



Centre for the Study
of Co-operatives

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ABSTRACT

WHILE MOST PEOPLE IN SASKATCHEWAN are familiar with co-operatives and credit unions, the traditional forms of the social economy, they are not very aware of the newer forms. In their report on social enterprise in Saskatoon's core neighbourhoods, Diamantopoulos and Findlay (2007) profiled some of these emerging enterprises and also highlighted the barriers to further growth of the movement. One of those barriers was a lack of awareness and understanding of the social enterprise option. The purpose of this research is to explore the awareness of and support for the social economy among a group of opinion leaders from the private, public, and third sectors in Saskatoon. The information gathered is intended to assist proponents of the social economy in developing heightened awareness and readiness for action.

We conducted semi-structured interviews with eight opinion leaders: three from the private sector, two from the public sector and three from the third sector. We assumed that they would have differing degrees of awareness of the social economy generally as well as specific forms such as enterprising non-profits and for-profit social purpose businesses so that we could gauge the needs for clarification. We were also interested in the participants' own involvement in civil society organizations, in particular what motivates them. Finally, we asked them to comment on what they thought the prospects were for intersectoral cooperation and what specific steps each of the three sectors might take to strengthen the social economy.

While most interviewees had a general sense of what the social economy was about, there is definitely a need to clarify important distinctions such as non-profits with social motives as primary, for-profit social purpose enterprises where profit is primary, and traditional for-

profit companies that engage in corporate social responsibility activities that may have some social benefit. Most interviewees were motivated by a willingness to serve their community and the openness of the private-sector participants to get involved was encouraging. Participants provided a broad range of actions that could be taken including tax incentives for contributions to social economy organizations, as well as the personal time of business leaders and social economy organizations banding together to promote themselves and their accomplishments.

INTRODUCTION

FOR SEVERAL GENERATIONS the social economy (SE) in Saskatchewan — in the form of co-operatives and credit unions — has been a key component of growth and well-being. While still strong, these organizations are under increasing competitive pressure from mainstream corporations in their sectors. There is, however, evidence that, since the 1990s and specifically in the core neighbourhoods of Saskatoon, the social economy has been changing and expanding with the emergence of many vibrant new social enterprises in the form of community development corporations and enterprising non-profits (Diamantopoulos and Findlay 2007). The authors also identify many systematic barriers being faced by these organizations.

One of the barriers they identify is a lack of awareness and understanding of the social enterprise option (Diamantopoulos and Findlay 2007, 26-30). This lack of understanding, at least in some key quarters, was clearly evident in the case of Station 20 West funding. Station 20 West is a locally developed social enterprise centre intended to be a catalyst of opportunities for inner city residents – “a hand up” in everyday language. Provincial capital funding for the project was withdrawn ostensibly because the Government viewed it as “a hand out.” Moreover, some local businesses claimed that the centre would create businesses in direct competition with them (despite long-term disinvestment in the area) and some established co-operatives were reluctant partners. This lack of awareness and understanding was the spur for undertaking this research project as part of the Linking, Learning, Leveraging project on the social economy. We wanted to gauge the awareness of, and attitudes toward, the social economy of a sample of local opinion leaders from a range of sectors. The intent is to assist social economy groups and their allies in developing awareness campaigns when resources become available.

As many reports in the Linking, Learning, Leveraging project attest, there is still considerable debate within the sector regarding the proper definition and classification of social enterprises. Our intent is neither to resolve these debates based on our limited sample of respondents nor to “show up” our respondents for their lack of understanding of the social economy. Rather, we simply want to map the contours of awareness so that people in the sector can build upon common understandings and pinpoint misunderstandings that need to be clarified in a communication strategy. The remainder of this section introduces some of the language and issues in discussions of the social economy and provides an overview of this report.

The three-system classification of economic life developed by John Pearce (as presented in Lewis 2006, 10-15) provides a detailed model of the place and forms of social enterprises in economic life (see Figure 1). Pearce’s first economic system is the private, profit-oriented one where the key value is efficiency. The second one is the state that is focused on the planning and distribution of public goods and services. The third system is about citizens themselves taking action to identify and satisfy needs through either self-help or as a community through collaboration. In Pearce’s model the social economy comprises voluntary organizations and charities that engage in trading activities (also known as enterprising non-profits) and social enterprises that come in myriad forms based on their position on nine dimensions.

While Pearce’s model will be helpful in identifying specific areas of understanding and misunderstanding among our interviewees, we also need a simplified definition of the social economy for assessing the level of awareness particularly among those interviewees who indicate they have limited knowledge of the concept. Lewis (2006, 9) proposes the following:

A social enterprise is a business with primarily social objectives where the surplus is reinvested in the business and/or used for community benefit.

Lewis expands on the definition, highlighting five key elements (12):

1. Social enterprise elevates social goals as an explicit priority in the business. Social and economic returns on investment are deliberately pursued, whether or not there is any public investment.
2. Building the means for people to organise on the basis of mutual support and solidarity is a preoccupation of social enterprise. A way to achieve this is by engaging members and beneficiaries in the governance of the enterprise.
3. Selling into the marketplace is always a central feature.

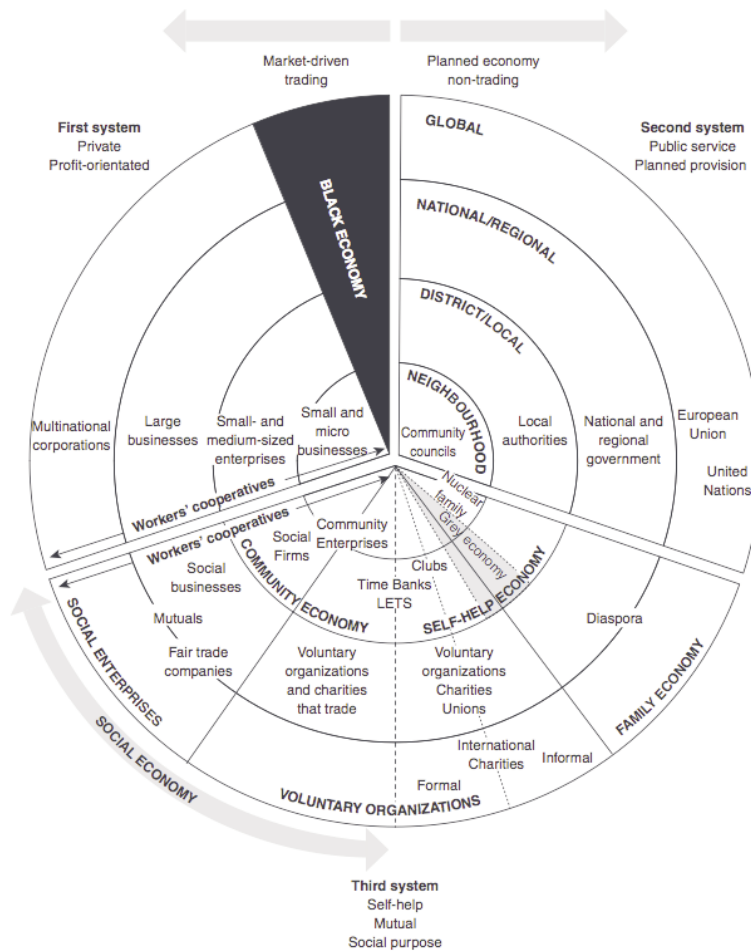


Figure 1: Pearce’s Three-Systems Classification of the Economy
 Source: J. Pearce, *Social Enterprise in Anytown* (Lisbon: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 2003);
 reprinted in Lewis (2006), 11.

4. Collective ownership is an important means of achieving integration of social and economic objectives with accountability to a defined constituency and the wider community.
5. Profits, assets, and wealth are not distributed to individuals; they are held and invested for community benefit.

Having just gone some way to simplifying and clarifying the meaning of social enterprises, we re-complicate matters by introducing “for-profit social purpose businesses” (SPBs). As the name implies, these businesses are intended to provide simultaneously a social benefit — often in the areas of green technology, health, education and (micro-)finance — and a

profit to be returned to the investors (MaRS 2012). SPBs are distinguished from social enterprises as defined in three of the elements listed above: governance (2), collective ownership (4) and profits to the individual owners, not just to community benefit (5). For these reasons the status of these organizations as members of the social economy is contentious among many, if not most, proponents of the social economy. At the same time, social missions as core to the SPB's business strategy distinguish them from traditional businesses, even those espousing the currently popular corporate social responsibility with double and triple bottom lines (profit, "community" and environment). It is not surprising, therefore, that the general public may be unaware of or confused by the meaning of and approaches to the social economy.

Increased awareness and understanding of the social economy are necessary, but not sufficient conditions for success; awareness and understanding must lead to positive actions. Many reports, including several in this series, identify and assess legal models for incorporation of social enterprises (MaRS 2010), provision of venture capital and expertise (Canadian Task Force on Social Finance 2011) and a range of government policies and programs (Bridge and Corriveau 2009). In Saskatchewan, for example, de Clercy (2009) points out that there is no government branch specifically responsible for the social economy, only a patchwork of programs in a number of ministries and few of these programs are directly relevant or institutionalized for emerging social enterprises. She contends that "The government of Saskatchewan, under both the NDP and the Saskatchewan Party, conflates infrastructural investment with community investment" and that this can be seen in budget documents as well as information from government ministries (12). In this project, by contrast, we asked our sample of opinion leaders what actions they thought the public, private, and third sectors could and should take to strengthen the social economy in Saskatchewan.

The rest of this report comprises three sections. First we describe the approach and methods of the research. Next we present the findings of our interviews and finally we discuss these findings and present our conclusions regarding next steps.

METHODS

THIS RESEARCH PROJECT emerged from a long-term collaboration between researchers at the Community-University Institute for Social Research (CUISR) and key social economy leaders in the core neighbourhoods of Saskatoon. In this case we highlighted the apparent lack of understanding of the social economy among funders that was detrimental to growth of the sector. Continuing the collaborative process we decided to elicit and compare the awareness and understanding of the social economy among a group of local opinion leaders in the private, public, and third sectors. Our approach was to develop a list of potential participants and to conduct interviews with them. In suggesting and deciding upon names, we wanted a sample with a balance of women and men, diverse racial and economic backgrounds, and differing levels of awareness of the social economy (based on their community profiles). With our community partners we selected a sample of twelve people.

Next, we developed an interview protocol, which was also discussed with our community partners. The final version comprised three sections (see Appendix 1):

1. Six questions regarding their awareness of the social economy including questions on three forms of social enterprises:
 - a. Co-operatives and credit unions
 - b. Not-for-profit organizations that earn part of their revenue from market activities (enterprising non-profits)
 - c. For-profit organizations that are engaged in socially beneficial market activities (profitable social businesses — PSBs)
2. Five questions regarding the extent of their participation in civil society organizations and their motivations for being involve
3. Five questions regarding the kinds of supports for the social economy that they would support.

The purpose of the research, proposed sample, the interview protocol, and an interviewee consent form (see Appendix 2) were submitted to and approved by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Research Ethics Committee in August 2010.

We contacted the potential participants to describe the purpose of the research project and to assure them that this was not a test of their knowledge; rather we were simply interested in what they had to say about the social economy. Eight of the twelve people we contacted consented to be interviewed, three by phone to accommodate their schedules and the rest were conducted in person. The interview protocol and the research consent form were sent to participants prior to the interviews. Principal researcher Dr. Louise Clarke and graduate student Emily Hurd were both present for the majority of the interviews, though there were some interviews at which only one of the two was present. The three participants from the third sector agreed to waive confidentiality so their names are specifically associated with what they said. For the others we have endeavoured to keep their identities confidential by using random initials and not linking them to particular organizations. Table 1 summarizes our sample.

Table 1: The Interviewees

Random Initials or Name	Gender	Sector	Interview Method
AB	Female	Private	In person
JC	Female	Public	Phone
OM	Male	Public	In person
QX	Male	Private	Phone
JJ	Male	Private	Phone
Darrell Lechman	Male	Third Sector	In person
Nayyar Javed	Female	Third Sector	In person
Marianne Hladun	Female	Third Sector	In person

Several participants fortuitously represented more than one perspective. For example, **Ms. Hladun** is a trade union activist at local, regional, and national levels and is a member

of the United Way of Saskatoon board of directors. In fact, all have been involved with civil society organizations, but only one had a formal connection to our community partners' organizations.

All interviews were recorded and Ms. Hurd typed detailed notes from the recordings. She also prepared an initial draft of this report.

FINDINGS

WE PRESENT THE RESULTS OF OUR INTERVIEWS in considerable depth so that the participants speak for themselves as much as possible. The findings are grouped by section of the interview and by the primary sector affiliation of the participants to facilitate subsequent comparisons.

Awareness of the Social Economy

At the outset of our interview, we acknowledged that there is no one agreed-upon definition of the social economy but asked participants to describe what they understood it to be. We followed up with a specific question about the concept of a double or triple bottom line. We then asked if they were familiar with specific forms of social enterprises and if they would be inclined to support one form more than the others.

Private Sector

AB had a better understanding of the social economy — how “profit combined with the social piece” — than we anticipated, explaining that she had experience in the public sector and with non-profits prior to joining the private sector. For her the social economy pertained to “businesses and/or organizations that do things for the social good as opposed to a purely profit motive” and that the concept of a double or triple bottom line did fit with her understanding. She was familiar with the traditional Saskatchewan co-operatives and credit unions and was able to name Ten Thousand Villages as an example of an enterprising non-profit. Though she could not name an example of for-profit social enterprise or define the term directly, she said,

I think many for-profit organizations are starting to develop one leg of their business that addresses some of these things and I think they do it because their shareholders and their investors are starting to ask them more and more about that, so I actually think that there's tons of organizations — all the oil and gas of any size — that have to address those sort of things.

As to whether she would support one of the three categories over the others, AB said it would depend on which perspective she was operating from. As a volunteer in the third sector, she would be most likely to support organizations with a SE perspective. But,

when I think about investing and supporting monetarily an organization, it would have to be the for-profit [one] with a social leg to it, but I couldn't say to you definitively that, if I had two equal proposals, I would choose the one with the social economy first, if it was in a for-profit circumstance, from an investment point.

AB would like to make donations to organizations that try to give individuals a “leg up by doing some profitable business,” but the social enterprise aspect would not “rise to the top as one of the things I look at — it would be nice, but it wouldn't be a necessity.” She added that she thought that enterprising non-profits should be seen as complementary to both the public and private sectors.

QX said that, from observation, he possessed moderate awareness of the term SE and what it meant, namely an emphasis on social responsibility. Of the various forms of social enterprises, he said that he best understood co-operatives and credit unions. He named the Rick Hansen Institute as an example of an enterprising non-profit, explaining that

their enterprising business [is] where they actually make investments in businesses that further the betterment of people living with spinal cord injury. So, if you had an invention that would improve the life of someone with a spinal cord injury, their non-profit organization would be a potential investor in your business.

QX named Goodwill and Habitat for Humanity's ReStore as examples of profitable social enterprises and did not indicate at this point his preference for a specific form of social enterprise, just that he would support business that “puts back into the community.”

JJ thought that the SE had a number of definitions covering a range of forms: “I think it goes from one extreme being totally not-for-profit, totally co-operative and going to the other extreme which is a hybrid not-for-profit co-mingled with the private sector.” He said that he was familiar with all three SE types, but was able to name only examples of co-operatives and credit unions. When asked about his preferred form of social enterprise, he stated:

I believe it is the collection of [the] three that is really going to make it meaningful for various target audiences. I think to lose one or the other would be to reduce part of the total. Even at the corporate end — who still have their main focus on profitability — I think there is a lot of “add on” that they bring into that area that you wouldn’t want to exclude, although a purist of these types of groups may not give them that much credit or think they should be put in the same category. At the end of the day, I want to bring as much value to this whole area as I can, so it would not be excluding or favoring one. If the aggregate total of all three [contributes], why would you want to diminish one?

Public Sector

JC, as we anticipated, was not very familiar with the SE, so had difficulty defining the term beyond relating it to the idea of organizations with a “triple bottom lin.” She said that she was familiar with all three types, but could give examples only of credit unions and co-operatives. She would be most likely to support not-for-profit organizations, noting that,

I typically associate the phrase not-for-profit to be...well, they are not a private-sector business ... their goal is not to earn money; their goal is typically some type of social contribution to our community so it’s easier, I guess, for me to feel supportive of that when these organizations are doing the work for example that civic governments can’t.

OM, as expected, indicated that he had a good understanding of the SE. He defined social enterprises as “non-profit enterprises that are supplying a product or a service to be used in the economy where they exist” and noted that different types of enterprises were likely to give varying emphasis to the different bottom lines. He was familiar with all three forms of social enterprises and identified a Tribal Council as an example of a for-profit social enterprise which was “running business ventures and returning those profits back to the band

members.” Asked if he was inclined to support one of the categories over the others, he responded:

They are all, in my opinion, providing services. If you are a non-profit ... you are providing a service, and you can't operate in Saskatoon without making money. My view is that these businesses in the social economy are considered businesses and there are plenty that have generated revenue for a consistent period of time, like Cosmo Industries, and I don't know how long it's been in the city here. Ever since I've lived here for the past fifteen years, it has generated revenue, covered its costs and made a profit, and I'm okay with that.

Third Sector

We anticipated that these three participants would have moderate to high understanding of the SE, which they did. As mentioned above, these three interviewees agreed to waive confidentiality, so we begin by introducing them.

Mr. Lechman is the founder and executive director of the Saskatoon Community Youth Arts Programming (SCYAP) Inc. He understood social enterprises as organizations that deliver a social benefit and, therefore, the idea of multiple bottom lines fit with this understanding. He was familiar with co-operatives and credit unions. He indicated he was not very familiar with the concept of profitable social enterprises, but thought that Saskatoon's Pelican Signs might be an example because it is, in his view, a very community-minded business. He named the Saskatchewan Abilities Council and SARCAN as examples of enterprising non-profits. Mr. Lechman said that the likelihood of his supporting one organizational form over the others would depend largely on the specific activities of each organization and how it was managed. Ultimately, however, he would be most likely to support co-operatives and credit unions, “because it is just that — a co-operative.”

Ms. Javed was selected primarily in her capacity as past president of the Saskatoon Intercultural Association and also because she is an employee of a local co-operative. She told us that she drew her understanding about the SE from her life experiences and related the term to “on the ground action.” For her the SE is “just part of a very broad definition of economy. It's not only job creation and economic output, but it is also the connectedness, the agency that people feel; it has a huge psychological component and social component.” She was “glad that we have started to integrate the concept of social economy to see that it is indeed a very powerful economic activity.”

Ms. Javed was familiar with co-operatives and credit unions, and with enterprising non-profits such as Ten Thousand Villages. She could not name an example of a profitable social business, but did provide some very interesting comments on the concept:

I would have difficulty with people working for profit and then investing huge amounts of money in social enterprises. I ask the question, how is the economic system structured that some people end up making a huge amount of money? Does it create the need and other people deprive them. It is the issue of equitable distribution of wealth and, in my opinion, it is not a very human way of dealing with equitable distribution of wealth.... We need to move on and create a world where there is a more equitable distribution of wealth at all levels and, in my opinion, the SE can play a grave role in coming up with that kind of framework.

Ms. Hladun was selected primarily because she is a board member of the United Way and secondarily because she is a leader in the trade union movement. She viewed the SE as a “more socialistic approach to the left version of capitalism; you can still prosper but be socially responsible.” She was very familiar with co-operatives and credit unions. While she was not able to give specific examples of the other two forms of social enterprises, she did observe, “What you are seeing more and more is, especially [for-profit] corporations that they are sponsoring things that are donating portions of their profits. The question always becomes are you doing it because you care about the community, or because it looks good?” She identified The Body Shop as doing a great deal of good on environmental and fair trade issues. **Ms. Hladun** initially stated that she would assess each organization on a “case by case, because it depends what’s available,” but then said that the enterprising non-profit form would be her “first choice.” In her view, co-operatives and credit unions were just part of “day-to-day operations” — not much different from traditional corporations — and her support for PSBs would depend on their specific mission and goals.

The last two questions in the section on awareness concern two issues being debated within the SE community:

- Should for-profit social purpose businesses be included as part of the SE?
- Is democratic control of SE organizations an essential requirement?

We wanted to ascertain whether or not the individuals in our sample were aware of these issues as well as what they thought about them.

Private Sector

Our private-sector interviewees were not explicitly aware of these issues but, not surprisingly, their responses reflected their for-profit orientation. AB told us that she thought for-profits would be an important component of the SE because they contributed the “resources to make things happen,” while not-for-profit SE organizations could potentially be resource constrained. Regarding democratic control, she believed that stakeholders needed to be heard, but at the same time, it is difficult to get things done unless the decisions are made by a smaller group. She said that “the top-down approach allows things to happen,” while bottom-up takes a lot longer, but the input gleaned is very important. Ultimately, democratic control was not essential in her opinion.

JJ also thought that for-profits should be included under the social economy umbrella. He told us that

beyond the profitability issue, [and] the funds that they drive, it is the management talent that [for-profits] bring to these groups that also make these groups more effective. When you look at the business leaders of Saskatoon, whether it’s SARCAN, Cosmo, or whatever, some of the most advanced corporate talent in the private sector is helping these groups. They are well served by the inclusion of that talent.

At the same time he thought that democratic control was an “important driver” of SE organizations.

QX addressed only the democratic control issue stating his belief that a board governance model was “in the worst case scenario, most likely to prevent corruption and in the best case scenario, would allow for the best decision making.” He added that he would not want, “everything to go to referendum or plebiscite — not a good way to go.”

Public Sector

JC was not aware of the specific issues but also expressed the opinion that for-profit SPBs should be included as part of the SE because they could still potentially meet a double or triple bottom line. As for democratic control, “It’s really a question of practicalities. If every organization, to make any decision, had to go back to its entire group and get them to build

a consensus or make a decision or even just vote, it's just ... I don't think that works really very well." Democratic processes are appropriate and necessary, just not on a day-to-day, decision-by-decision basis.

OM would also include SPBs since "there is nothing wrong ... with businesses making money, such as a tribal council, which is considered a for-profit business under the Business Corporation Act, making money on a hotel, or what-have-you, and providing those profits back to its band members for social programs." He did not think democratic control was essential:

Governance is a key issue, but it comes down to the results. I've seen lots of people who've been on boards of directors just in name only, but to operate a non-profit, to employ people, you need people who can be concerned about operations, marketing, all these sorts of things and those board members are not really helping out.

Third Sector

All of our third-sector interviewees thought that SPBs could and should be included in the social economy, although there were some reservations. **Lechman** would include them, "if they are willing to work with the community and give back to the community, and have part of the community within their decision making process," but that decision-making process did not have to be fully democratic. **Hladun**, citing the local example of Turning the Tide Bookstore, also thought that for-profit businesses that do very positive work in the community should be included in the SE. She then qualified this statement, warning that it could lead to abuse by some for-profit organizations; they would have to do something beyond sporadic donations or event sponsorship, for example, to be included as part of the SE. Democratic control, while not strictly essential in her view, did provide an important degree of credibility and accountability to the organization.

Javed also stated that including SPBs was acceptable, but she argued that we need to look at the larger issues such as distribution of wealth; "another kind of economic system [is needed] all across the globe." She felt strongly about the importance of democratic control to ensure that people's voices are heard.

Participants' Involvement with Social Economy and Civil Society Organizations

In this segment of the interview we asked questions to get a sense of not just what organizations participants were involved with, but also their motivations and view of the context for their organizations. Specifically we asked:

- Were they involved in any SE organizations and why would the organization be considered part of the SE?
- Why and in what capacity they decided to become involved; what sort of benefits they thought the organizations provided to society and whether the organizations were more or less important in the current economic, financial, and environmental context?
- How the private, public, and third sectors could work together for the betterment of society?

Private Sector

AB became involved as a board director with several organizations she considered to be part of the SE primarily because she saw them as good learning opportunities. One of the organizations provides better opportunities for individuals with cognitive disabilities which benefits society, in her opinion, by striving to change antiquated practices thereby providing individuals with a higher standard of living. Another organization seeks to fill unmet needs by, for example, providing music lessons to children in core neighbourhoods. Programs like this are exceedingly important in the current economic climate because “they change lives.”

QX identified several civil society organizations that he was involved with but did not specify why he considered them to be part of the SE. His contributions included both time and money and his reasons for getting involved varied. For instance, he was involved with the campaign for a children’s hospital from a desire to “pay it forward,” in another organization as an expression of gratitude, and in a third because of its environmental goals. He commented,

These organizations are solving a need that government hasn’t picked up on and tried to solve on their own and it’s probably because the need isn’t that broad-

based. And in each of these cases I think that's a good thing; instead, it's almost like a user-pay model. It's not [appropriate] for the government to get involved in any of those three, or really probably any of the organizations that are not-for-profit."

He "absolutely" felt that the organizations he worked with were more important in the current economic, financial, and environmental context by, "promoting the accessibility to the benefits of a rich society to all members of that society, to those elements who would not otherwise have access at all, or who might feel compromised, embarrassed, intimidated by accessing what should be accessible but maybe isn't." He emphasized the importance of the arts and recreation:

Getting the arts down — arts, sports, healthcare, social services — to the most marginal or the poorest people in our otherwise extremely rich society. So, I see that as the greatest benefit, you know, if you can expose someone to something that can lift them up out of their situation, then we keep pulling people up from the ... maybe making less difference between the rich and the poor gradually.

QX felt that relationships between sectors needed to be forged by the individuals involved. He thought that policies should be set by government and that government should, "point out what's the mark of success and then let those individuals who are not political but who have more of a long-term view, the actual executives in the organization and put them together.... I think it will be done one-by-one, one at a time, one issue at a time."

JJ was indirectly involved with several SE organizations primarily in an advisory capacity. He specified that he provided groups with "market intelligence or guidance to support their causes where they may be lacking or just wanting a broader array of information." He had, "previously served on a number of boards, some of this [work] is an extension [of that role], but it would be just volunteer consulting ... bringing outside management talent and outside conduits to the specific group." He became involved with the organizations in large part because he "was asked." If he is asked, believes in the cause, and feels that there is something he could potentially contribute to an organization, he will take part. He felt that the organizations he was a part of fulfilled a "niche" effectively and efficiently. When asked if he felt that these organizations were more or less important in the current economic climate, he responded, "I don't make that judgement. If participants of the group believe there is a need,

and they are servicing... I don't make that judgement." As to the three sectors working together for the betterment of society, JJ told us that he believes that we are going to see an expanding role for the private sector in the SE.

Public Sector

JC, who is an elected official, considered that she was involved in a SE organization because "government ... routinely makes decisions from a triple-bottom-line perspective," that is, based on financial, social, and environmental considerations. She was also involved in several civil society organizations because she felt that she was quite fortunate and wanted to give back to the community and "be a part of the solution." JC believed that the different sectors need to work together for progress to be made because each has an important role and cited recycling and housing in particular as areas where collaboration is accomplishing a lot. She pointed out that for-profit organizations often "pump millions of dollars back into the community," but they "don't always see as well [the needs] out there — they're focused on their business — so, I think they need a partner to show them what's happening in the community and what they can do to assist." Matching up for-profit industry with organizations in the community that need their support (both money and human resources) is very important.

OM's primary involvement was with an organization that he does not consider to be explicitly part of the social economy although it is non-profit and works with SE organizations. This is because, he said, "it's a mixed bag of housing people with lots of experience and lots of skills; with that sort of an organization, it's very results orientated." He thought that this organization is indeed more important in today's context because accessible housing is a very pressing issue in Saskatoon. He named another organization that he was involved with that he called an enterprising non-profit. In both cases he was involved as part of his work in the public service, but he also chose to associate with them, and other organizations, because they are engaged with issues he believes are very important.

When asked about organizations from different sectors working together, he said that he had seen for-profits invest in SE organizations and the community, but only in cases where the SE organizations were "organized, they had lived up to their commitments ... and did a lot of the legwork, so it made it easier for the private-sector individual to work with them. They [the private-sector individuals] had a connection with that particular community, and it was painless." He warned that for a SE organization to get investments, it must first have a

“business case that can work for both parties” and include an angle which is beneficial in some way for the for-profit business. Usually the business does not need the SE organization in the same way that the SE organization needs the business, so the SE organization must work to ensure that the process is relatively easy and smooth for the business, otherwise it could otherwise easily go on to support a different initiative. He continued,

... the people managing the social enterprise, if you are going to interact with business, you have got to get your processes in place, your operating processes; you have to have good financial accountability, and you have to have good management skills.... You have to have your act together. Financially, managerially, your board has to be strong, because there’s lots of demand.

The benefit for social enterprises of working with the private sector is that the private sector has these advantages:

Access to capital, expertise, [can] accomplish things much quicker than other sectors. They can use their contacts, and those contacts are not just within the city, they are province-wide because sometimes these businesses have locations in other provinces, and they have access to, in particular on the housing side, access to materials and suppliers, that an average non-profit social enterprise would not get the same kind of deals.

Third Sector

As mentioned, all three interviewees were selected specifically because of their involvement in the third sector, but only **Lechman** was involved in a social enterprise. He is the founder and executive director of Saskatoon Community Youth Arts Programming Inc. (SCYAP) and has worked as a consultant with other SE organizations. He considered SCYAP to be a part of the SE because it strives to meet a double (and sometimes triple) bottom line by promoting culture, art and skill development among youth, particularly Aboriginal young people. For example, one project redirected young artists from doing graffiti and vandalism on private property to having them create artwork which was legal and even marketable and honing their skills so that they could potentially be developed into a career. He explained that there are multiple benefits to “... building people and ... us[ing] these resources we have to try to create a bit of an economy that could fund future and other programs.” For the youth

participants, the benefits are, “personal development, skill building whether it’s hard or soft skills.” These programs benefit the community,

whether it’s beautifying the community through different art installations or whether it’s helping to eliminate some of the graffiti from the community, whether it’s giving an opportunity for some of these people who were once alienated from their community to now find a place within their community because of their personal development, their skill development and what they are doing for the community, and being recognized for it. Then we look at the benefit to the taxpayer, and those are huge because we are taking individuals who were for the most part on social assistance and relied on that social program of our government, and now giving them an opportunity to a point where they are no longer on social assistance. Now not only are they not on social assistance so we are saving taxpayer’s dollars there, but they are contributing to that tax base that is going to help others as far as social assistance goes.

Lechman said that the three sectors were already working together, but emphasized that competing directly with private business is a mistake —

probably the biggest mistake that someone involved with a social enterprise or the social economy could make. That’s something we’re very cognizant of and ... we make sure that we have great relationships with the business sector.... you are getting government input as far as funds go, and then you are competing with someone that’s “private Joe” that’s not getting any help from the government and not that’s not fair practice.

Javed, who has been involved in civil society organizations on a local, national, and international level, had a very different perspective on the three sectors working together. She stated that the three sectors could work together for the betterment of society, but that they currently do not.

We are really not working together because of the stereotypic images. The civil society is engaged in advocacy and human rights area, and the intercultural association is focusing on that. That is kind of seen as threatening to private enter-

prises; over the years I have noticed that (and it is not one sided, it's both sided) there is a lack of trust between these two sectors, and of course the public sphere is another area. The business community does not really see the civil society which is engaged in human rights as a useful partner, because for whatever reason, the suspicion that when we challenge the economic system we are challenging them, which is really not the case.

She values businesses with a social conscience, but she has noted a change in the political climate from the heyday of the civil society under Trudeau which started to erode in the 1980s and 1990s. "It is amazing the work we can do with a very small amount of resources ... but right now it is questionable if we have the relationship we need with these three sectors to do the work we need to do, not for the current definition of the economic good, but for the well-being of our citizens."

Hladun has been very involved with the United Way as a financial contributor, canvasser, and member of the board of directors. She became involved because she was asked and because she felt that it was something she could contribute to. The United Way works in some key areas that she feels strongly about including human rights and labour issues. On the board she informs and advocates for certain segments of the community and tries to create opportunity for them. **Hladun** believes that these services are important in the current climate because they "provide a voice" for those who have been marginalized. She thinks that the three sectors can work together, the United Way being a key example, but that the level of collaboration depends on the organization and to what degree the different sectors are willing to compromise.

Support for the Social Economy

Building on the last question regarding the sectors working together, we next asked our interviewees to suggest specific actions or policies the various sectors could take to expand the SE. They provided a rich array of insights and suggestions; Table 2 (overleaf) summarizes their suggestions and we elaborate on the insights below.

Table 2: Suggestions for Action to Support the Social Economy

From	For Governments	Private Sector	Social Economy
Private Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax incentives for contributions; publicly support the sector • Tax incentives; match private funding • Fund SE to extend impact of social programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand what is really required, not just give big corporate gifts; develop more formalized structures for giving, not just events • Get more involved in local initiatives to see your own impact; write the cheques • Need for partnerships to fulfill corporate [CSR] strategy; get involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand for support is very competitive — get a champion • Use media to publicize results • Promote your accomplishments; reach out to corporations
Public Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax incentives • Several programs already exist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donate employee time to work in SE • Contribute management expertise and mentoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the impacts of the SE • Show leadership and commitment; deliver results and market those results
Third Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Social” has become a bad word; programs “parked” • Should support SE, but support has declined • Maintain social services or there is a negative ripple effect; find out what is really needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donate staff time or even second staff • Do more to formalize relationships with SE organizations • Open up to opportunities to volunteer; they will build corporate image 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate taxpayer savings from SE approach; promote importance of the arts • Promote the SE accomplishments; sector should work together on this • Band together to blow horn of SE

Private Sector

AB told us that her level of support for the SE and other civil society organizations had increased over the past five years due in large part to her involvement in an organization which evaluates and approves grant applications for community projects. Her previous

narrow-minded thinking [came from] not having enough exposure to the different areas out there that need support. When you look at the ideas that come forward, the really sincere attempt to make a change, you develop an understanding of areas you had no idea about, and you become much more willing to support those because you like the idea and you’re not so focused on a specific segment.

The inference is that the SE needs to provide more information to business people like **AB**. She thought that the private sector is doing a better job of getting involved in the community than they have in the past, but that they need to get past the big corporate event where the donor's commitment is not sustained and the return is mostly in entertainment value. Moreover, this approach shuts out smaller organizations that don't have a big public profile. Currently,

unless there is a personal connection, unless the "ask" comes with a personal connection, whether it's a time ask or a money ask, it's really difficult to get people's attention. So you either need to find a champion for your cause that's got some personal connection to it and then can use their network to get some support.... It is a really tough job.

More positively, she thought that support for the social economy in Saskatoon was growing and would continue to grow as the city itself grows. **AB** sees an important opportunity in growth:

As our city becomes larger, I think we develop a more formal process or a more formal way of thinking about how to take care of people in our community. Before we have viewed it as a family or community responsibility; we kind of know everybody and we have that small city sense. But as you grow, it's just like a corporation, you start to formalize things, and you start to formalize policies and procedures, and I think maybe some of that thinking also sneaks into your community — get to a point where you start to formalize it and then you have a lot of support for your SE.

Beyond these thoughts for the private and third sectors, she suggested that possible government supports could include providing tax incentives for gifts or investments in the SE and publicly supporting it.

QX, in contrast, expressed a clear preference for the local, personal approach:

I'll look local first and ... deal with people who reflect the same morals and ethics that I do and probably are involved in the same fundraising initiatives that I am.... It's not anything particularly special — you do business with people that you like, that are involved in and interested in the same things you are.... We are

small enough ... that your actions have a real effect on the outcome of the situation, on the success of the organization you are participating in just because of the size. You can actually see your personal effect unfold on the situation, where that wouldn't be the case in Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, Vancouver.

While **QX** thought that volunteerism is good in Saskatoon, he did note that some improvements are needed. He stated that the private sector should get more involved:

... to make a commitment towards something to make the world a better place with a little bit of effort Where we had failed, but seem to be coming around ... when the time comes to put money down, we are getting better and better at writing cheques. Understanding that you've got to write cheques; you've got to buy the ground, you've got to build the building, or fund the purchase of the food or equipment or whatever it is for the organization to do their thing.

But, "in Canada, particularly in Saskatchewan, we're painfully bad at putting our money where our mouth is.... I hate to say it, but there needs to be an incentive further than what there actually is.... If you have a higher tax incentive on large gifts, it sure has been proven to me, that increases gifts." He also suggested that an incentive such as scholarships requiring a certain amount of volunteer hours is needed to get young people to become more involved. Two other suggestions were that government could do more to match funding provided by SE organizations and that the media should provide more coverage of the SE and more free advertising for SE organizations.

JJ initially declined to recommend government actions to support the SE, but later suggested that they "could use these [SE] groups to deliver services as an extension of social programs" where resources are "put right down to the street level support as opposed to ... paying for bureaucratic support and administration. I think these people on the street can be very much better tuned in and deliver more bang for their dollar." Turning to private-sector support, he thought that corporations are not just engaging in "chequebook philanthropy"; they are engaging in experiences that are more personally satisfying and rewarding. His main point here was that SE organizations need to seek out corporate partners. While some SE organizations may be hesitant to engage the private sector because they assume the sector would not be supportive, he contended that "they would be really surprised" and should take the opportunity to work with companies that have social responsibility as part of their

corporate strategy. “There needs to be more partnerships and less proprietary [control] over these things,” he said.

To obtain resources from both government and the private sector, JJ said that the SE needed to do more to communicate what they are doing in the community, what they are accomplishing and what resources they need. He closed by saying that the focus needs to be on the principal goal of doing some good in the community and less on the specific means to do that. “Bring in the combined value of society; don’t pick and choose your participants.”

Public Sector

JC recommended tax incentives and credits as a way for the government to support the SE. The private sector, in addition to donating money, should do more to donate the time of their employees. For example, seconding employees to SE organizations could make a big difference to these organizations. When asked what the SE itself could do to increase support, she noted that more awareness had to be created and organizations needed to quantify their results, and display what it is they are doing in terms of social, economic, and environmental impact.

OM had no suggestions for government because, he said, there are already a number of programs that SE organizations can access; they just have to fit their requests for funding into the strategic priorities of the government. Instead, his emphasis was firmly on what SE organizations need to do; namely, “you have to achieve results, and results meaning providing the service, being viable, running a tight operation, good management, strong board, and being a good community partner.” This emphasis on delivering results is, he said, different in Saskatchewan compared with other places in Canada he has worked. SE organizations need to prove themselves, not only in the short term, but also in the long term: “If they are not sustainable financially from a business standpoint, and if they are relying [only] on provincial and federal governments for revenue, then that’s not sustainable over the long term.”

Not only do SE organizations have to achieve results, but they have to be able to market these results and the commitment of their leadership in order for governments, the private sector, and the community to take them seriously. Organizations adept at marketing themselves can attract volunteers, donations, investors, and in-kind contributions. It follows that

his specific recommendation for private-sector support was providing management and mentoring. Due to financial constraints, SE organizations cannot afford to hire the same type of individuals that the private sector can or to develop good human resource and financial systems, so the private sector can help with these aspects. This support is important because he is “looking for that sort of commitment, and the people who are behind it, because if people aren’t behind it or if it doesn’t have the leadership or the management it is going to fail.” Asked if he believed that an umbrella organization would be helpful for marketing purposes (as suggested by AB), he said no, because he thought that it would result in “chaos.”

Third Sector

Lechman’s perception of government support for social economy organizations was in stark contrast to that of **OM**. While the Western Economic Diversification agency of the federal government had some SE initiatives that were helpful, it is not enough:

It has been parked since the Conservative government took office. We’ve been lobbying, and we’ve had our [MP] lobby on our behalf to try to find us financial help through the federal government as far as pure operations go, which would be helping to fund the social economy aspect. She went on our behalf through everywhere she could go, and she had her people ... she couldn’t find one initiative that helped.... When you speak to certain people in government about SE, it’s like a bad word.... It has to be framed in such a way that they see the benefits. Because once the word “social” is tagged on anything, it is difficult. And it’s difficult to Joe and Suzy Sixpack, who are worrying about the guy who’s breaking in to their house, that’s all they’re thinking about, not “are we giving enough to social this, social that”? It almost has to be changed and take the word social out.... It has to be something different.

Nevertheless, he believed that for many SE initiatives to be successful, one had to include government, business, and community.

Lechman warned that the attitude of some people in the SE that private industry is “the bad guy” is not conducive to success or progress. Enterprising non-profits need to be aware of potential competition with private-sector businesses and “be fair” especially if the organizations are receiving a lot of government funding. He thought that the best way for the private sector to support the SE was to provide staff through secondment, for example, because

the third sector is often in need of staff, but cannot afford to hire them. Since spreading the word about their organization and what they do is critical, it would be great for an advertising company “that wanted to do something good to second someone to work with us; then I think we could go somewhere.”

His main recommendation for the social economy sector was that there needs to be more emphasis on taxpayer saving because “it is all about the bottom line for people.” SE organizations need to demonstrate that their organizations are helping to cut taxes and, specifically, that culture and arts organizations are “not indulgences, but strong and mighty community building tools; they help build and develop an economy within themselves. That’s important to know, that the product is very beneficial [to society].” Finally, **Lechman** thought that “people get too hung up on governance” of SE organizations; “[they] have a misconception that if there is only one or two or three people making the final decision, that’s not good, that’s authoritarian.” If you have the right group of people on the board and as managers, “a smaller group is better because when you have more, a lot doesn’t get done.... So I think they put too much emphasis on governance when they haven’t really dissected each and every specific, whether it’s [an SE] organization, business, whatever it may be.”

Javed also noted that government support for organizations she is involved with had diminished over the years as departments and priorities changed. Instead, they should be advocates for the SE, she said. While she said that more should be done to formalize the relationship between the private sector and the SE, she did not elaborate. Her main focus here was on what SE organizations need to do to build the SE, specifically, build awareness of the sector’s contributions:

The stereotypic image is that we aren’t seen as contributing towards the economy, when really we are.... I think we really have to come together to discuss it more formally, raise questions about how we have been doing our work in terms of reaching out. There is no question in my mind that we have been doing wonderful work in providing what we needed to. But outreach work, and working together, we really have to think more thoroughly about it: have more dialogues, have some conversations, then reach out the way we need to reach out and fight these stereotypes.

Hladun welcomed any chance to work with a SE, but did have reservations about

supporting a for-profit social enterprise (PSB) because of the potential for businesses to simply “re-brand” in a way that appears as if they are sympathetic with and involved in the SE when, in reality, they are a business just looking for a way to look better. Businesses that want to support the SE do not necessarily have to spend a lot of money to do so. “Sometimes it is opening your doors for something ... A lot of organizations now are doing volunteer days, and that really goes a long way ... to dealing with your customers, your clients, whatever it is. It puts out your public image, but it is good for your staff; it builds the whole network.”

She argued that governments would support growth of the SE by maintaining public-sector services. If social programs and services are cut, she warned, the “ripple effect is huge” and everyone loses out. Governments need “to actually talk to people and find out what they need” and provide programs that actually make a difference in the lives of citizens. Finally, **Hladun** echoed what several other interviewees said the SE sector needed to do. It is difficult for SE organizations “to blow their own horn” given their limited resources, so banding together to increase awareness and build support could be a very powerful strategy.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR ACTION

OUR SMALL, PURPOSEFUL SAMPLE OF INTERVIEWEES provided us with a broad range of information and opinion, much as we anticipated in selecting people with differing levels of awareness of and support for the social economy from the private, public, and third sectors. In this final section of our report, we discuss the important commonalities and differences evident in the findings both within and between groups of interviewees. From these areas of agreement and tension, we suggest some implications for future actions to strengthen the social economy in Saskatoon and, we hope, throughout the Province of Saskatchewan.

Awareness

In Saskatchewan, it is not surprising that all interviewees were familiar with co-operatives and credit unions. There was, however, considerable variation in people’s awareness of the term social economy, let alone its meaning in either general terms or as formally

defined. The idea of SE organizations having double and triple bottom lines, which we used as a prompt, had great resonance for the interviewees, but some interpreted it quite broadly. For example, **JC** thought that, since governments had a triple bottom line, they could be considered part of the SE. A few others equated this idea with corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the private sector, thus blurring or even eliminating the distinction between private and third-sector organizations. In other words, proponents of the SE can use the concept of double and triple bottom lines to help explain their values to the public, but they must clarify that their primary focus is on the social bottom line as compared to private-sector organizations whose priority is and must be on the financial bottom line regardless of their commitment to CSR. Both **Hladun** and **Javed** from the third sector expressed clear concerns about for-profit organizations abusing their CSR initiatives; others were more sanguine about this.

Social purpose businesses do blur the line between the private and third sectors representing, in effect, a hybrid. Only two interviewees — one from the public sector and one from the third sector — were aware of this hybrid organizational form and could provide a correct example, namely the business arm of some tribal councils and The Body Shop (although this example may be stretching the definition). Interestingly, once interviewees grasped the concept, all of them were in favour of it and had no serious reservations about SPBs being considered part of the social economy. Those in the private sector were most supportive since they could identify with the intent to generate a profit. Again, it was only **Hladun** and **Javed** who moderated their support with some concerns about potential abuse.

Most interviewees had at least a general awareness of enterprising non-profits and could correctly give examples, local or national, and all were supportive of this organizational form — a positive point for SE proponents to build upon. Based on the findings of this research, however, proponents will likely have a difficult task building awareness about the SE and especially the distinction between enterprising non-profits and SPBs. New legal forms and certification of so-called “B (Beneficial) corporations” or “community interest companies” have been developed particularly in the United Kingdom and United States (MaRS, 2010) in an attempt to bring some clarity and accountability. While it is possible to argue that any and all contributions to the community interest are good, attempts to define degrees of goodness or benefit are likely to create confusion among the general public and invidious comparisons among persons and agencies interested in contributing to organizations with a social purpose. We will return to this theme below.

Democratic control of social enterprises was not a big issue for almost all of the participants. Viewing it in populist terms, they saw it as impractical and even detrimental to the efficient functioning of the enterprise in contrast to the board governance model in the private sector and, to some extent in non-profit organizations. Only **Hladun** and **Javed** from the third sector were somewhat positive with the former suggesting that democratic governance contributed to the credibility and accountability of SE organizations while the latter was the only participant to consider the issue of voice as a matter of principle. Clearly there is an opportunity and need for SE organizations to inform potential supporters of the forms and value of democratic control or at least participation. At the same time, recruiting private- and public-sector people with governance expertise to boards or advisory councils can be very advantageous to SE organizations. This involvement is the subject of our next section.

Personal Involvement and Views of the Context

All participants in the research were chosen because of their reputations for involvement in the community. Most did not discuss their organizations in explicit third-sector terms such as non-profits, enterprising or not, but we inferred from their comments that the organizations were traditional non-profits with funding from some combination of government funds and charitable donations. Two exceptions were **OM** from the government sector, who participates at a co-ordinating table of government and private-sector organizations, and **Lechman**, who is the founder and executive director of an enterprising non-profit. All contributed their time as members of boards and three explicitly mentioned that they also contributed money; the others may have, but did not say so.

Their motives for being involved in civil society organizations centred on a commitment to service, of giving back to the community for their good fortune, but there were some interesting variations on this theme. **QX** from the private sector said that he was interested in solving a need that government had not acted upon and **JC** from the public sector said that she valued being “part of the solution” to problems. **JJ** from the private sector and **OM** from the public sector emphasized being involved in issues or causes that they believe in. **Lechman** from the social enterprise said that he was motivated by the benefits to the individuals he serves, the community at large, and taxpayers because his service is more cost effective than publicly delivered services. **Javed** emphasized her personal values and ideology. Another interesting motive, and one that SE proponents could try to build upon, came from **AB** of the

private sector who said that involvement was a good learning opportunity for her, namely, to understand issues and segments of her community with which she was not familiar.

When asked for their views on the SE in the current economic and political context, only a few gave substantive comments; one said simply that he did not make that kind of judgment. **QX** from the private sector said that the organizations he worked with were “absolutely” important in the current context by making the benefits of a rich society more accessible to those who were less well off, perhaps even narrowing the gap between rich and poor. All three participants from the third sector noted a clear change over recent years in the context resulting in reduced funding for third-sector organizations. **Lechman** thought that the climate had worsened to the point that even using the word “social” was problematic. **Javed** noted that the changed political context meant that civil society organizations received far fewer resources, but they were still doing a lot with those resources. **Hladun** said that civil society organizations provide an important voice for the marginalized under the changed conditions.

Given the current context, what are the prospects for the public, private, and third sectors working together? There was general agreement that the three sectors could work together with **Lechman** and **Hladun** noting that they already do. **Lechman** added that, for co-operation to work, SE organizations must not operate in competition with private-sector organizations. **Hladun** added that the level of collaboration depends on the particular organizations and the degree to which the key people are willing to compromise. Unfortunately, she did not specify compromise on what. **Javed** was blunt: the three sectors should, but do not co-operate well together because of stereotypic images of each other. People in government and the private sector think that the third sector is only out to lobby against them, but advocacy for basic rights is important for society. People in the third sector think that government and the private sector are only interested in reducing expenditures and taxes.

QX from the private sector and both **JC** and **OM** from the public sector shared similar views on inter-sectoral co-operation. Each sector has an important role, but it really comes down to individuals in the private and third sectors building relationships to work on specific problems. Business needs community partners to show what is really needed while the SE org can benefit from private-sector assistance in building a good business case for their service. Build solutions one by one. This is good general advice, but what about the specific actions required to make it happen?

Opportunities for and Tensions in Taking Action

In this section we use participants' suggestions to identify — and sometimes expand on — opportunities and barriers for supporting the SE. The ideas are not new; indeed, most are covered in other reports in the Social Economy Suite, so we do not explain or review them in depth.

Government

Two of three private-sector participants and one public-sector participant suggested that government should offer tax incentives for contributions to SE organizations, but they did not specify donations or investments. There was little mention of specific program support for the SE such as exists in some provinces, notably Quebec. While **OM** from the public sector stated that several government programs to assist SE organizations already exist, **Lechman** said that he had had no luck in finding government programs to support his organization. These contradictory statements may reflect a situation where government has very specific criteria for programs, but SE organizations want flexible programs that can be tailored to their specific needs or broad support for operations. One private-sector participant thought that governments could use third-sector organizations to provide social programs at a lower cost than they could themselves. **Lechman** also supported this approach, but **Hladun** stated that public services should remain, otherwise there would be a negative ripple effect on the whole economy. One person from the private sector as well as **Javed** thought that government should publicly support or advocate for the social economy.

In sum, details and agreement on government support for the SE were in short supply. Based on **OM**'s assertion that there are government programs available for SE organizations, a specific social economy Internet portal such as Manitoba has could be a good first step.

Private Sector

There was broad consensus that the best way for the private sector to support the SE was for company executives to contribute their own time. Two people from the private sector thought that SE organizations should reach out to private-sector leaders to get involved and champion their cause. One participant from the public sector and two from the third sector suggested that companies should contribute staff time to volunteering with SE organizations, but no one from the private sector suggested this. One participant from the private sector

and one from the third sector thought that relationships between the two sectors should become more formalized while one from each of the private and public sectors thought that building relationships had to be local and personal, not formalized.

The three private-sector participants appeared to be modestly supportive of the SE as we moved through the interview, but it is problematic, of course, to assume that what any interviewee says will translate into actions. Our concern is that these three, and corporate leaders in general, are more attuned to personal and corporate philanthropy to non-profit organizations than to investment in social enterprises. This may be attributed to a lack of awareness of the SE, the positive publicity garnered from philanthropy and the tax incentives for donations compared to the financial and reputational risks of investments in social enterprises. Moreover, as mentioned above, even when business leaders are considering investing in the social economy, they may prefer to invest in for-profit social purpose businesses than in enterprising non-profits. SE activists could consider acquainting potentially sympathetic local business leaders with the networks in other areas that work collaboratively to create pools of “patient capital” for investment in the SE and link interested business leaders with SE organizations that they can mentor. This pooled approach can also help to overcome the apparent “Catch-22” identified by participant **OM** that social enterprises must demonstrate that they have a viable business plan *before* local business people will support them, but they rarely have the resources to develop such plans. Examples of such networks include Enterprising Non-Profits (ENP) in British Columbia and Ashoka internationally. There are many resources available on social finance as well including a recent report by the Canadian Task Force on Social Finance, “Mobilizing Private Capital for Public Good” (2011).

Third Sector

Developing some infrastructure to facilitate the involvement of private-sector leaders is important, but so too is developing some infrastructure for the SE itself. All but one participant said that the best way for the SE to expand was to promote its accomplishments: impacts on clients and communities as well as taxpayer savings from using the social enterprise approach compared to government-delivered programs. Such awareness campaigns require resources which are typically scarce. Local networks or support organizations can pool resources and expertise to undertake promotion of the sector through conventional and new social media.

As a few participants pointed out, garnering support is intensely competitive. Existing, large social organizations have a competitive advantage while new and small ones can be

overlooked. SE infrastructure can mitigate some of the negative effects of this competition by offering seed grants to small organizations and publicizing them through their networks. Again, ENP in Vancouver is an SE infrastructure organization carrying out these and other activities. Such an organization might also serve to help level the playing field between enterprising non-profits and social purpose businesses by providing information and criteria for assessing relative social benefits.

In conclusion, there are signs that the prospects for the SE in Saskatoon are somewhat improved since Diamantopoulos and Findlay reported on their research (2007). CED organization Quint is still going strong and, with several partners, has successfully raised sufficient funds from the community to build an important social enterprise centre in the heart of the core neighbourhoods. Funding for the project, Station 20 West, came from a broad cross-section of Saskatoon: credit unions, Saskatoon Co-op, labour unions, churches, and the public, including a few large donations from local business people. This lends credence to QX's comments that local business people are getting better at "writing the cheques."

The results of this research — modest though they may be — also indicate that there is some awareness of the social economy and, as AB says, a willingness to be open to the needs and opportunities out there. Leaders of SE organizations should feel encouraged to inform business leaders about social enterprise in general and their particular causes and to seek their assistance on boards or advisory groups.

What does not seem to have improved appreciably is government support for the SE as evidenced by the comments from the third-sector participants in this study with regard to the current economic and political context. And while the City of Saskatoon has been supportive of Station 20 West, for example, the provincial and federal governments have lagged the private sector and citizens.

The regional economy is strong with an attendant influx of people who may help to energize the development of the social economy. At the same time, the rising tide does not raise all boats, so many people remain marginalized and in need of the kinds of services that SE organizations could provide. A key ingredient still needed to build momentum for the SE is some form of co-ordinating and resource group. With the publicity surrounding the opening of Station 20 West, now is a good time to raise the profile of the social economy and begin the work of building some entrepreneurial infrastructure.

APPENDIX 1

Interview Protocol

Thank you for participating in this project, examining awareness of, attitudes to, and engagement with the social economy in Saskatoon. We are interested in a range of perspectives on this issue, and would like to hear your personal perceptions, so there are no right or wrong answers. We have sixteen questions to ask you. Before we begin, I will ask that you please review the consent form that sets out your rights in this interview process.

Do you have any questions about the consent form, the interview process, or this research project?

First we want to ask you some questions about your awareness of the SE.

1. How familiar would you say you are with “the social economy”? What does it mean to you?
2. There is no consensus on a single definition of the SE, but a common feature of organizations involved in the SE is a commitment to double (social and economic) or triple bottom lines (social, economic and environmental). Does this fit within your understanding of the SE? Please explain.
3. Similarly, do the following three categories or types of SE organizations fit with your understanding? Are you familiar with examples of these organizational types?
 - co-ops and credit unions

- not-for-profit organizations that earn part of their revenue from market activities (enterprising non-profits)
- for-profit organizations that are engaged in socially beneficial market activities (profitable social enterprise)

(Examples will be provided if necessary)

4. Are or would you be inclined to support one type of SE over the others? Why/why not?
5. Do you agree or disagree that for-profits should be included as part of the SE? Why/why not?
6. Do you agree or disagree that democratic control of SE organizations is an essential requirement? Why/why not?

Next we want to ask you about your involvement with organizations in what is often called civil society.

7. Based on your understanding of the SE, are you currently involved in a SE organization? In an organization not part of the SE? Which one(s)? Why do you consider this organization part of the SE? Or why do you not consider it part of the SE?
8. If involved, in what capacity? Board member? Employee? Financial contributor? Social entrepreneur?
9. Why have you chosen to become involved with these organizations?
10. What benefits (if any) do you think they provide to society? Are they more or less important in the current (economic, financial, and environmental) context?
11. How do you think organizations from different sectors (private, public, SE) work together for the betterment of society?

Finally, we have some questions about support for the SE.

12. From what you know about the social economy, do you
 - support it or certain aspects of it? Why?
 - not support it or certain aspects? Why not?
13. Are there government policies or programs to support the SE that you would recommend?

14. Are there private-sector actions in support of the SE you would recommend?
15. Are there actions that you think people involved in the SE should take to enhance awareness of and support for the SE?
16. Are there other actions that might enhance awareness of and support for the SE?
 - alliances, media, education, research
 - barriers (gender, culture, etc.) to overcome

Thank you very much for taking the time to answer our questions. Do you have any questions or summary comments about the interview or research?

APPENDIX 2

Individual/Group Interview Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a study entitled Assessing Awareness of and Attitudes to the Social Economy in Saskatoon

My name is: Emily Hurd, CUISR intern and MA candidate
University of Saskatchewan (306) 229-0839

This research is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Louise Clarke, associate professor, Edwards School of Business, University of Saskatchewan. If you have questions or concerns, please contact me at eac688@mail.usask.ca or Dr. Clarke at (306) 966-8409 or Clarke@edwards.usask.ca

Purpose and Procedure

Building on previous work conducted on the social economy in Saskatoon and beyond, notably the “*Growing Pains*” (Diamontopoulous and Findlay 2009) report on social enterprise core areas, this research seeks to map the terrain surrounding public and private awareness of and attitudes to the social economy in Saskatoon. We are seeking to collect perspectives of various members of the Saskatoon community, including those in the public, private and third sectors. We will assess the level of understanding and support for various aspects of the social economy, particularly in reference to government policy and programs.

- If you agree to this interview, it will be recorded on a digital file. Notes, based on the digital file recording, will be taken at a later date. Direct quotes may be taken from this interview.

- If indicated, you will not be identified in the final report, but will be referred to in an anonymous way, i.e.: “participant X” or “one member said...”
- You may request that this interview is not recorded.
- You may withdraw from the research at any time. Also, at any time in the interview you have the right ask me to turn off the recording device.
- Your right to withdraw data from the study will apply until _____. After this it is possible that some form of research dissemination will have already occurred and it may not be possible to withdraw your data
- You may refuse any questions you wish not to answer. If at any time you feel uncomfortable, please let me know and we can take a break or end the interview.
- The discussion should take approximately one hour to complete.

Potential Risks

Please note that this interview involves minimal risk to you. Your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw at any time. I will make every effort to try to ensure confidentiality throughout the research process.

Potential Benefits

Your participation will contribute to understanding of the awareness of and public private engagement with the social economy in Saskatoon and in the broader context of the Linking, Learning and Leveraging project on the social economy being conducted by CUISR and the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives. The findings may also help generate recommendations, policies, and guidelines to benefit the social economy in its various forms.

Storage of Data

In accordance with university guidelines, the transcript and recording files will be securely stored (separate from consent forms) in the care of the project management team at the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives for a minimum period of five years.

Confidentiality

I will make every effort to ensure your anonymity and confidentiality throughout the research. Coding of your interview will protect your identity during analysis of the data.

After the interview has been completed, the principal researcher or intern will listen to the recording, and take notes based on what was said during the interview. Only the project researchers will hear the interview recording and see the raw notes. Direct quotes may be transcribed. No quotes will be attributed to you without your explicit consent. All quotes and statements will otherwise remain anonymous. Your name will not appear in any publication without prior consent. Interviewees will be introduced in general terms, for example, “One member said...,” to protect your anonymity, unless otherwise agreed to.

The research conclusions will be published in a variety of formats, both print and electronic. These materials may be further used for purposes of conference presentations, or publication in academic journals or popular press or student theses. In publications, the data will be reported in a way that protects confidentiality and anonymity of participants.

Please be aware that you are a participant in a small group interview and the other participants will hear your answers. As the researcher I will make every effort to safeguard the confidentiality of the discussion, but cannot guarantee that other members of the group will do so. Please respect the confidentiality of the other members of the group by not disclosing the contents of this discussion outside the group, and be aware that others may not respect your confidentiality.

Right to Withdraw

As mentioned above, you have the right to withdraw at any time without any penalty of any sort. Upon withdrawal all data that you have contributed will be deleted.

Questions

You may ask my supervisor or me questions at any time. The study was approved by the University of Saskatchewan Advisory Committee on Ethics in Behavioural Research on 12 August 2010. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, please contact the Ethics Office at (306) 966-2084.

You will have access to published versions of the completed study. Please contact me at eac688@mail.usask.ca with any questions. You will be notified of any new information that may influence your decision to participate.

Please indicate your willingness to be identified:

If you do not check one of the following, it will be assumed that (a) applies:

____ (a) I prefer to remain anonymous, as described in the consent form. I understand that my remarks will not be attributed to my name. Instead, they may be attributed to an unnamed individual or to a pseudonym or composite profile.

____ (b) I prefer to have all remarks from this interview attributed to me by name, or used anonymously, at the author's discretion.

____ (c) Certain remarks are to remain anonymous (as indicated by me during my interview) but the rest of my comments may be attributed to me.

Consent to Participate

I have understood the description. I consent to participate in the study understanding that I may withdraw this consent at any time. A copy of this consent form has been given to me for me records.

Participant Date

Researcher Date

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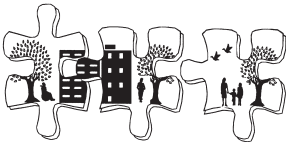


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