

# WORKFORCE INNOVATION THROUGH SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

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## Project Management Team

Dr. Barbara Barter, Research/Evaluation Consultant  
Jenny Chaulk, CEN Finance Manager  
Jeanette French, Project Research Assistant  
Peace Godwin, Primary Researcher  
Bernice Hancock, CEN Executive Director  
Ian MacDonald, Project Coordinator

*Workforce Innovation Through Social Enterprise* is a research project led by *Community Education Network (CEN)* and funded by the NL Workforce Innovation Centre (NLWIC).

Established in 2017 by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and administered by College of the North Atlantic, NLWIC has a provincial mandate to provide a coordinated, central point of access to engage all labour market stakeholders about challenges, opportunities and best practices in workforce development.

The Centre's goal is to promote and support the research, testing and sharing of **ideas** and models of **innovation** in workforce development that will positively **impact** employability, employment and entrepreneurship within the province's labour force and particularly underrepresented groups. Funding for NLWIC is provided by the Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills (IPGS) under the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Market Development Agreement.

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# COMMUNITY EDUCATION NETWORK FOR SOUTHWESTERN NEWFOUNDLAND

- CEN is a non-profit incorporated community-based organization with thirty years experience working collaboratively with stakeholders throughout Southwestern Newfoundland.
- CEN is committed to diverse, equitable, and inclusive life-long learning for individual and community betterment.
- CEN, and its two associate organizations, work with many partners and stakeholders to provide an array of supports, services and programs throughout the region which are based on identified needs and interests.

**“It is the synergy created by working together, the concerted effort and combined effect of many, that is the magic ingredient”.**



### Community Action Committee

- Early Years Programs
- Healthy Baby Club
- Family Resource Program
- Licensed Childcare/Preschools

### Community Education Network

- Adult Basic Education
- Career and Employment Programs
- Mental Health and Addictions Youth Outreach Worker
- Housing Support Services
- Supportive Housing for Youth
- Violence Prevention Southwest
- Social Enterprise Research and Development

### Community Youth Network

- Youth Engagement and Leadership
- Community Service/Volunteer Opportunities
- School Partnerships
- Education and Training Workshops
- Support Services



# SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

**A catalyst for social and economic empowerment and inclusion. It is defined as:**

- A non-profit initiative that produces and sells goods or services in a business-like model in the market economy,
- They manage their operations and redirect their surpluses in pursuit of social, community, cultural or environmental goals.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### Strategic Advantages of Social Enterprise Ventures

- They involve the collective commitment of people.
- They go where private business may not be able or willing to go, such as rural or remote communities.
- They expect less profit and profits stay in the community.
- They are responsive to the need for Labour Force Adjustment
- They mobilize vulnerable people in disadvantaged regions, communities or neighborhoods.
- They generate economic activity, add social value, and provide training and employment opportunities for individuals experiencing employment barriers and challenges entering or rejoining the workforce.
- For individuals requiring additional supports and services and more time to adjust to a new workplace environment, Social Enterprise provides the supports and wrap-around services needed for a successful transition to the workforce.
- Through research and consultation, social enterprise has been identified as an innovative opportunity to address workforce challenges and economic sustainability in Southwestern Newfoundland.

# WORKFORCE INNOVATION THROUGH SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

## KEY COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

- ▶ Bay St. George Chamber of Commerce
- ▶ Bay St. George Community Employment Corporation
- ▶ Bay St. George Status of Women Council
- ▶ Community Youth Network
- ▶ Department of Industry, Energy and Technology
- ▶ Grow Remote
- ▶ Horizon TNL (Francophone Economic Development Association)
- ▶ Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network (NAWN)
- ▶ Stephenville Lion's Club
- ▶ Tourism Southwest
- ▶ Town of Stephenville

# Workforce Innovation Through Social Enterprise

## GOAL

- ❖ Facilitate evidence-based research and analysis;
- ❖ Disseminate resources and practical tools which encourages and supports Social Enterprise growth in rural Newfoundland and Labrador;
- ❖ Support rural sustainability, encourage small business enterprises, and build a stronger economic foundation for the future.





**PRIMARY  
RESEARCH  
QUESTION:**

What practical and innovative Social Enterprise opportunities exist in Southwestern Newfoundland which can address workforce challenges, provide training and employment opportunities, support community sustainability and build a stronger economic foundation for the region, as demonstrated and evaluated in a pilot study?

## OBJECTIVES:

- Actively engage community partners and stakeholders
- Conduct labour market research and data analysis
- Conduct research and analysis including a literature review, interjurisdictional review and case studies
- Work closely with the Town of Stephenville and other identified community partners
- Pilot and evaluate up to three new, practical and innovative social enterprise ventures in Southwestern Newfoundland
- Prepare detailed documentation of the process, findings and recommendations
- Coordinate knowledge mobilization and dissemination of information through various mechanisms of communication

# METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE

- ▶ Community Consultation
- ▶ Labour Market Research
- ▶ Inter-jurisdictional Scan
- ▶ Literature Review
- ▶ Case Studies
- ▶ Data and Document Analysis
- ▶ Piloting and Evaluation
- ▶ Knowledge Mobilization and Dissemination



# DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

## PERSONNEL



## DETAILED TIMELINES



# PERSONNEL

- ▶ Project Staff
- ▶ Project Management Team
- ▶ Project Advisory Committee
- ▶ Research/Evaluation Consultant
- ▶ Primary Researcher (MITACS MUN Student)

A graduate level researcher was contracted to conduct a literature review and interjurisdictional scan, as well as review existing case studies. The aim was to summarize and synthesize the content and provide direction as to future work,

Throughout the duration of the project, an external research/evaluation consultant was contracted to guide the research, data collection, analysis, and evaluation and to provide ongoing consultation and expertise to the Project Management Committee and Staff. This provided a non-bias and qualified resource person, external to the project, to help guide and evaluate the process and outcomes.



# DETAILED TIMELINES

## Workforce Innovation Through Social Enterprise Timelines for Project October 7, 2019, to June 30, 2022



Date	Action Items
Oct 2019-June 2022	Community Partner/Stakeholder Engagement (Ongoing)
Oct 2019	Contract with Research and Evaluation Consultant (Consultation Ongoing)
Oct - Nov 2019 Feb 2020, July 2020	Staff Recruitment, screening, hiring and orientation
Oct 2019 - June 2022	Staff supervision and support (ongoing monthly meetings with Project Management Team)
Dec 2019	Initial meeting of Project Advisory Committee/Research Team
Dec 2019 to June 2022	Project Advisory Committee Meetings (Ongoing Quarterly Meetings)
Oct 2019 – June 2022	Work Plan/Research and Evaluation Plan Development and implementation (Quarterly Review)
Oct 2019 – Sept 2021 (Ongoing as required)	Labour Market Research and Data Analysis
Jan 2020 – Sept 2021 (Ongoing as required)	Literature Review and Synthesis
Jan 2020 – Sept 2021 (Ongoing as required)	Inter-jurisdictional Review/Best Practice Study and Synopsis
March 2020	Project Launch/Public Presentation

## DETAILED TIMELINES CONTINUED...

Date	Action Items
Ongoing	Detailed Record Keeping (Daily logs, journals, minutes, etc.)
July 2020 – Dec 2021 (Ongoing as required)	Data and Document Analysis
Oct 2020	Mid-term Summary Report Preparation and Review
Oct - Dec 2020	Community Presentation Preparation and Implementation
Jan 2020 - June 2021	Work with stakeholders, non-profits, and funders to identify Social Enterprise opportunities in Southwestern NL
April 2020 – Dec 2021	Secure partnerships, funding, and in-kind resources to establish and develop identified social enterprise ventures in Southwestern NL
July 2020 – Dec 2021 (Timeline is flexible depending upon new social enterprise development opportunities)	Piloting and evaluating of three new, practical, and innovative social enterprise ventures in Southwestern NL which will include detailed case studies.
Oct 2021 – June 2022	Stakeholder Engagement/Community Consultations/Feedback (Ongoing)
Jan to March 2022	Data Compilation, Analysis, and Evaluation Draft Research and Social Enterprise Piloting Report Preparation and Review
March 2022	Completion of Research and Social Enterprise Piloting Report
April to June 2022	Development and Implementation of knowledge exchange dissemination plan Distribution of hard copy and virtual tools and resources.
June 2022	Final Report/Project Completion

# SOCIAL ENTERPRISE PILOTS



Community Education  
Network



Bay St. George Chamber  
of Commerce



Grow Remote and  
Horizon TNL





# Juniper

PRINTING

Juniper Printing is a social enterprise, operated by the Community Education Network, specializing in delivery of a full suite of printing services including designing, printing, copying, scanning and laminating for customers throughout Southwestern Newfoundland.



The Long Range Market is owned by the Bay St. George Chamber of Commerce. The goal is to operate a local virtual marketplace for businesses to sell their products/services online for minimal cost with ease of use for buyers and sellers.



grow remote  
*stephenville*



Grow Remote Stephenville is managed by Horizon TNL and CEN. The goal of Grow Remote is to build a community and ecosystem to support remote workers by partnering with local, provincial, national and international stakeholders to increase the number of remote employment opportunities available in local communities.

# PROJECT FINDINGS



Workforce  
Innovation



Community  
Collaboration



Financial  
Support



Networking



Employment  
Training



## Workforce Innovation

- ▶ Social enterprises should include an employee base with a diverse range of needs and employment barriers.
- ▶ Identifying and understanding specific barriers, and providing support to remove such barriers, should be a priority, before and during, workforce engagements.
- ▶ A bridging agency can provide employment guidance.

It takes the parent organization, as a whole, to make the social enterprise work; building formal collaborations with other social enterprises, and continued assistance, are very important to the success of the subsidiary earned-income social enterprise.



Community  
Collaboration



## Financial Support

New and existing social enterprises need support from a diverse range of funding sources. Financial support from the government, as well as subsidy programs, are necessary to increase capacity and engage people in the community to work.

A grassroots, collective decision-making approach to operating a social enterprise or developing a project, empowers participants and community members. Business opportunities and visibility can be expanded by regular conversations within the community, such as town halls and networking events. Surveys and development evaluations can be used to gauge Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for trained workforce as well as community impact.



## Networking





## Employment Training

- On-the-job technological tools are key to skills advancement, improved productivity, and increased sales/revenue which was particularly evident during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Lack of necessary training and resources for employers to effectively tend to the needs of an individual experiencing barriers to employment. For example: mental health training, soft skills training etc
- Partnerships are the key to success and finding the right partner(s) is essential.

# Two key documents demonstrate Government's recognition of the challenges experienced by communities in NL

## THE WAY FORWARD ON WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- ▶ Identifies labour market conditions and dynamics in NL
- ▶ Prepares NL for future labour market opportunities by identifying skills gaps

## THE HEALTH ACCORD

- ▶ Creating an awareness of and intervention in the social factors that influence health (social determinants)

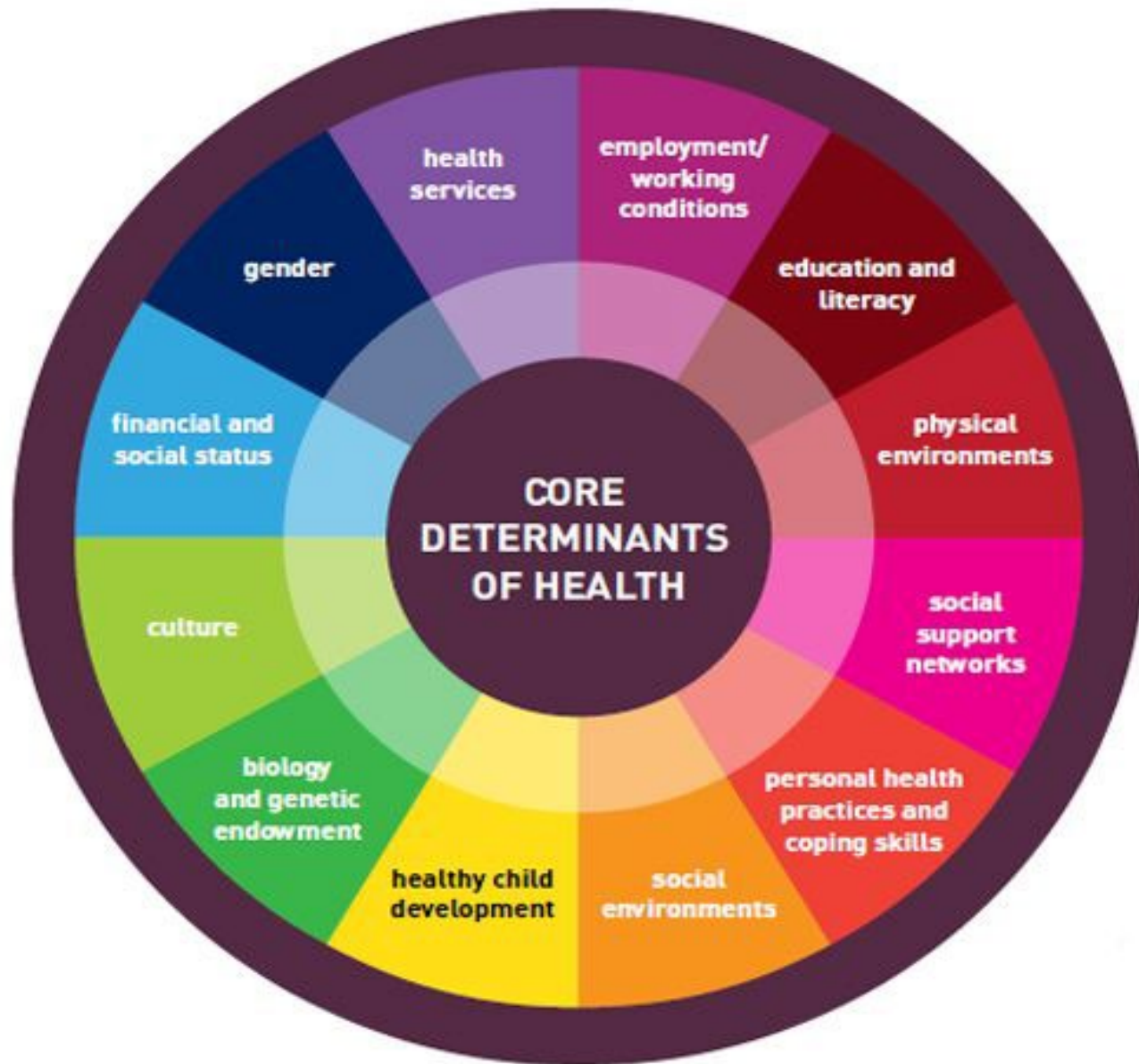
# SOCIAL ENTERPRISE IMPACT ON THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

## *Research:*

- *Shows that the social determinants can be more important than health care or lifestyle choices in influencing health.*
- *Indicates that the contribution of sectors outside health to population health outcomes exceeds the contribution from the health sector.*

Non-profit collaborative grass-roots community-based organizations, like CEN, have a positive impact on the social determinates of health for individuals and families.

Throughout Southwestern Newfoundland this includes healthy child development, personal health practices and coping skills, employment and education, social environments, and social support networks, with a broader influence on many other social determinates through collaborative partnerships and a coordinated approach to service delivery.



# Social Enterprise

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



# THE ROLE OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISES IN HEALTH CARE

- Addressing the socio-environmental factors that influence the physical, mental, social and spiritual components of health and well-being requires similarly innovative and imaginative responses. Social enterprises are a potentially useful and economically viable strategy to this end.
- SEs are organizations that engage in commercial trade for a social purpose – most often to address one or more aspects of social vulnerability – rather than for the personal financial enrichment of owners or shareholders.
- Despite many examples of good news, evidence to support that social enterprises work remains scarce.



# GAPS IN THE LITERATURE

- Employment barriers affecting persons with disabilities are most often cited in literature than for other groups.
- Research focused on rural areas is often the least cited.
- Hybridity exists in the field of social enterprise that limits establishing clear classifications of social enterprise. This divide disallows clear and unified case-study classifications and undermines certain efforts to clearly identify non-profit organisations that best fit social enterprise descriptions. **More research is needed to explore ways to consensually conceptualize the field of social enterprise.**
- Existing social enterprise models can incorporate remote work or remote support work.
- The reported best practices have been implemented in NL, however, impacts remain disproportionate among sub-regions in the province. Indeed, significant impacts are yet to be seen in rural NL, particularly in areas in the South Coast-Burin Peninsula and Notre Dame-Central Bonavista Bay.

# Recommendations





# GOVERNMENT

Support	Support social enterprise research
Provide	Provide the funding to nurture social enterprise growth in the province
Create	Create a navigator position in regions that can provide support for people interested in social enterprise ventures

# TRAINING PROVIDERS

## Provide

Provide training opportunities for individuals facing employment barriers

## Accommodate

Accommodate individuals facing employment barriers

## Organize

Organize town halls and networking events in their community

# COMMUNITY

Provide necessary training for staff and volunteers to build a supportive environment for employees with employment barriers.



Social Enterprise is another innovative tool for advancing regional growth opportunities to benefit the economy, support rural sustainability and encourage entrepreneurial governance models and service delivery.

Government will benefit from collaborating with the non-profit sector to develop policies, programs, and service delivery mechanisms designed to support this vision and address identified key issues.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY, PROGRAM AND SERVICE DELIVERY CHANGES**

- ▶ Flexible and responsive policies and programs must be designed to support the development of social enterprise in rural and remote communities.
- ▶ This would include the development of a work plan with accountability mechanisms which includes concrete objectives, actions, outcomes, indicators and specific timelines.



Policies must support social enterprise development in the non-profit sector through:

- training and skills development for marginalized and vulnerable populations
- adequate and accessible funding for social enterprise development within the non-profit sector
- ongoing support for existing social enterprises to thrive and expand.



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Non-profits offer inclusive employment programs and services for individuals facing multiple employment barriers.

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These programs can be further expanded through flexible government policy, program delivery and accessible funding opportunities.



# IMPACTS

- ▶ Increased networking
- ▶ Business experience
- ▶ Employment
- ▶ COVID-19



# FURTHER RESEARCH AND COLLABORATIONS

## Future Research Questions:



- ❖ What are the specific employment barriers faced by individuals living in rural and remote communities?
- ❖ How are they currently being addressed?
- ❖ How can employment supports be improved through social enterprise?
- ❖ How can social enterprise act as a sustainable and scalable driver throughout Newfoundland and Labrador?

# UNINTENDED LEARNINGS AND OUTCOMES

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**The value of technology**

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**Changing Times Calls for Changing Measures**

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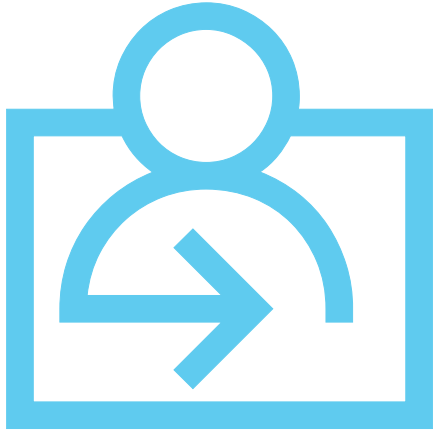
**Financial benefits**

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**The Pandemic**

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**The Building of Trust**



***Social Enterprise*** has been identified as an innovative opportunity to address workforce challenges and economic sustainability in rural and remote communities.





The world of work is changing. Digitalization, globalization, and population aging are having a profound impact on the type and quality of jobs that are available and the skills required to perform them. Both the Long Range Market and Grow Remote were timely enterprise adventures, having a focus on various forms of social media it invited a platform into the world of change, especially as it pertains to working remotely. Remote work is seen by project stakeholders as one potential solution for revitalizing rural areas and increasing job opportunities.

Social enterprise activity created the potential for partnership building by engaging in e-commerce, shared services, and external organization support. These are drivers of rural sustainability.



The *Health Accord* concluded that the province can “significantly improve the health of the people of our province and achieve its vision of improved health and health outcomes”. To be successful we must accept and intervene in social determinants of health, and by designing a higher quality health system that rebalances community, hospital, and long-term care services.

Social enterprises can **reduce inequalities in health** (through social, economic and/or environmental action on social determinants of health) in a variety of contexts.



## CRAIG'S STORY

Craig is a 28 year old young man and new father who faced difficult life circumstances and had been out of the workforce for many years. He had little work experience, no post secondary training and was receiving income support. Craig was also hard of hearing and communicated through lip reading and sign language, which often left him feeling isolated and unmotivated to look for work due to past negative experiences. He joined the nine-week Transitions to Work Program hoping for some help in finding a job to improve life for himself and his family.

## Craig's Story (continued)...

When Craig joined the program he was greeted with a hot meal prepared by two experienced and caring co-facilitators, a retired teacher and a retired social worker, and a small group of six other participants who were also facing multiple barriers to employment. During the nine weeks, he participated in interactive workshops and discussions designed to build self-confidence, develop life skills, and improve communication and job skills; one-on-one supportive interviews and personal action planning; community engagement and building of social support networks; as well as a two-week coached job search. Through this program, Craig was connected with “Empower” a provincial organization which supports individuals with disabilities in finding and maintaining employment through subsidized work placements. He is currently working full-time in an entry level position he thoroughly enjoys and is planning to attend post-secondary training in the near future.

## Impact of Craig's Story ...

Craig's story speaks to the importance of an inclusive environment to engage and support participants, particularly vulnerable and marginalized individuals who often face multiple barriers such as poverty, childhood trauma, mental health and addictions issues, and lack of social support. It is essential to provide a warm, friendly, non-judgemental environment; ensure basic needs such as food and shelter are addressed daily; build trusting relationships with participants; provide inclusive and flexible community-based programs based on identified needs; build social support networks through community engagement; and collaborate with partners to provide a coordinated approach to service delivery.

*“What a difference the past nine weeks has made in my life. I feel like I am part of the community, like I belong. I have hope.”*





The social enterprise models in this pilot and Craig's story tells us that by working to establish policies and programs that positively influence social and economic conditions and provide wrap-around supports and services, we can improve the lives of many people and provide pathways to employment and self-efficacy in ways that can be sustained over time. For rural and remote communities in particular, social enterprise fills a market need that otherwise would not occur.

# WORKFORCE INNOVATION THROUGH SOCIAL ENTERPRISE



SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

