

WORK FOR THE COMMON GOOD



2014

An Introduction to Social Enterprise for
Christian Organizations in Canada



This guide is designed to support faith-based organizations as they consider how social enterprise could impact their community development engagement in Canada.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This introduction to social enterprise for faith-based organizations has been rooted in the development and experience of *JustWork Economic Initiative (JustWork)*. *JustWork* emerged in 2004 from the life and ministry of *Grandview Calvary Baptist Church (Grandview Calvary)* in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Relationships with marginalized people in the church neighbourhood inspired a small group to consider how to offer hope and practical assistance to people who were struggling to find work. Since 2006, *JustWork* has focused on social enterprise as a model of community development. The term social enterprise describes entities that use a business model to achieve blended social and financial returns. *JustWork* has used social enterprises to achieve its mandate to offer dignified, meaningful work opportunities to people facing barriers to work. *JustWork* continues to work alongside *Grandview Calvary* as part of a holistic approach to community care, and currently employs 28 people through three social enterprises: *JustPotters*, *JustCatering* and *JustRenos*.

There is a four-fold purpose to this document:

- To introduce social enterprise to a new audience;
- To explain how social enterprise complements community development initiatives;
- To outline the connections between social enterprise and the Christian faith; and
- To provide an organizational assessment strategy for interested groups, as well as examples from *JustWork's* own history and development.

The first chapter provides a broad overview of social enterprise, as well as an introduction to the history of the social enterprise movement in Canada. We hope that this chapter helps readers differentiate between social enterprise and traditional businesses and charities.

The second chapter summarizes community development and explains how the values and goals of social enterprise complement community development efforts. The aim of this chapter is to emphasize the importance of relationship-based knowledge and strong community partnerships to the success of social enterprise as a form of community development.

The third chapter describes how *JustWork's* development of social enterprise was influenced by the biblical narrative's emphasis on the goodness of creation, stewardship, and life-giving relationship. Our goal is to show how the Christian themes of vocation and justice can work together to strengthen social enterprise.

The fourth chapter outlines an organizational assessment strategy and provides interested groups with a detailed overview of *JustWork's* own experience in social enterprise development.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to Social Enterprise

Overview of the Chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a broad overview of social enterprise, as well as an introduction to the history of the social enterprise movement in Canada.

The content that will be covered includes:

- social enterprise definitions
- common characteristics of social enterprises
- other forms of socially-responsible business
- benefits of social enterprises
- the history of social enterprise
- status of social enterprise in Canada
- the future for social enterprises
- list of key resources for social enterprises

“Social entrepreneurs are not content just to give a fish or teach how to fish. They will not rest until they have revolutionized the fishing industry.”

---Bill Drayton, Founder, Ashoka

We hope that this basic introduction will offer readers a framework for considering the possibilities and challenges of launching a new social enterprise within the Canadian context.

What is a social enterprise?

In this section we will look at social enterprise definitions, features and forms, and situate social enterprise within the context of other socially responsible businesses.

Definitions

The social enterprise movement includes a wide variety of organizations that use a traditional business to achieve social justice goals. As demonstrated in these sample definitions, descriptions of social enterprise vary in emphasis and in detail:

“Social enterprises are businesses whose primary purpose is the common good. They use the methods and disciplines of business and the power of the marketplace to advance their social, environmental and human justice agendas.”

--Social Enterprise Alliance, USA¹

“Social enterprises are businesses owned by non-profit organizations, that are directly involved in the production and/or selling of goods and services for the blended purpose of generating income and achieving social, cultural, and/or environmental aims. Social enterprises are one more tool for non-profits to use to meet their mission to contribute to healthy communities.”

--Social Enterprise Council of Canada²

“Social enterprises are social mission driven organizations which apply market-based strategies to achieve a social purpose. The movement includes both non-profits that use business models to pursue their mission and for-profits whose primary purposes are social. Their aim is to accomplish targets that are social and/or environmental as well as financial: often referred to as the triple bottom line.”

-- Canadian Social Enterprise Foundation³

¹ “What’s A Social Enterprise?” www.se-alliance.org/why

² “What Is A Social Enterprise?” www.socialenterprise.ca/en/learn

³ “What Is A Social Entrepreneur?” www.csef.ca/what_is_a_social_entrepreneur.php

What all of these definitions have in common is an understanding that social enterprise is a form of community development that combines:

- the social justice emphases typical of a traditional charity; with
- the sale of goods and/or services typical of a traditional business

We define social enterprise as an entity that uses a business model to achieve a return on investment that blends social and financial returns.

Common Characteristics of Social Enterprises

Parent Non-Profit

One of the most common similarities amongst social enterprises in Canada is the presence of a parent non-profit. For our purposes we define a *parent non-profit* as a non-profit organization that is actively involved in the planning, creation and operation of a social enterprise that shares a similar social mandate. Some of the things parent non-profits can provide include: start-up finances, initial staffing resources, business plan development support, and stakeholder connections. Although the support of a parent non-profit often contributes to long-term enterprise success, it is not a requirement. Many social enterprises operate without a parent non-profit and are quite successful.

Driving Factors

Another thing that unites most social enterprises are the two most common driving factors for social enterprise creation: funding challenges and mission opportunities.

- *Funding Challenges* - Over the past decade the Canadian government decreased the amount of funding available to non-profits while outsourcing many government programs to the non-profit sector. In other words, as the non-profit sector became responsible for a growing number of social programs, the financial support usually available to fund these projects dried up. This forced many non-profits to rethink their traditional donor-dependent funding model. Instead of focusing on strategies for competing with other non-profits for donor support, non-profits started talking about how to create their own revenue-generating entities by selling goods or services in the marketplace.
- *Mission Opportunities* - The other most common driving force for social enterprise creation is the identification of an unmet social need that could be addressed through the operation of a socially-responsible business.

JustWork developed social enterprises to provide jobs for people facing barriers to work such as mental or physical disabilities.

Blended Return on Investment

As a hybrid between the typical charity and the typical business, social enterprises seek a return on investment that blends the goals of both.

Overview of Organizational Goals

For-Profit Business:

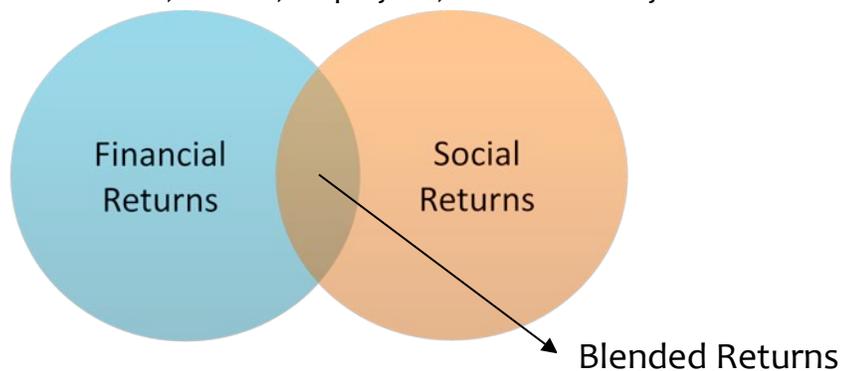
- Goal = financial return on investment (i.e. profit)
- Method = increasing the margin between production cost and revenues
- Beneficiaries = investors

Non-Profit Charity:

- Goal = social or environmental impact
- Method = increasing the level of donor support for non-profit mandate
- Beneficiaries = donors

Social Enterprise:

- Goal = blended social and financial return on investment
- Method = using donor support to supplement business operations that achieve a social mandate
- Beneficiaries = clients, donors, employees, and community



Types of Social Enterprise

Enterprising Non-Profits (ENP), a collaborative organization that supports the development of social enterprise in Canada, says most social enterprises fall into three categories:

- **Needs-based enterprises:** these enterprises are developed primarily in response to specific needs in their local marketplace. One example of this kind of enterprise is *The Banqueting Table*, a non-profit catering company that helps single mothers re-enter the workforce.

- **Mission-based enterprises:** these enterprises are developed as a means of fulfilling the mission of the parent organization. One illustration of this type of enterprise is the Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) program of A Rocha Canada. The CSA furthers A Rocha’s mission of environmental stewardship by connecting consumers with farmers through a weekly harvest box.⁴
- **Revenue-generating enterprises:** these enterprises are developed to address the funding challenges of a parent non-profit. These enterprises usually sell goods and/or services to raise money for the activities of the parent non-profit. One well-known Canadian example is the Salvation Army Thrift Store. Their goal is to “generate funds to help The Salvation Army achieve its mission, and to influence positively the communities in which we operate.”⁵

The Social Enterprise Continuum

As highlighted in our definition, social enterprises use traditional business models to achieve the social goals found in your typical non-profit organization. If you imagine a continuum with businesses on one end and non-profits on the other, social enterprise occupies the middle space, as shown below.



The typical business interest is profit and the typical non-profit interest is social change. In the past decade, however, many businesses have started to engage with social causes in their community in response to consumer interest in corporate social responsibility. At the same time, many non-profit organizations have started to explore market-based solutions to needs in their community or funding challenges. These shifts created an environment ready for social enterprises.

New Developments in BC

Until 2013, social enterprises had only two choices for their legal structure: corporation or non-profit. Since most social enterprises operated under the oversight of a parent charity, the most common structure was that of a non-profit.

In July 2013, however, amendments to British Columbia’s *Business Corporations Act* came into force, creating a third option for legal organization: the Community Contribution Company (C3). Using the C3 structure, a social enterprise is able to take investment from philanthropists expecting a financial return (one of the benefits of a traditional business) as long as it operates to benefit the wider community as defined in the Act.

Although more time is needed to conduct a risk benefit analysis of this new model, it is an exciting new development for those interesting in pursuing the social enterprise model.

⁴ For more information about A Rocha’s CSA program go to <http://www.arocha.ca/bc-centre/csa-welcome/>

⁵ The Salvation Army, “Our Vision, Mission and History,” <http://www.thriftstore.ca/british-columbia/our-mission-vision-and-history>

In addition to social enterprise, some trends and entities that have emerged include:

- **Socially-conscious purchasing** - This refers to consumer willingness to pay more for goods and/or services that foster social value. Industry Canada highlights four (4) different focuses of socially-conscious purchasing⁶:
 - *Ethical and fair-trade purchasing* includes purchasing from suppliers who agree to meet basic expectations and/or third party “fair-trade” certification around areas such as minimum wage and working conditions
 - *Social enterprise purchasing* occurs when people support social enterprises by purchasing goods and/or services from them
 - *Aboriginal purchasing* supports Aboriginal-owned businesses or businesses that preferentially hire Aboriginal employees
 - *Local purchasing* supports businesses that sell products that were crafted or produced locally allowing consumers to support neighbourhood artisans and producers.
- **Corporate social responsibility (CSR)** - This reflects business willingness to take the social cost of profit maximization into consideration when structuring their business operations. One way to think about this trend is to picture a business making an intentional shift from the typical shareholder model (with an exclusive focus on increasing shareholder value), to a stakeholder model (with a broad focus on the interests of all stakeholders – customers, employees, the local community, and even the environment).
- **Separate revenue-generating entity**: These entities are formed by non-profits to supplement their budget. As separate businesses these entities run completely distinct operations from the parent non-profit. One good example is the *Society for the Prevention of the Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)* thrift store. These entities are perfect examples of the revenue-generating enterprises mentioned on the previous page.
- **Earned revenue project within non-profit** : These entities are not set up as separate businesses but rather are revenue generating activities operated by the non-profit itself. These projects can include annual conferences, dinners and even gift shops.

⁶ Corporate Social Responsibility: Ethical and Social Purchasing,” www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/csr-rse.nsf/eng/rs00584.html

Why Start a Social Enterprise?

Non-profits that develop and/or operate social enterprises receive a number of additional, often unexpected, benefits beyond revenue development and mission opportunities, including:

- **Increased public profile**

- enterprise activities lead to new connections in the community and the potential for increased media attention through changed public profile
- relationships with customers, suppliers and enterprise peers enhance the non-profit reputation and spread the word about the community benefits of the social enterprise
- economic growth attracts the attention of a new audience, such as local businesses and governments



Established in 1987, one of the oldest social enterprises in Canada is *A-Way Express Courier*, which is a same-day express courier that employs people with a history of mental illness in Toronto. *A-Way's* success has been noted by The Canadian Human Rights Commission, the Canadian Mental Health Association (Ontario) and many others, creating growing interest in the potential of social

- **Increased organizational capacity**

- enterprise development requires ongoing organizational development and utilizes new skills from existing staff and volunteers
- programs created to facilitate social enterprise success benefit existing programs through increased efficiency or efficacy

- **Increased donor base and donor retention ability**

- donor confidence increases as they observe increased public profile and organizational impact
- increased visibility naturally lends itself to the potential of new donors, specifically if donors have witnessed or experienced the positive impact the social enterprise is creating firsthand

Larger community benefits of social enterprises

Social enterprises are quickly becoming known for their contributions to the local community in addition to all of the benefits that they bring their parent non-profit. Consider the benefits highlighted in the *Canadian Social Enterprise Guide*⁷:

- **Addressing Environmental Issues:** Recycling, education, ecotourism, and car-sharing have addressed critical environmental issues
- **Stimulating Economic Revitalization:** Social enterprise is a key element of economic diversity and Community development, particularly in inner-city and rural communities

⁷ To download a free copy of the *Guide*, go to www.socialenterprise.ca

- **Reducing Poverty:** Social enterprises help break the cycle of poverty by providing training, skills, resources and opportunities for people to earn a living wage, by building affordable housing, and by operating community-based support systems for low-income people
- **Providing Accessible Health Care:** For rural residents, immigrants, low-income families, seniors, and others, affordable and accessible health care support has been a valued benefit of social enterprise
- **Integrating Immigrants:** Social enterprise can help integrate new Canadians into the workforce by providing them with flexible employment opportunities in their local community
- **Providing services and products to an underserved community:** Social enterprises are often the most effective and efficient service providers in many communities
- **Developing social and cultural capital:** Social enterprises also increase the social and cultural capital of their community, strengthening relationships between diverse groups of people



The History of the Social Economy

The social enterprise movement emerged from the growing social economy. The social economy is a term used to describe an umbrella of entities committed to socially responsible business. The social economy developed to address social needs and concerns that were unmet by the private and public (governmental) sectors.

The *Canadian Community Economic Development Network* says that today the social economy includes the following entities:

- the social assets (housing, childcare centres) of community organizations;
- social enterprises including co-operatives and revenue-generating programs of non profit groups;
- credit unions and social financing organizations like community loan funds;
- training and skills development enterprises; and
- sectoral and regional organizations (e.g. renewable energy associations).

The history of the social economy goes back hundreds of years, and includes the development of the following key players:

- **Community Centres** – These organizations are one of the oldest members of the social economy. The *Young Men’s Christian Association*, for example, was founded in 1844 in

London, England by George Williams. Seven years later YMCAs had been established in 9 other countries, including Canada, the United States, and Australia.⁸

- **Thrift stores** - These revenue-generating enterprises have existed since the late 1800s. During World War II the Red Cross opened hundreds of thrift stores across Great Britain to raise money for their war efforts. The first North American thrift store was launched in Boston in 1895 by Rev. Edgar J. Helms, founder of Goodwill Industries.⁹
- **Co-operatives** – The first co-operative organizations emerged in the 19th century, primarily in Britain and France. In 1844 the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers set out their “Rochdale Principles” which became the foundation for the present-day International Co-operative Alliance’s Statement on the Co-operative Identity. One of the most successful co-operative organizations is the Mondragon Corporation in Spain.¹⁰
- **Micro-finance organizations** – These entities are one of the most recent developments in the social economy. Micro-finance organizations emerged primarily in the developed world to provide credit and financial services to small businesses and individuals who lacked access to banking services. One prominent form of micro-finance is the micro-credit institution, which is a community development model that provides bank loans and other services to groups of individual entrepreneurs. One of the most successful micro-credit institutions in the world is the *Grameen Bank*, launched in 1976 in Bangladesh by Muhammad Yunus.
- **Social enterprise** - The earliest use of the term ‘social enterprise’ can be traced to 1978 when Freer Spreckley, an academic at Beechwood College in Leeds, used the term to describe worker co-operatives that used a social accounting and audit system.¹¹ In 1980, the *ASHOKA Organization* was founded by Bill Drayton in order to “provide start-up financing, professional support services and connections to a global network across the business and social sectors, and a platform for people dedicated to changing the world.”¹² Today *ASHOKA* is the largest official network of social entrepreneurs in the world with 3,000 entrepreneurs in over 70 countries.



⁸ Young Men’s Christian Association, “Who We Are: History,” <http://www.ymca.int/who-we-are/history/>

⁹ The Institute for Social Entrepreneurs, “Evolution of the social enterprise industry: A chronology of Key Events,” (August 1, 2008: slide 6), www.se-alliance.org/

¹⁰ “Co-Operative Experience: History,” www.mondragon-corporation.com/eng/co-operative-experience/history/

¹¹ Louise Carey, February 14, 2014, “All You Need to Know About Social Enterprises,” <http://socialbondinvestor.com/>

¹² *ASHOKA*, “About Us,” <https://www.ashoka.org/about>

The Current Context of Social Enterprise in Canada

While lagging behind developments in Britain and the United States, social enterprises are fast becoming an intrinsic part of the economic landscape of Canada. Around one-third of Canada's social enterprises were started in just the last five years, according to the *Social Innovation Generation*.¹³ While this statistic reveals the rapid recent development of the social enterprise sector in Canada, the same data set showed that one-fifth of social enterprises have actually been around for more than 20 years. What this means is that it is an exciting time for social enterprise development in Canada. Older, more developed enterprises are perfectly positioned to provide newly established entities with important advice about how to succeed in these dynamic and changing times.

One-third of Canada's social enterprises were started in just the last five years.

- A 2012 survey of 363 of the 1,040 confirmed social enterprises in Ontario found that the surveyed enterprises generated over \$200 million in revenue that year, employed over 5,000 people, trained over 65,000, and provided services to almost 2.7million people.¹⁴
- A 2012 survey of 104 of the 357 confirmed social enterprises in British Columbia found that the surveyed enterprises collectively generated over \$60 million in revenue, provided jobs to over 3,000 people, and trained over 6,000.¹⁵
- A 2002 report by the Canada Revenue Agency asked charitable organizations to report revenue from government sources, fundraising and market-driven activities. Market-driven activities generated gross revenues of \$27.9 billion, or just over 2.8% of Canada's total gross domestic product.¹⁶

Resources for Social Enterprise

Support for social enterprise has expanded beyond the traditional sources to include businesses with philanthropic leanings, competitions with in-kind and monetary awards, and even specific start-up grants offered by regional funders. Most of these kinds of opportunities are locally-based, so it is important to build a strong network to learn of opportunities in your community. Some of the important resources for social enterprise include:

¹³ Avery, Simon. "Canada Playing Catch Up In Social Enterprise." The Globe and Mail October 19, 2010 www.theglobeandmail.com/

¹⁴ Joanna Flatt, Kate Daly, Peter R. Elson, Peter V. Hall, Matthew Thompson and Paul Chamberlain, "Inspiring Innovation: The Size, Scope and SocioEconomic Impact of NonProfit Social Enterprise in Ontario," (2013: page 55) The Canadian Community Economic Development Network, Simon Fraser University, and the Institute for Nonprofit Studies, Mount Royal University for the Social Enterprise Survey Sector, www.sess.ca

¹⁵ Peter R. Elson and Peter V. Hall, "Headline results from: The 2012 Survey of Social Enterprises in British Columbia," (2012) Mount Royal University and Simon Fraser University for the Social Enterprise Survey Sector, www.sess.ca

¹⁶ Enterprising Non-Profits, "The Canadian Social Enterprise Guide (2nd Ed.)." 2010, page 8

- **Federal government** - The federal government has also voiced strong support for the social enterprise model and recently developed a Social Partnerships Strategy that funds various initiatives.¹⁷
- **Provincial government** – In 2011, the British Columbia Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation created the BC Social Innovation Council to provide recommendations on how the Province could “maximize social innovation....with an emphasis on social finance and social enterprise.”¹⁸ The Council’s Action Plan released in March of 2012 included four key recommendations in order to support social enterprise, including: a tax credit for those who invest in the development of social enterprise, and the expansion of government-sponsored business development programs for small and medium enterprises.¹⁹
- **Municipal government** – Mayors and council members have taken note of the potential for social enterprise to create jobs and tackle some of the most difficult social and environmental issues in their cities. In 2013, Vancouver’s Mayor Gregor Robertson announced that the City would be contributing \$380,000 in grant funding to support the development of social enterprise.²⁰ Interested enterprises can apply for funding through the Social Enterprise Portfolio Program administered by the VanCity Community Foundation.
- **Enterprising Non-Profits (ENP)** – ENP is one of the most comprehensive national support organizations for social enterprise. ENP started as a British Columbia-based project in 1997 but now serves communities across Canada. As stated on their website, “ENP is a unique collaborative program that promotes and supports social enterprise development and growth as a means to build strong non-profit organizations and healthier communities.” The *ENP Canadian Social Enterprise Guide* is an excellent resource for project managers,

Funding Partnerships:

St. John’s Bakery is a social enterprise that specializes in handmade organic sourdough breads made in the traditional French method. St. John’s is funded in part by the Toronto Enterprise Fund, a funding partnership between the United Way and three levels of government.

JustWork has received funding from a range of prominent organizations including the VanCity Community Foundation, World Vision Canada, the Vancouver Foundation and the Co-Operators Insurance Group.

¹⁷ More information can be found on the Canada Business Network website at <http://canadabusiness.ca/eng/page/4337/>

¹⁸ Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation, “Social Innovation,” www.sdsi.gov.bc.ca/social-innovation/index.htm

¹⁹ British Columbia Social Innovation Council, “Action Plan Recommendations to Maximize Social Innovation in British Columbia,” (March 2012), www.innovatebc.ca/documents/Social_InnovationBC_C.pdf

²⁰ City of Vancouver, “City of Vancouver Affirms Its Role As Leader In Social Enterprise,” (May 16, 2013), <http://vancouver.ca/news-calendar/city-of-vancouver-affirms-its-role-as-a-leader-in-social-enterprise.aspx>

executive directors, board members and staff wanting a detailed outline of the social enterprise planning process.

- **The Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CED)** – The CED is a national association of several hundred organizations and individuals committed to strengthening communities by creating economic opportunities that enhance social and environmental conditions.

Further Resources

- **Enterprising Non-Profits** - www.socialenterprisecanada.ca
 - Canadian Social Enterprise Guide
www.socialenterprisecanada.ca/en/learn/nav/canadiansocialenterpriseguide.html
 - Social Enterprise Council of Canada
www.socialenterprisecanada.ca/en/gettoknowus/nav/socialenterprisecouncil.html
- **Canadian Community Economic Development Network** – <http://ccednet-rcdec.ca/en>
- **Canadian Social Enterprise Foundation** - www.csef.ca/
- **Canadian Social Enterprise Marketplace** – www.secouncil.ca/en/marketplace
- **ASHOKA Changemakers** – www.changemakers.com
- **Social Enterprise Sector Survey** - <http://www.sess.ca/english/>
- **BC Centre for Social Enterprise** - <http://www.centreforsocialenterprise.com/what.html>
- **BC Partners for Social Impact** - <http://socialimpactpartners.ca/>
- **Centre for Social Innovation** – <http://socialinnovation.ca>
- **The Province of Ontario’s Social Enterprise Strategy** – www.ontario.ca/business-and-economy/impact-social-enterprise-agenda-ontario
- **MaRS White Paper on Social Enterprise Structures** --http://www.marsdd.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/MaRSReport-Social-Enterprise_2012.pdf

Social Enterprises List

- **The Banqueting Table** – thebanquetingtable.ca
- **The Cleaning Solution** – cleaningsolution.ca
- **The Salvation Army** – salvationarmy.ca
- **The Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals** – spca.ca
- **A-Way Express Courier** – awaycourier.ca

Chapter 1 Reflection Questions

We recommend gathering key stakeholders from your organization to discuss the following questions:

1. What social enterprises are already active in our community? How familiar are we with them?
2. How have we experienced the changing landscape for businesses and non-profits (described on p.8) in our organization?
3. Based on what we have learned about social enterprise in this chapter, how might social enterprise support the mission of our organization?
4. Which type of social enterprise from page 7-8 would be the most appropriate in our context?
 - Are we interested in social enterprise to address funding deficits?
 - Could our organization achieve mission-based goals through social enterprise?
 - Does our community need social enterprise to address particular needs or concerns?
5. How could the “Further Resources” list from p. 16 help us address outstanding questions we have about social enterprise?

Chapter 2: Social Enterprise & Community development

Overview of the Chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a broad overview of community development and to show how social enterprise fits within the community development framework.

Here is a summary of the content that will be covered:

- definition of community development and how it is unique from other top-down methods of community transformation
- analysis of how the approach, processes and goals of community development and social enterprise overlap with each other

We hope that this chapter will help you identify where and how social enterprise could complement other community-based initiatives in your neighbourhood.

What is Community Development?

In this section we will cover the following main points: definitions of community development, forms of community development projects and the benefits of these projects.

Defining the Term

Community development is an umbrella term for the fastest growing model of social investment by non-profit organizations in the world. The term encompasses development projects that intentionally include beneficiaries in project approach, design and implementation. This model recognizes that traditional, top-down poverty reduction strategies have not worked as effectively in the long-run as projects that are community-based and demand-driven. Community development is often associated with other terms like community capacity building, community empowerment or community-driven development. Most often it describes development that seeks to transform communities and reduce poverty through mutually beneficial relationships.

*We define community development as
journeying in community to express aspirations, discover assets,
name limitations and generate solutions for peace and well-being
in homes, communities and in the neighbourhood.*

Forms of Community development

Since community development projects are born out of relationships with local beneficiaries there is no one-size fits all type of community development project. Relationships with the people who live in the target region, town or neighbourhood dictate everything about community development projects from initial brainstorming to actual project implementation. There is a wide

spectrum of projects that fit within this model, including initiatives in the international development sector, housing and social service agencies, health care and education providers. That means that over the last few decades community development projects have taken many different forms from large-scale, 15-year World Bank initiatives in Ethiopia that affect up to 15 million pastoral farmers to community gardens that affect dozens of low income families.

Benefits of Community Development

Compared with traditional, top-down approaches, community development projects have been more effective at reducing poverty and transforming communities. Some of the benefits of the community development approach include:

- Specific Information** - One of the main reasons that community development projects are so effective at fighting the root causes of poverty is the high level of community-specific information gained through relationships with project beneficiaries. This information helps inform the entire process and ensures that projects are responsive to actual needs on the ground. What community development recognizes is that the people living in a community are the ones best positioned to articulate the root causes of poverty in their neighbourhood and to assess the potential efficacy of proposed development projects.
- Community development recognizes is that the people living in a community are the ones best positioned to articulate the root causes of poverty in their neighbourhood.*
- Sustainability** - The emphasis on social change through relationship means that community development projects work towards project sustainability in every aspect of their evolution. One of the main reasons for this focus on sustainability is that social change through relationship requires a longer time horizon than traditional approaches. Projects that have the momentum and resilience to sustain social change in the long run call for beneficiary empowerment and strong stakeholder partnerships. What community development projects have found is that the greater the degree of empowerment and partnership, the stronger the potential for lasting social transformation.

How Does Social Enterprise Fit Within Community Development?

It is the purpose of this Chapter to show that social enterprises share similar core values, processes and goals with community development projects. As the Saskatoon District Health Community Development Team said in their 1999 report:

“(C)ommunity development is a means to achieve health by living out certain values, employing certain processes, and *engaging in certain kinds of work* – embodying the kinds of relationships that contribute to health.”

As described, social enterprises often seek to provide the kinds of work that strengthen

communities through relationship. Therefore, we posit that social enterprises complement pre-existing community-based projects and support the transformation of entire neighbourhoods.

Shared Core Development Values

The most foundational shared value between social enterprises and community development projects is the prioritization of social change over other common development or business indicators. For example, *JustWork's* commitment to provide meaningful employment to those who face barriers to work means that the profitability of an enterprise is less important than making sure that employees have the community of support required for them to be successful at work. More specifically, this might mean that certain portions of the pottery-making process at *JustPotters* require more time and supervision than they might in a different pottery studio. While longer production time frames and increased staff requirements do not make business sense from a traditional perspective, they do make sense in the context of our unique mandate as a social enterprise. At *JustWork*, we do business differently in order to meet our community-based social justice goals.

At JustWork we do business differently in order to meet our community-based social justice goals.

Being intentional about social change influences many facets of social enterprise and community development projects. In particular, it means that strategic development begins and ends in relationships with beneficiaries and other community stakeholders. This bottom-up grassroots approach recognizes that fighting the root causes of poverty will look different in every neighbourhood because each place has a unique set of resources, challenges and opportunities. This approach requires a large investment of time up front, gathering information from local stakeholders and assessing which projects might respond effectively to local situations.

This allows for long-term sustainability and creates information sharing networks that can help the project remain responsive to local conditions as the community develops over time. This commitment to project sustainability is one of the hallmarks of both community development projects and social enterprise.

Shared Common Development Processes

As mentioned above, one of the shared values of social enterprise and community development projects is relationship-based strategic development. This means that enterprise and project growth is an organic, inclusive and relationship-based process.

Since beneficiaries and stakeholders are usually best positioned to drive the development process, maintaining community partnerships throughout the life of the project is key. The World Bank states that “.....people can effectively organize to identify community priorities and address local problems by working in partnership with local governments and other supportive institutions.”²¹ In *JustWork's* experience, building relationships with local partners has been crucial to the continued success of our social enterprises.

²¹ The World Bank, Community Driven Development – Overview, www.worldbank.org/en/topic/communitydrivendevelopment/overview

The development of partnerships with key neighbourhood stakeholders also requires community-level accountability. While enterprises and community development projects may have internal objectives, they also adopt external benchmarks involving key stakeholders and beneficiaries. For example, while *JustWork* sets out specific quarterly goals related to enterprise development, we also seek out the perspective and guidance of other non-profits in our community and respond appropriately to their concerns. This mutuality ensures that we remain accountable to our community.

At JustWork an ongoing relationship with our local bank, Vancity Credit Union, has given us the opportunity to apply for specific grants, receive strategic planning support, hold tours and workshops for bank employees and participate more fully in community events.

Shared Development Goals

The above description of the values and processes commonly adopted by both social enterprises and community development projects makes it clear that they share some common goals. First, even where development projects are not located within the marketplace in the same way as social enterprises often are, community development projects have a similar goal of wealth redistribution for community benefit.

Second, both enterprises and projects desire to enhance the capacity of beneficiaries and community stakeholders. As discussed above, empowerment is central to community development. The World Health Organization argues that an empowered community is one in which individuals and organizations apply their skills and resources in a collective effort to address health priorities and meet their respective needs.²² Said another way, utilizing the skills and resources of a local neighbourhood empowers the individuals within it. Understood from this perspective, learning about the unique skills of project beneficiaries and incorporating them into project design not only leads to more effective poverty reduction strategies but also enables individuals to transform their own lives.

Finally, both social enterprises and community development projects use mutually beneficial relationships to strengthen communities by breaking down the barriers between the haves and the have-nots. The British National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence states that, “community development (...) involves changing the power structures to remove the barriers that prevent people from participating in issues that affect their lives.”²³ *JustWork* endeavours to do this by bringing donors, employees, staff, granting organizations, customers and volunteers into relationship with each other and changing the ways in which these individuals relate to each other. Our desire is that each person recognizes opportunities to both give and receive support from others in our community.

²² University of East London, “Community development Approaches to Health Promotion,” www.uel.ac.uk

²³ National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, “Community Engagement to Improve Health,” (2008: page 38), www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/pdf/PHoogGuidance.pdf

Conclusion:

This Chapter has outlined how social enterprise fits within and complements community development approach, strategy and goals. We hope that it has helped you begin to think about where social enterprise might work in your own neighbourhood as you seek to transform your community and fight poverty through mutually beneficial relationships.

Chapter 2 Reflection Questions

1. What do you appreciate most about the definition of community development on p. 18? What would you change?
2. What community-based limitations might social enterprise help you address? What aspirations might social enterprise help you realize?
3. How could social benefit our organization's existing community development initiatives? What challenges might social enterprise create for our organization?
4. Consider your existing relationships with other community stakeholders. How might the development of social enterprise complement the work that they are doing?

Chapter 3: Social Enterprise and Christian Theology

Overview of the Chapter

The preceding chapters placed social enterprise within a Canadian context and within a community development context. The purpose of this chapter is to ground social enterprise in the world of Christian thought and practice. This chapter will begin by setting out our biblical foundations and then explore how these stories have shaped our understanding of vocation and justice. We will break it into two main sections:

The Over-Arching Biblical Narrative: The Bible can be understood as telling one large narrative describing the relationship between God, humans and the world.

- This narrative begins with the first twelve chapters of Genesis. These stories describe the creation of the world, highlight the stewardship role of humans and present a picture of the world as God intended it to be: full of goodness and shalom (peace).
- The first twelve chapters of Genesis also include the story of the Fall, which signals a break in these rhythms of goodness and shalom. The biblical narrative then quickly moves on to illustrate how this break fractures all relationships – between human beings and God, between human beings themselves, and between humans and the rest of creation.
- With this backdrop of God’s intent for creation and the unfortunate reality, the story then opens to all that follows: God’s work through Israel, Jesus, and the church to bring a blessing of hope and renewal to all of creation – work that continues throughout the narrative until the final pages of Revelations, the last book of the Bible.
- This narrative of Scripture has influenced Christian thought and culture through the centuries, and it continues to shape the way Christians understand the world today. For our purposes, we will focus on the concepts of vocation and justice and explore how these concepts have roots in this Christian narrative and how they have helped shape our life together at *JustWork*.

Implications for Social Enterprise:

The Christian understandings of vocation and justice have had a significant impact on *JustWork*’s development. Though vocation (the daily work of Christians) and the pursuit of justice (that things would be on earth as they are in heaven) are often studied by separate groups, we believe that integrating these concepts into our identity and mandate has strengthened our work in social enterprise. We believe that Christians are called to think about day-to-day work in terms of both vocation and justice because our Creator God cares about the world and everything in it.

We believe that integrating the biblical concepts of vocation and justice into our identity and practice has strengthened our work in social enterprise.

The Biblical Foundations of Our Work

As a non-profit organization with roots in Christian thought and culture, *JustWork* has been intentional about building our social enterprises on the foundation of the biblical narrative. The following sections will describe:

- The Creation Stories
- The Story of The Fall
- The Continuing Narrative of Israel, Jesus and the Church

The Creation Stories

The Bible begins with two different creation stories. Using motifs and structures from ancient near eastern mythology, these Genesis stories reshaped the way that Israel understood God, the World, and themselves. One of the most important ways that these stories transformed Israel's story was their emphasis on God's care for the world, their declaration that God designed the world as a good gift for us, and their insistence that our engagement with the World matters to God.

The First Creation Story – Genesis 1:1-2:3

There are actually two creation stories found in the first few chapters of Genesis. The first one poetically describes God's creation of the world in six days and God's day of Sabbath on the seventh. In this story, the repeated refrain "And God said..." marks the beginning of each day.

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness (Genesis 1: 3-4, NIV)

Unlike the unpredictable gods of the ancient near east, Israel's God speaks with creative authority and acts with loving purpose. God sees a need, promises to meet it, and does. Similarly, at seven times in the text, God affirms the new Creation by saying "...And it was good." These repeated affirmations told Israel that unlike the aloof gods of the ancient near east, their God loved *the world*. This meant that what happened to the World, mattered.

*Unlike the aloof gods of the ancient near east, Israel's God **loved** the world.*

The final instance of God's affirmation follows the creation of human beings. The text states that human beings were created in the image of God and then:

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground." (Genesis 1:28, NIV)

This part of the creation story tells us that we are blessed to engage creatively with the world. As Martin Luther wrote, "The maid who sweeps her kitchen is doing the will of God just as much as the monk who prays – not because she may sing a Christian hymn as she sweeps, but because God loves clean floors." The idea that our work is pleasing to God is foundational to our understanding of vocation.

The Second Creation Story – Genesis 2:4-25

The second creation story takes place in the Garden of Eden and focuses on the first human beings, Adam and Eve. The story tells us that God put Adam (and later Eve) in the Garden of Eden “to work it and to take care of it.”²⁴ One of the first jobs involved naming all the animals that God created. Verse 19 tells us that God created all of the animals, and brought them to Adam “to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name.” This verse shows us that part of what it means to be created in God’s image is to work with creative authority alongside God. The idea that human beings were called to partner with God to bring fullness to Creation was another way that this story differentiated Israel’s God from the gods of the ancient near east. This second creation story painted a picture of a world very different from the one that the Israelites were living in. This story shows a world at peace – humans at peace in their identity as God’s image bearers and the world’s care-takers, and humans at peace in their supportive relationships with each other.

The Creation Mandate

God’s directions to human beings in these two stories are sometimes referred to as *The Creation Mandate*. This Mandate forms the foundation of the concepts of stewardship and creation care that have emerged in Christian thought and practice in the past decade.

The Creation Mandate emphasizes the fact that God gave all human beings a very special responsibility – a vocation – to care for all of God’s creation, including the earth, the air, the water, the animals and everything that exists. In other words, it is our job as humans created in God’s image to work with God to care for Creation. Through this work we can live into our identity and become more fully human. Through creation care we can also find connection with God, enjoy community with co-workers, and enjoy the dignity that comes from living out our vocation. This mandate has also shaped the way that Christians have come to understand our work and vocation. One organization that has inspired *JustWork* by living out this mandate in the modern context is *A Rocha*.

A Rocha is an international Christian organization that engages in scientific research, environmental education and community-based conservation projects. For A Rocha, the act of restoring salmon habitat both fulfills God’s call to care for the earth and glorifies God by showing love for creation.

www.arocha.org

In our experience at *JustWork*, we have seen the good things that can come from work. Many of our employees – even those who are the most impoverished – sense that there is something intrinsically good about the work they have with us, even in the midst of their own challenges and brokenness. They build community with their co-workers. They work for a purpose outside of themselves. They sense dignity from seeing the work that their hands produce. In this way our story affirms the truth that can be found in these creation stories. The experiences of our employees solidify our understanding of the importance of vocation. God cares about our “9-to-5”

²⁴ Genesis 2:15, New International Version (NIV).

work because God designed us to be creatively engaged with the world God made. Understood this way, work provides us with a chance to live into our identity as children of our Creator God.

The Story of The Fall

The creation stories do not end with Genesis 2:25, however. Instead, they are quickly followed by the story of the serpent’s temptation of Adam and Eve, their subsequent disobedience of God, and the consequences that followed. The sequence of events is often called The Fall because Adam and Eve’s disobedience brought a curse on the original Creation Mandate.

Perversion Of Work

One major consequence of The Fall was a perversion of Adam and Eve’s ability “to work (Creation) and take care of it.” As a result of the fall, God said:

*Cursed is the ground because of you,
Through painful toil you will eat of it
All the days of your life...
By the sweat of your brow
You will eat your food
Until you return to the ground,
Since from it you were taken;
For dust you are
And to dust you will return.
(Genesis 3: 17-19, NIV)*

Most theologians understand this passage as a curse that affects everything about our human work. Instead of the peaceful and life-giving creative work imagined by the Creation Mandate, after the Fall work becomes “painful toil” accomplished by “the sweat of your brow.” No longer will work be an exercise in joyously living into our identity as children of God, but rather a reminder of our brokenness.

All of our employees at *JustWork* can personally attest to the difficulty and frustration of work through their own experience. For much of their lives they have struggled to find work, any work, that can offer them fulfillment or a steady pay cheque. For many of our employees, work has been a demeaning experience and a place of continued failure, not a place of dignity and joy. This experience of brokenness and injustice is a far cry from the meaningful and important work imagined by the creation stories highlighted earlier.

Born in the Niska territory, Priscillia is one of *JustWork*'s employees of aboriginal descent. As a single mom who faces a permanent disability, she has been employed by *JustCatering* since 2008. Priscillia is glad to have found a work environment where her service is valued as making a genuine contribution.

While the flexible work hours enable her to take care of other responsibilities, what she enjoys most on the job is her interactions with others. “The people I have met here,” she assures, “are unique and amazing.” Priscillia is also greatly appreciated by her team as they find her to be a wonderful co-worker. “Priscillia has a great sense of humour,” says Teresa (*JustCatering*'s Manager), “and she pays great attention to detail. Her skill level has improved

... ..

Perversion of Stewardship Responsibility

While this curse means that it will be more difficult to exercise our special stewardship responsibility, we are still called to an everyday vocation of creation care. Living in a fallen world, however, means that caring for Creation will be filled with difficulty and frustration. It is not hard to see how this has impacted the world we live in today. Human engagement with the world often negatively impacts the environment by altering ecosystems and disrupting the natural rhythms God designed to sustain life. This does not mean that we should disengage from the world and abstain from business that involves the natural environment, but it does mean that we must be mindful of the reality of the curse on our attempts to do so. At *JustWork*, we hired a Sustainability Coordinator to help us think holistically about the way that we do business through our social enterprises.

Perversion of Relationship with Each Other

Another major consequence of The Fall was a perversion of Adam and Eve's relationship with each other. As God said,

*I will make your pains in childbearing very severe;
with painful labour you will give birth to children.
Your desire will be for your husband,
And he will rule over you.*
(Genesis 3: 16, NIV)

Originally Adam and Eve were placed in the garden to care for it and to help each other live out the Creation Mandate. After the Fall, however, the intended partnership and equality of their relationship was broken by an ongoing power imbalance and the biological realities of childbirth. Just as the image presented in the creation stories above was one of peace between God, human beings, and the rest of creation, the story of The Fall²⁵ signalled the complete disintegration of peace. This led to all forms of injustice, and in our experience, includes the dissolution of relationship and the loss of supportive community.

For many of our employees at JustWork, barriers to work have also become barriers to community.

For many of our employees at *JustWork*, barriers to work have also become barriers to community. While our mandate is to provide dignified, meaningful employment to people who face barriers to work, we also recognize that we are providing them with a network of support including their colleagues, our staff, customers, donors and even our community partners. We believe that this network of support is one way to stand together in defiance of the curse and to help each other live into our identities as children of God.

Israel, Jesus, and the Church – Living as a Community with a Concern for the Poor

The brokenness of creation as described in Genesis 3 is intensified with three other key stories in the early chapters of Genesis: Cain killing his brother Able, the flood, and the Tower of Babel. By

²⁵ Other examples of the disintegration of peace include the stories of Cain killing Abel, Noah and the flood, and the Tower of Babel.

the end of these early stories, one is left with the picture of a world without hope. It is then that the movement shifts as God's intent to bring hope and blessing to the world is introduced in the person of Abraham.

Abraham's story begins importantly with a blessing from God found in Genesis 12:

*Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonours you I will curse, **and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.***

(Genesis 12:1-2, NIV)

This call of God on a person and, by extension, a group of people, for the purpose of bringing blessing to the greater world is one that continues throughout the rest of the Biblical story. The entire history of ancient Israel as recounted in the Biblical narrative, the life of Jesus, and the development of the church as the community of Jesus-followers all carry these same themes: In the midst of a world that so often does not reflect God's desire of shalom, God calls people to form an obedient community so that this community can be servants to the rest of creation – servants who will bear witness to a new creation marked by peace.

While much could be said about the type of behaviour that is to characterize this obedient community, we will simply focus on two aspects that have had particular significance for *JustWork*: the importance of daily life and the importance of economic justice.

The Sacrament of Our Daily Work

The Bible tells of instructions given by God to Israel to shape their community life. One important aspect of these instructions is the focus on day-to-day life. These directions included information about everything from when and how to wash their pots to how best to disburse loans. Everything has significance – not simply what might typically be defined as the “spiritual.”

Significantly, the role of these communities is not to withdraw from the world but to bear witness to the world regarding a way of peace through their day-to-day life together. This emphasis on the common continues in the ministry and teaching of Jesus and of the early church. Jesus was often teaching and modeling this way of life through day-to-day interactions such as at meals.²⁶ Likewise, the some of the earliest stories about the early church involves eating together – either doing it properly²⁷ or improperly.²⁸

We believe the emphasis on these passages demonstrate God's continuing interest in our everyday life. God is always interested in the mundane and God is working to form a community of people who will understand that their vocation is to care about the everyday, mundane affairs of life. This significance of everyday life provides a strong grounding for those who emphasize the

²⁶ Take some time and read through the stories about Jesus' life and see how much happens either while at a meal or telling stories about others who are eating.

²⁷ See the first few Chapters of the book of Acts.

²⁸ See the first letter to the Corinthians.

theology of vocation.

Economic Justice

Second, through these instructions to Israel and later through the life of Jesus and the early church, God demonstrated a clear concern for economic matters and how they impact the poor and marginalized. God singles out widows, orphans, and foreigners in particular as those who need special attention to ensure that they are cared for properly. To illustrate the importance of economic justice in the details of these instructions to Israel, consider God's words about the importance of Sabbath observance.

"... remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy... On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your ox, your donkey or any of your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns, so that your male and female servants may rest, as you do. Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the Lord your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. " (Deuteronomy 5:12-15)

Significantly, the instruction to cease from work was for **all** people. It cut across human divisions of age, gender, socio-economic status, and ethnicity as parents and children, men and women, masters and servants, locals and sojourners were all called to rest. One of the most interesting things about this commandment was the fact that servants also were to experience rest. This was in direct contrast to life in a society like Egypt where slavery was the norm. God clearly desired Israelite society to be radically different in the ways that they showed love for God and love for their neighbour, whether rich or poor, male or female, slave or free. The weekly Sabbath was not the only way economic justice was institutionalized in Israel. Other laws instituted debt cancellation and the release of slaves every seven years, and the return of ancestral property in the year of Jubilee (at the end of seven cycles of seven-year debt cancellation).

JUBILEE 2000

In the 1990's, a retired lecturer from the University of Keele linked this biblical idea of jubilee to a modern debt relief program and founded the *Jubilee 2000* campaign. *Jubilee 2000* became an international coalition of organizations committed to living out a modern day example of Jubilee by calling on their governments to cancel the debt of third-world countries.

The emphasis on how the marginalized are impacted in economic matters continues throughout the Bible. The prophets continually challenge Israel to return to a faithfulness that is characterized by economic fairness. Jesus spends much of his teaching time focused on money, issuing challenges to the wealthy and offering hope to the oppressed. Likewise, the earliest church is characterized in this way, "No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had... There were no needy persons among them."²⁹

²⁹ Acts 4:32, 34, NIV.

Finally, it is important to note that the Biblical story shows us that it is really hard to glorify God through our work and that loving the most vulnerable is not our natural tendency. The biblical narrative tells us that our economic system has a tendency to produce masters and servants; it has a tendency to force people into economic slavery to pay off debt; and it tends to magnify economic inequality by concentrating property in the hands of fewer and fewer people. God calls us to live in this broken world in a way that points towards something better.

Providing Work that Recognizes the Importance of Vocation and Justice

As outlined above, the stories in the Christian Scriptures form the foundation of our worldview. Two important theological concepts that have emerged from these stories for *JustWork* are vocation and justice. Not only do we aim to provide meaningful work for our employees, we also seek to honour their individual vocations as we work towards justice for all people in our community.

The main purpose of this section is to demonstrate how our day-to-day work has been influenced by these stories and to explain how the Christian faith can enliven the development of social enterprise.

Work and Vocation

The Christian understanding of work for much of history is summed up well by Lee Hardy in his book *The Fabric of This World: Inquiries into Calling, Career Choice, and the Design of Human Work*. According to Hardy, work has often been seen:

... as a disagreeable necessity, rooted in the temporary arrangements of this earthly life: we must work in order to eat; we must eat in order to sustain the body. But the body will soon pass away, returning to the dust from which it came. The soul, however, will pass into the next life and, if properly prepared, enjoy a state of perfect blessedness in the contemplation of God.³⁰

Beginning in the 1500's with Martin Luther, however, Christian theology sought a deeper understanding of the relationship between Christians, work and the kingdom of God. Drawing especially on the first two chapters of Genesis, what came out of this period was the idea that the Fall does not change our identity or God's intention for the goodness of work. Rather, it means that our experience of work will not be the experience God originally intended it to be.

With this understanding, Luther championed the idea of vocation for all believers and argued that God's main calling to love one's neighbour was still our calling. In this way, Luther challenged the assumption that a monastic life of full-time service was the best fulfillment of the Christian life and he encouraged every Christian to view their everyday ordinary work as their true vocation.

³⁰ Page 45.

Fast forward hundreds of years and one sees clearly this strong emphasis on work and vocation in the Christian community. *JustWork* has been significantly influenced by this perspective as we believe the day-to-day work involved in running our catering, pottery, and renovation businesses can be of service to this world. *Regent College (Regent)*, a Vancouver graduate school of Christian studies, has been particularly important in shaping *JustWork*'s understanding of work and vocation.

Regent has developed a *Marketplace Institute* that seeks to "... provide and embody fresh, reliable, and well-informed expressions of the gospel that reveal its truth, necessity, and relevance to all spheres of public life."³¹ One way they seek to do this is through their social enterprise incubator. This incubator offers "... courses, training materials, consultancy, and other resources to help entrepreneurs start and sustain profitable enterprises that serve the common good."³²

The Marketplace Institute's encouragement to Christians who seek to engage in the marketplace has been a great support to *JustWork*. Likewise, we expect that this will be enlightening to other Christian-based organizations thinking about social enterprise. In our experience this theological foundation has been helpful in two key ways. First, it has shaped our organizational values, the development of our strategic direction, and our workplace culture. Second, it has provided an alternate perspective to the typical profit-motivated values of most business workplaces in our community.

Justice

The second concept that has strongly influenced *JustWork* is the biblical notion of justice, particularly its fundamental concern for the most vulnerable groups in our society (women, children, refugees). The biblical concern for justice is larger than adherence to state laws, upholding private morality or generous public service. The biblical concern extends to the very structure of our economy and society, which often is

Managing As If Faith Mattered: Christian Social Principles in the Modern Organization

By Helen Alford and Michael Naughton.

This book serves as an excellent introduction to the Catholic Social Tradition and the efforts from this tradition to bridge the gap between Christian faith and the work of management. Through the work of Alford and Naughton, one can understand core principles of this tradition (such as the common good and virtue) and how these principles can shape specific management practices such as fair wages, ownership structures, job design, and marketing communication.

Naughton serves as the director of the John A. Ryan Institute at the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota. The Ryan Institute offers a host of resources for Christians in the world of work including books, papers, conferences, and other leadership development tools.

Please see their website for more information:
<http://www.stthomas.edu/cathstudies/cst/default.html>

³¹ Regent College Marketplace Institute, About Us, <http://marketplace.regent-college.edu/about-us>

³² Regent College Marketplace Institute, "Christian Social Enterprise Incubator," March 12, 2012, <http://marketplace.regent-college.edu/news>

the root cause of violence, oppression and injustice. As Dave Diewert wrote in his article *Living Justly* (2009):

“Justice demands societal practices that uphold the dignity and worth of every member of the community, and refuses to normalize patterns of oppression and social exclusion. In this sense, to live justly is to engage in the work necessary to establish and maintain just social, political and economic arrangements for the well-being of everyone, especially the weak and vulnerable.”³³

The Deuteronomic laws provide us with many examples of specific provisions intended to further just social, political and economic arrangements. Orphans, widows and foreigners were to be welcomed into the annual community festivals and celebrations (Dt 14:28-29; 16:11-14; 26:12-13); farmed produce was to be left in the field for those who were hungry to pick and eat (Dt. 23:24-25; 24:19-22); day labourers were to be paid at the end of each day (Dt. 24:14-15); the socially weak were to be given fair access and due process in legal matters of justice (Dt. 24:17-18); slaves were to be treated fairly and set free after six years with adequate provision for supporting themselves in the community (Dt. 15:12-18); debt was to be cancelled every seventh year (Dt. 15:1-11).³⁴

These Old Testament provisions addressed the practical concerns of vulnerable people while radically challenging the status quo. In the New Testament’s gospel stories, we see Jesus doing the very same things. Jesus embraced children, healed the sick and spent time with the outcast. He lived justly by standing in solidarity with all people and at the same time he proclaimed the radical, world-changing welcome of the Kingdom of God.

Our own connection with this tradition of justice comes primarily from *Grandview Calvary*. Over the past 25 years, *Grandview Calvary* has sought to show a special concern for the disadvantaged people who live in the Grandview-Woodlands neighbourhood in Vancouver. The church’s vision statement—a community of people who receive and extend the radical welcome of God—emphasizes that this welcome is for all people, including those on the margins. At *JustWork*, we see our social enterprises as a way to extend this radical hospitality into the realm of work by providing life-giving work opportunities to people who face barriers to work.

Vocation and Justice: Can They Work Together?

Unfortunately, proponents of the social justice movement and advocates for Christian engagement with the marketplace through daily vocation have had very little dialogue with one another over the years. In fact, they have often considered one another with varying levels of distrust. Proponents of the social justice movement often find that the capitalist system itself is an inherently unjust system. There are countless specific examples of this, including inhumane working conditions in Bangladeshi garment factories, the exploitation of the Amazon rainforest, and the growth in human trafficking. As a result, people interested in social justice often believe that engagement with the marketplace directly contradicts the values and goals of justice. On the other hand, people engaged in marketplace theology have struggled to understand and

³³ Dave Diewert, *Living Justly* (2009: page 2), page www.streetlevelquebec.org/downloads/Living%20justly.pdf

³⁴ *Ibid.*

appreciate the work of those fighting for justice. They often sense that intentional disengagement with the traditional marketplace (except for critique) is both impractical, short-sighted and produces few results. As a result, there has been little room for dialogue or partnership to develop as the concepts of justice and vocation take root in modern day Christian theology.

At *JustWork*, we believe that social enterprise presents a new opportunity for these two streams of thought and practice to work together for good. In our own organization, we have been fortunate to have individuals on our board and our staff who come from both sides of this equation, and we have benefited significantly by this cross-fertilization of ideas. By creating space for these two concepts to co-exist, our thought and practice has been challenged and strengthened.

We believe that the lens of vocation keeps us grounded in some good ways. For example:

- It reminds us that God loves *the world*, and everything in it. This means that God calls people to engage with the world's systems as a form of stewardship and of worship
- It keeps us focused on finding practical ways of helping people that recognizes the importance of vocation. In other words, rather than giving people hand-outs or connecting them with social assistance, we have learned that providing work itself is the best way to meet practical needs and provide dignity and community

On the other hand, the lens of justice has reminded us that:

- The dominant economic system is not neutral. In many situations the rich tend to get richer and the poor get poorer
- Justice is concerned with the distribution of resources and power, so our efforts at organizing ourselves need to keep the typical un-equal distributions in mind
- Employees are not just cogs in a machine. Rather, they are to be treated holistically with concern for their entire well-being

JustWork is a better organization because we have been influenced by both of these theological impulses.

Conclusion

As a non-profit organization with roots in Christian thought and culture, *JustWork* developed its social enterprises on the foundation of the over-arching biblical story, with a particular emphasis on the creation stories, the fall and the continuing narrative of Israel, Jesus and the early Church. These stories remind us that God loves the world, created it as a good gift for us, and designed us to be caretakers of it. Despite the fact that the fall perverted our ability to live into this reality, we are still humans made in the image of a creator God who calls us to engage with the world and care for it and one another. In this way, these stories have shaped our understanding of vocation and justice, which in turn has transformed the way we operate our social enterprises.

We wrote this chapter with great hope. We are convinced that more and more people who are coming into the world of work (both people of Christian faith and not) clearly see the problems faced by our cities, our nations, and our world. Dichotomies that have long divided are no longer

so relevant. No longer does a person come out of college with simply the choice either to enter some kind of helping profession (likely in a non-profit) or to enter the greedy world of business. Instead, those on the helping side of the equation are recognizing that a business model has great potential – both for destruction and for goodness. Likewise, there are more and more examples of businesses emerging who believe they can do good for society, they can pursue something other than profit.

Chapter 3 Reflection Questions

1. How does the Biblical concern for the marginalized resonate with our organization's mandate?
2. What connection do we perceive between vocation, work and economic justice?
3. What elements of the economic system (global and local) limit the ability of your community members to live into God's good intentions for work?
4. Can you think of examples of other organizations that have successfully blended business objectives with the aims of Christian social justice?

Chapter 4: Considering Social Enterprise

Introduction

To this point, this guide has provided a framework for faith-based organizations to consider social enterprise as a community development tool in a Canadian context. At this point you might be convinced that social enterprise is a great option but you still might not be sure whether it is right for your particular organization. This final chapter focuses on organizational readiness and sets out to help you assess whether social enterprise is right for you. First, we set out some general areas to consider, then we reflect on *JustWork's* own experience and finally we have included a self-assessment questionnaire. While the questionnaire will work best for pre-existing non-profits, it could also be used by groups thinking about starting a non-profit with a social enterprise focus.

Self-Assessment of Social Enterprise Readiness

The bulk of the material from this chapter, as well as the self-assessment tool, was taken from *Chapter 3: Organizational Readiness* of *The Canadian Social Enterprise Guide* produced by Enterprising Non-Profits (ENP).³⁵ We are grateful to ENP for allowing us to share this material here.

1.1 Areas of Consideration

The assessment of a non-profit's readiness for social enterprise involves looking at three key areas: organizational readiness, social enterprise readiness, and business readiness.

- **Organizational Readiness:** Starting a social enterprise is quite a challenge and can place a lot of stress on the existing non-profit's time, energy and finances. Therefore, it is important for an organization to seriously consider its history and current stability before beginning. Some things that indicate organizational readiness include:
 - Clear organizational vision and mission
 - Detailed and realistic strategic plan
 - Demonstrated capacity to handle internal change and conflict
 - Strong financial management skills
 - Well-developed hiring practices that attract and retain highly qualified, committed and creative employees
- **Social Enterprise Readiness:** Starting a social enterprise also brings challenges inherent to social enterprise development itself. Things to consider before starting include:
 - Whether there is a comprehensive understanding of social enterprise amongst the current board and staff
 - The level of stakeholder (donor, church and community partners) support for the development of social enterprise
 - The strength of the local network of social enterprise allies
 - Whether the staff have the time and capacity to contribute to the development of the social enterprise

³⁵ See www.socialenterprisecanada.ca.

- **Business Readiness:** It is important that the parent non-profit has the business skills to successfully plan, launch, and develop a social enterprise. Some requirements include:
 - Strong business skills and experience on the board and staff
 - A staff person with the passion and ability to lead the project
 - Accounting systems able to track the social enterprise venture separately from the rest of the non-profit
 - The capital and human resources to plan and launch the social enterprise

1.2 JustWork's Story

Every social enterprise will have a different story rooted in its own unique setting. While some enterprises will follow the steps outlined in this chapter, others will not. *JustWork's* story falls into the latter category. In this section we are going to tell the story of *JustWork's* creation and development. Our hope is that this concrete example will help you to evaluate where and how your context will require a different approach.

Need Recognition

Grandview Calvary was established in 1908 in the Grandview-Woodlands neighbourhood of Vancouver. In the 1990's the church experienced a period of renewal focused on re-connecting with the changing demographics of the local neighbourhood. Through this process, a number of initiatives emerged to connect the church with the people living in Grandview-Woodlands including people living on the street, refugee claimants, at-risk youth, and single mothers. Towards the end of the decade it was clear that unemployment was a common theme for most of the people living in the neighbourhood.

Community Assessment

In 2003, a study group from *Grandview Calvary* secured funding from a local foundation to complete a community assessment around employment opportunities in the local neighbourhood. Once complete, the group proposed four different ideas about how to address the issue of unemployment: pre-employment counselling, a job match program, small businesses start-up assistance, and social enterprise development. In 2004 the group formed *JustWork* and focused initial efforts on the first three ideas in this list.

Early Years

Between 2004 and 2005, *JustWork* provided counselling and job search support; connected individuals to work through a small job match program, and assisted a few people who were trying to launch their own small businesses. While these efforts had some success, *JustWork's* Board and staff team felt that these initiatives were not reaching those with the largest barriers to work. Late in the summer of 2005, the Board and two part-time staff decided it was time to think about social enterprise.

Preparing to Launch

Between the summer of 2005 and early 2006 was a critical time in the development of *JustWork* as it now exists. It was during this time that we undertook the organizational readiness steps mentioned above and assessed who we were as an organization and whether we had the capacity

to develop a successful social enterprise. We began by exploring two social enterprise ideas: one in property maintenance and one in pottery.

While *JustWork* considered launching social enterprise we discovered that *Grandview Calvary* and another community stakeholder, *Salsbury Community Society*, owned and operated one church building, one single-family residence and five community houses. The ongoing need for property maintenance at all of these facilities led *JustWork* to explore the possibility of a property management social enterprise. The goal was that ongoing work at these buildings would lead to contracts with other individuals in the church community, and the wider community through word-of-mouth.

In 2000 a pottery studio called *The Potters House (TPH)* started hosting drop-in pottery sessions at *Grandview Calvary*. *TPH* was a place for local, low-income residents to find community support while learning pottery skills. The drop-in started in 2000 and continues today. In 2005, *TPH* and *JustWork* discussed a possible partnership. *JustWork* proposed to develop a pottery-based social enterprise in *TPH's* studio. The goal was that the social enterprise would benefit and possibly employ participants in the drop-in program. These discussions lasted throughout 2005 into early 2006 when *JustWork* hired a pottery studio manager.

JustWork's next goal was to hire a manager for the property maintenance social enterprise. Unfortunately when we interviewed candidates for the position in October of 2005, we did not find anyone suitable for the position. One of the candidates, however, suggested landscape gardening as an alternative to strict property maintenance and offered to lead the project. Given the lack of qualified candidates for property maintenance and the applicant's skills and qualifications, we changed directions.

JustGarden - 2006

In late 2005 and early 2006 we moved forward with the *JustGarden* idea, developing a simple business plan, and preparing some marketing materials. On a beautiful Saturday morning in early March, a team of volunteers went door-to-door in the Grandview-Woodlands neighbourhood delivering flyers about our newly formed social enterprise. Before the day was over, we had our first customers and work began the following week. These first months required very hands-on support from a talented Board member, who completed our very first limited project.

In hindsight, the Grandview-Woodlands neighbourhood turned out to be an unanticipated advantage. Most Vancouver landscapers tend to focus their energies on wealthier neighbourhoods on the west-side of the city where property owners are more likely to hire gardening services.

*Historically, Grandview- Woodlands was a working-class neighbourhood with a strong level of social activism and a well developed community identity. As housing prices increased rapidly in the 2000's, new home buyers were attracted to the neighbourhood for the relatively low housing prices and its unique sense of community. These new residents were excited about social activism, Community development and perhaps most importantly able to financially support a social enterprise initiative like *JustGarden*.*

JustPotters

This social enterprise was launched in a series of phases between 2006 and 2007. In 2007, we also developed our first full business plan for the enterprise. The launch of the pottery studio proved to be quite challenging for a number of reasons:

- Social enterprises that produce a product tend to be more complex than service-focused enterprises like *JustGarden*. For example, *JustPotters* requires raw materials, space to accommodate the entire production processes, storage for inventory, etc.
- From the beginning, *JustPotters* has shared studio space with TPH. Although we have been partners from the start, each organization has a different set of goals and a different identity.
- The small size of the studio space put pressure on the relationships formed to start the enterprise. In fact, the size of the space continues to be a challenge as *JustPotters* grows.

In retrospect, *JustWork* could have done more to prepare for the challenges presented by the craft-industry as well as the specific studio we were entering as guests.

Despite these challenges *JustPotters* continues to operate as a successful enterprise for *JustWork*. Since its launch in 2007, it has consistently offered meaningful employment for our employees. In fact, *JustPotters* has played a crucial role in introducing people to social enterprise and *JustWork* through our online store, at Vancouver-based retail outlets, or at local craft fairs.

Were We Ready?

The previous paragraphs have provided a bit of the chronology of events surrounding *JustWork's* own move into social enterprise work. Were we ready to make this move? Were we ready to launch *JustGarden* and *JustPotters* in 2006? The following paragraphs attempt to answer that question by connecting our own story with the self-assessment tools found in this chapter

Organizational Readiness

- Prior to developing our social enterprises, *JustWork* developed clear vision and mission statements in 2003 and 2004. These provided wonderful guidance for us during a time of deliberation and transition, and the same statements continue to guide us to this day.
 - *JustWork's Vision*: We aspire to be a part of a healthy community where people are meaningfully and gainfully employed and where business practices embrace an ethical, social mandate.
 - *JustWork's Mission*: We foster dignified, gainful work opportunities for people facing multiple barriers to employment.
- While we did have excellent vision and mission statements, we did not have a strategic plan to guide us as an organisation. In 2006 we would go through a small strategic planning exercise, but most of our planning energy for the next few years went into planning for the specific social enterprises that would develop. It was not until 2009 that we would go through an extensive multi-year strategic plan for our whole organization.

- When we started thinking about social enterprise, *JustWork* was less than two years old. At that early stage of organizational development we were not particularly strong in any of the other key areas identified for organizational readiness: handling change and conflict, financial management, or human resources. However, in some ways this youth and inexperience proved to be an advantage. As we did not have much history, we did not have much history to work against. Our board was filled with people who were willing to be creative and to take risks, as we had little to lose in this experiment. Likewise, because our systems and policies were still in the process of development, we were able to adapt to our quickly changing circumstances. Even though we did not have a strong history and/or policies to attract and retain staff, because we were preparing to venture into an emerging field and had a clear mission and mandate, potential staff were drawn to us.

Social Enterprise Readiness

- In 2005, we did not have any real experience in social enterprise amongst our staff or board. However, we did have a broad mix of business experience and more traditional non-profit experience, and we were willing to learn. We were fortunate to connect with staff at ENP and at Vancity in 2006 to begin learning about the world of social enterprise.
- Since we had made the decision to end or largely cut-back the small programs we had offered in counselling, job matching, and small business start-up support, we were able to dedicate our funding to social enterprise research, idea development, and launch.
- Our non-profit partners from within the Grandview-Woodlands and *Grandview Calvary* communities were fully supportive of our move to social enterprise. Giving the incidence of homelessness and unemployment in the neighbourhood, our partners saw this experiment as one that would be positive regardless of the outcome.

Business Readiness

- As mentioned previously, we had strong business experience on our board and, to some extent, on our staff. Board experience included individuals who had successfully run small businesses to those involved in running multi-national firms. In addition to this business experience, our board members were very hands-on during this period: meeting monthly with the staff to provide support and oversight, working with us to develop our business plans, and giving generously on a financial level.
- We did have a staff person to serve as a champion of the enterprises. He was able to provide key general management support that included everything from bookkeeping, to budgeting, to human resources, and fundraising.
- Perhaps most importantly, we had the initial start-up capital to support us during the crucial launch period. For example, *Grandview Calvary* donated a van to *JustGarden* and provided studio space in the basement of the church to *JustPotters*. The studio had excess capacity that *JustPotters* was able to use at no additional cost.

Summary

While there is not one clear path to follow in making the decision to launch a social enterprise, this decision is not one to be taken lightly. The social enterprise model does have the capacity to make significant contributions to the mission of a non-profit, but in our experience there are costs and challenges. Therefore, it is vital to consider well in advance what some of these costs and challenges might be.

Attached to the end of this chapter is a self-assessment check list. This is intended to be used as a tool to assist any organisation considering social enterprise. We hope you find it to be useful.

AGENCY SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction:

As reflected in the companion **Work For The Common Good** social enterprise resource guide, Christian organizations going into social enterprise need to be fluent in the language and terminology of non-profit organization, Community development, social enterprise, business and theology. The first part of this self-assessment looks at *organizational identity*, with a particular emphasis on Community development and theology. The second part of the assessment looks at *organizational readiness*, with a focus on non-profit status, social enterprise understanding and business acumen.

PART 1: Organizational Identity

This section is designed to facilitate in-depth group discussion around your current organizational identity as it relates to community development and the Christian faith. Please take time as a group to think carefully about each question. It is important that your answers focus on your *current* organizational identity, not on the identity that you want to adopt or aspire to be.

- **What is our definition of community development?**

- **How have we practiced community development over the past two years?**
Consider organizational strategies employed to design and implement programs. Reflect on the roles of your Board, staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries. Think about how programs have facilitated connections with other organizations in your community.

- **How has our relationship with program beneficiaries changed/shaped our organizational identity?**
Think about the extent to which beneficiaries are involved in strategic planning, program design and the day-to-day operation of your organization.

- **How has the Christian faith shaped our organizational identity?**
What Biblical stories or theological themes have been particularly significant?

- **How do vocation and justice inform your organizational identity?**
What kind of work has your organization been gifted to do in your community? What kinds of injustice is your organization seeking to fight?

- **How is our organization participating in God's stewardship of the created world?**
Consider the resources or relationships your organization seeks to protect. Think about the unique creative energy and ideas of your Board, staff, and beneficiaries.

- **What terms or phrases best describe your organization's current identity?**
Think about the particular skills, gifts and passions of your Board, staff and volunteers. Reflect on how your organization operates in the community, navigates change and responds to conflict.

- **Does your unique organizational identity reflect the kinds of Community development work that you have pursued in the past few years?**

PART 2: Organizational Readiness

This section is set up to be an individual exercise for each member of the group in order to get a variety of responses and perspectives on each set of questions. Please rate your organization on each item in this questionnaire, including notes about ideas for improvement. At the end of each section, total your scores. At the end of the full assessment, you can calculate a grand total and see where your score places you on the suggested scale of readiness. Once individual scores are tallied, come back together as a group to share your results. The collective assessment will give your organization a good idea of your current strengths and weaknesses.

Our thanks to *Enterprising Non-Profits* for the use of this check list. The self-assessment is based on a checklist from the 2nd edition of the Canadian Social Enterprise Guide published by ENP. For more information please visit www.socialenterpriseCanada.ca

Basic Non-Profit Readiness	Rating (3 = strongly agree)	Notes
Does your organization:	1 2 3	
Have clear vision, mission and goals supported by board and staff?	1 2 3	
Have a strategic plan that is current and up-to-date?	1 2 3	
Have experience in planning and implementing internal change?	1 2 3	
Have experience dealing well with internal conflict?	1 2 3	
Have a comprehensive understanding of its financial situation and expected trajectory over the next 2-3 years	1 2 3	
Have financial stability (e.g. diversified funding and consistent income)?	1 2 3	
Have clearly defined lines of accountability?	1 2 3	
Have a result oriented approach?	1 2 3	
Have a demonstrated commitment to continual learning and innovation?	1 2 3	
Have a commitment to staff development, and creative risk-taking?	1 2 3	
Examine cost effectiveness in evaluating organizational activities?	1 2 3	
SUBTOTAL		

Social Enterprise Readiness	Rating (3 = strongly agree)	Notes
Does your idea fit with your organization's competencies, assets, and strength?	1 2 3	
Is your board, management, and staff interested in the concept of social enterprise? Do they understand social enterprise? Do they support further investigation of social enterprise?	1 2 3	
Does social enterprise fit with your organization's mission and mandate?	1 2 3	
Does social enterprise complement your organization's values?	1 2 3	
Have you set aside staff time for developing social enterprise? Are your board and staff willing to put in the extra time, energy and effort?	1 2 3	
Do you have outside stakeholders (clients, members, donors, funders) and do they support social enterprise?	1 2 3	
Do you know your potential allies or competitors?	1 2 3	
Have you thought about potential partnerships that would support the development of social enterprise in your organization?	1 2 3	
SUBTOTAL		

Business Readiness	Rating (3 = strongly agree)	Notes
Do you have business experience on your board or amongst your staff? Is there an internal champion?	1 2 3	
Do you have strong book-keeping/accounting systems in place to track a new business venture?	1 2 3	
Have you thought about how you can raise funds to plan and launch the enterprise?	1 2 3	
Do your staff have the necessary skills,	1 2 3	

or do you have a plan for how to build those skills?		
Do you have the space or equipment that may be needed?	1 2 3	
Do you have some capital to invest the enterprise's development?	1 2 3	
SUBTOTAL		
GRAND TOTAL		

How to assess your score:

21 - 30 Low level of readiness. Lots of work to do.

31 - 49 Medium level of readiness. Some significant issues or key areas require attention.

50 - 63 High level of readiness. Ready to go!

Even if your overall score is encouraging, take a look to see if there are some individual instances of only 1 point (weak) on a particular question. You will need to pay some attention to strengthening the organization in that respect before going further in your plans.