

Pathways to Success for Youth in BC's Capital Region

The Power and Potential of Social Enterprise

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Background and Context

Employment Social Enterprises
are businesses that have a mandate to employ individuals facing barriers to employment- real work for real pay- while training and providing wrap around supports

Social enterprise is gaining recognition as effective strategy in creating meaningful employment for people facing barriers to employment

“The “social economy has a key role to play in addressing disadvantage, improving employment outcomes and fostering social inclusion”

(OECD, Improving Social Inclusion at the Local Level through the Social Economy)



The social enterprise difference

Social enterprise combines best practices in employment development and support for people facing barriers to employment into an integrated model that creates synergies that are simply not present when delivered alone



LOFT Kitchen



Train for Trades- St. John's, NFLD



Energy retrofits and construction

Cross sector partnership

42 weeks of paid work experience, 2 weeks at college

Combination of training, employment and supports

75% post employment or education success



The Sector is Growing...

Province	No of SE's and ESE's	Employment as part of mandate	Training
BC (2012)	358; 25% employment; 14% training and transition	At least 2,430	6,250
Alberta (2012)	188; 12% employment; 9% training and transition	At least 6,610	6,120
Manitoba (2011)	266; 30% employment and training	3,450	6,890
Ontario (2013)	363; 37% employment; 29% training and transition	5, 133	65,902
Nova Scotia (2011)	109; 70% employment and training	2,220	34,797
New Brunswick (2012)	105; 20% employment	Not split	N/A

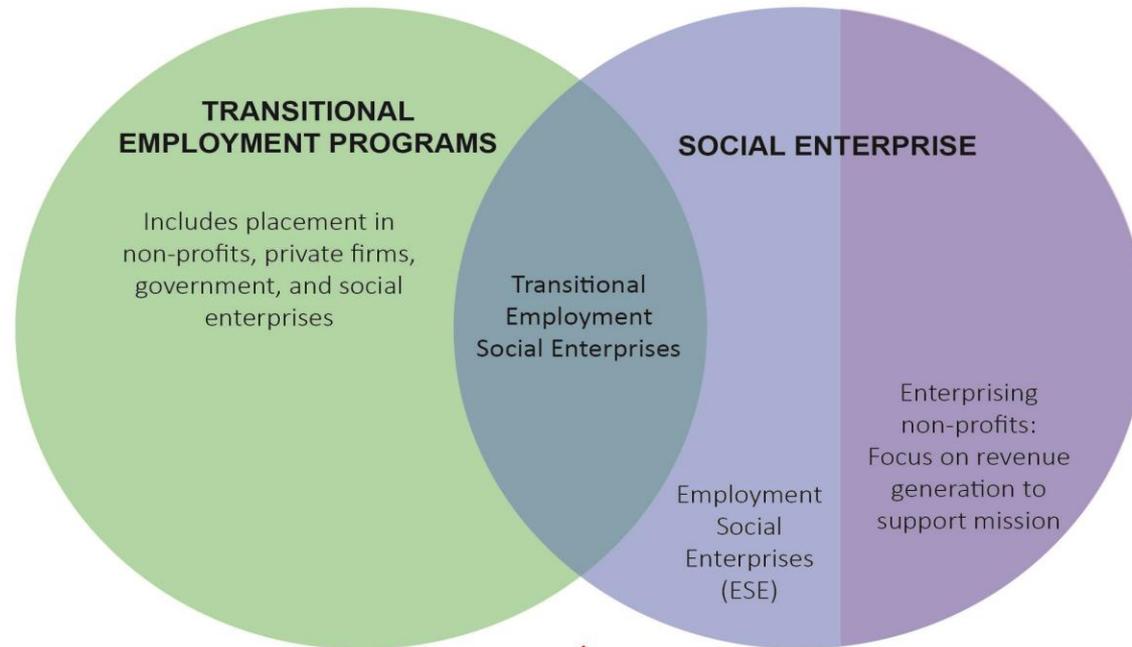
Hall, P. & Elson, P. (2011) Social Enterprise Sector Surveys. <http://www.sess.ca>

Research Approach

- Literature review
- Local environmental scan
- 4 case studies
- Local employer interviews
- Focus group with employment developers



A different approach to employment



Primary focus for social enterprises working with youth



The social enterprise difference

Social Enterprise Practices

Employment Development Practices

- Address range of skills development needs
 - Focus on 'real' work experience
 - Strong employer–practitioner partnerships support employment outcomes
- Include training in workplace and job **skills** in a setting that is **inherently integrated in the workplace.**
 - Integrate life skills and **wrap around supports** to achieve employment outcomes.
 - Prepare workers for entry-level positions- people with barriers to employment gain **work experience** and **reduces the risk employers** may bear in investing in unemployed youth.
 - Emphasize a **partnership model** employers, unions, social service and other community-based organizations
 - Address both **supply- and demand-side issues.**



Impact

Individual Impacts

- Employability outcomes
- ‘Soft skills’ (workplace and essential life skills)
- Self-confidence, sense of contribution, etc.
- Stabilize other aspects of lives (e.g. housing)
- *Employment itself is transformative*

Community Impacts

- Investments in disadvantaged communities leading to job creation and meeting service gaps
- Shifts perception of people facing barriers to employment
- Reduce impact on public expenditures by reducing public safety costs, among other factors.



BC's Capital Region: The need

4 000

youth not in
employment,
education, or in
the labour force



Local Findings

What did we hear locally?	Social Enterprise Contribution
Unique labour market dynamics demands a new approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A uniquely place-based approach, opens up new labour pools
Youth face barriers in terms of soft skills and first experience. Employers hire for these.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide wrap around supports & soft skills development• Serves as entry point into the labour market
Existing supports are inadequate and fragmented	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social enterprise is a grassroots response and targeted approach designed to work with those who are falling through the cracks• Most successful social enterprise examples are part of a coordinated and networked employment development system
Desire among employers to access pre-qualified candidates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social enterprise excels at supporting youth to develop essential life and workplace skills that are transferable to any workplace



A desire for new strategies

We are looking not so much for skills but for a positive attitude and work ethic. We are looking for people who will fit into our culture and work hard.” (Employer)

“Kids are hearing stories about working in the oil fields and make money. It’s changed the dynamic, especially in Western Canada.’ (Employer)

‘Take care of what’s in your back yard first- minimize your turnover and create long-term employment.’ (Employer)

‘We are seeking out to find people we haven’t looked at before- people with barriers, disabilities, making it gender neutral across the board.’ (Employer)



Next Steps For the Capital Region

An employment development network:

- Existing employment social enterprises and supportive employers work to **expand or complement existing programming**
 - These enterprises work together and are clustered in sectors with a strong focus on transferable skills and opportunity to ladder into high demand profession in the region.
 - Act as entry points into a support network of employers
- A **supportive employers network commits to hiring** the trained youth graduates of the employment social enterprises in the network.
- Focus on **capacity development** and share **best practices**, and create opportunities for referral to employment opportunities among partner employers
- Engage partners to streamline processes, address gaps and ensure that training meets the needs of employers and employees.



Next steps (cont.)

For researchers and policy makers:

- Research needed to test the **effectiveness of social enterprise** in achieving employment, skills development, and job retention outcomes as compared against traditional employment approaches
- More information is needed about the **type and intensity of wrap-around** supports that have a critical impact on improving outcomes for youth.
- More information is needed as to **how employment social enterprises build and maintain successful networks** with mainstream employers to create ongoing opportunities for exiting employees.



Questions? Ideas? More info?

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