

Appendix A

Ontario Youth Worker Co-op Proposal

Making the transition from youth-life, as a student, into the working world has been a characteristic stage of life for generations, however, it has been within the past decade that this life transition has taken on more and more unique characteristics. Throughout Canadian, American and many communities around the world, there is more and more talk about succession planning. The Baby Boomer generation is aging and they are also looking at moving on to their next life stage: retirement. As more and more members of this generation approach retirement there is a growing feeling of unease as people of all generations wonder how organizations will evolve, adapt or succumb to the changes that lie ahead. Generational learning and transition can take many forms and one form that is particularly empowering is supporting the development of young people as they find their own ways of identifying their needs, becoming involved in communities and learning through experience.

Specifically, the co-operative business model has proven to work in a variety of different sectors and in a variety of different forms, from child care to agriculture, retail to housing, transportation to financials, co-operatives can be found in nearly every sector of the economy. Currently in Ontario and across Canada there is very little education about co-operatives in the school curriculum at any and all levels of education. This makes the future of co-operatives particularly challenging as their succession plans not only require the continuation of existing businesses but also a fundamental understanding of co-operative philosophy. The resulting co-operative that has come from addressing these provincial needs, aims to meet numerous objectives: a way to contribute to strengthening local communities, providing opportunity to young people and supporting them as they shape their own co-operative business and educating young people about co-operatives inside and outside of the co-operative organization.

Overall, the aim of this research is to conduct a national examination of existing co-operatives that have been developed by young people for young people and other young social enterprises that are youth organized. The research focus of this national scan will focus on the products/services, structure/governance, financing, sector support, education and leadership of each young co-operative or social enterprise. There are three main outcome goals that this research aims to achieve:

1. An understanding of the number, scope and types of youth run initiatives that are operating across Canada.
2. To understanding how it is that young people in Canada are identifying with the co-operative model. How have they come to learn about co-operatives and how do they identify with and utilize the model, and share this information with their peers. Do young people see the co-operative model as a means for entrepreneurship and community contributions and betterment.
3. Other tools and supports that can be developed to help young people connect with one another, to develop more co-operatives or to become involved in other co-operative initiatives. This could range from on-line forums and tools, to toolkits, sample business plans, financial literacy, governance training, etc.

Overview of the Co-op

As a means to engage more young people into the co-operative movement and to increase awareness of co-operatives and the social economy through peer-to-peer education, a feasibility study will be conducted to determine one possibility for a youth-based solution to the needs that have been identified. The background research along with a feasibility study will be the key research tools that are used to attain the proposed practical solution/application.

The identification of these needs has led to plans for the development of a province-wide worker co-operative, for young people ages 18-25. This co-op will operate in regions across the province, primarily going into high school, college and university classes to provide workshops to students. The principle workshop will focus on educating young people about the co-operative model and the size, diversity and opportunities within the co-operative sector. There is also the opportunity of developing other training curriculum that can be presented, topics in this area may include, communications workshops for student leadership groups, financial literacy training or sustainability from the perspective of Generation Y. Ideally, the co-operative will develop to operate in many regions across the province, however to test the idea and the operational plan a 'pilot' will precede the incorporation of the co-operative. It is proposed that the pilot begin in three regions across the province, with specific and distinct needs being addressed in each of the proposed communities.

This co-operative is meant to support the development of the co-operative sector in Ontario. It is not meant to take away from the operations of any co-op or sector but will work with co-operatives and credit unions to highlight the entire sector and provide a variety of co-op and credit union examples. The goal is for this co-operative to work in support of the co-operative sector, through relationships with organizations such as the Ontario Co-operative Association to provide a service to youth by youth in a way that is otherwise not possible due to limitations of resources, namely, time, money and staffing.

Vision: Co-operative business providing education for youth by youth.

Mission: A provincial, regionally based youth co-operative whose mission is the education of ourselves and our peers, recognition of the co-operative sector for the enhancement of communities and youth opportunities.

The Pilot

To measure the feasibility of this project an 18-month pilot program to measure and evaluate the project has been developed. The pilot begins with operations in three regions in Ontario: Thunder Bay, Toronto, and Guelph. Each region/community is being chosen for particular reasons and overall, to test the functionality, interest and diversity of challenges and opportunities within each of these regions and the overall viability of this model.

I. Community Needs Assessment

Empowerment, employment and opportunities to develop transferable skills are aspects of youth development that aid young people in becoming more active and engaged community citizens. With changing demographics, in regards to an aging population, and with young people

under growing scrutiny from the negative stereotypes that surround it can be challenging for young people to identify and to access ways that they can make contributions to themselves and to the communities in which they live. As indicated the provincial pilot will launch in three regions in Ontario: Thunder Bay, Guelph and Toronto. Community demographics as well as needs are outlined for each of the pilot communities in the section that follows.

Thunder Bay

Thunder Bay is a unique Ontario city. The population of Thunder Bay is 109,140, with 13.3% of the population comprised of young people between the ages of 15 and 24 (Statistics Canada, 2006). The economic and employment landscape of Northern Ontario is quickly changing as climate change and the demand on natural resources change. Many large industries have left the Thunder Bay area, however there is still a significant dependence on the mining and logging industries. On the other end of the employment spectrum, Thunder Bay has a large and growing health science sector, and they are leaders in cancer treatments in Northern Ontario. This means that there is great potential for the area over time, however currently Thunder Bay faces a number of challenges. Specifically related to youth, Thunder Bay and communities in the surrounding area are struggling with youth retention. The rate of youth out-migration is significant, meaning that many young people are leaving the area to go to larger city centers in search of better job opportunities and a higher quality of life (FedNor, 2006). There is also a very large Aboriginal population in Thunder Bay, at 6.7% of the population. This compares to Guelph and Toronto at 0.7% and 0.5% respectively (Statistics Canada, 2001). This presents some additional challenges, as Aboriginal youth face challenges regarding the historic implications of racism, the sustainability of their language and culture and stereotypes about higher crimes and substance abuse rates (Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, 2005). By introducing the co-operative model to young people in Northern Ontario, it is hoped that they will consider a co-operative when working to meet local community needs and that they will also see the potential of their local community.

Toronto

Toronto is the largest city in Canada, with a total population of 2,503,281 and 12.7% of the populations between 15 and 24 years of age. While great diversity and many opportunities are characteristic of Toronto, its great size also presents many challenges. Such challenges include identifying ways to engage with and define a community, and ways for young people to find a meaningful place in such a large setting (Larson, 2006). To pilot this particular project in Toronto, specific objectives are going to have to be set through realistic goals that are scaled to the size of the regional co-op team, especially considering there are 109 secondary schools in Toronto and 11 colleges and universities. Additionally, there are many co-operatives in Toronto, in every sector, so the potential for partnerships and local support from co-operatives is great. There is also great diversity in Toronto as it is a starting place for many new Canadians as well as home to many people with generations of history in Canada. Statistics Canada has noted that 20.8% of the Toronto population immigrated to Canada between 1991 and 2001 and that 42.4% of Torontonians identify as a visible minority. This compares to the visible minority populations of Thunder Bay and Guelph at 2.4% and 11.4%, respectively. There is an ever-growing interest in co-operatives that bring together new Canadians and the potential for continued development in this area as a result of greater education is very exciting.

Guelph

The city of Guelph is located in Southwestern Ontario, about an hour from Toronto with a population of 114,940. Guelph is defined as a city but is often noted as having a small-town feel. Guelph has a youth (15-24) population of 14.6% (Statistics Canada, 2006). Another unique characteristic of Guelph is that considering its size, it is home to many co-operatives, both large and small and is also the center for the agricultural community in Ontario. In choosing this community as a pilot location, there should be great support from the community to bring the education and awareness of co-operatives into the schools as well as sharing numerous examples of co-operatives within the agricultural sector. Last year, The Ontario Rural Council (TORC) held a youth forum to hear about the challenges and opportunities that young people identified living in rural communities across the province. Some of the main challenges that were identified from that forum include the lack of opportunities for youth employment and entrepreneurship in rural communities (TORC, 2007). In regards to employment there are not a lot of opportunities outside of the very typical youth jobs such as working in the retail and restaurant businesses. There is great interest from young people in developing unique skills, such as public speaking, and business operations (TORC, 2007). Additionally, co-operatives have strong agricultural roots and as the agriculture sector looks to integrate more young people into this industry, returning to the historic and current opportunities for co-operatives may be complementary to both sectors.

Each of the regional co-op locations will ideally begin with 4 members, for a team of 12 initial member-participants plus one project co-ordinator. Two high school aged students and two college/university-aged students are the ideal make-up of each initial regional location, as this dynamic will hopefully be beneficial for the following reasons:

1. Older members can act as mentors to the younger members.
2. By allowing for younger members the goal is to build in on going 'succession planning' from the beginning, to develop a strategy where there will always be new members and existing members to help with on-going education and the sustainability of the co-op.
3. All members can benefit from the diversity of experiences, facilitation styles and personalities of the other members.

As mentioned each of the pilot communities/ cities are very unique, however, this selection is intentional as it is hoped that by selecting very different communities in very different locations across the province, the pilot will assess the feasibility of this project in different settings. It will also assess how young people can or cannot work together in shared business venture (co-operative) across the province. The results of the pilot will help to determine if and how more locations are added to the co-operative.

II. Problem Analysis

When it comes to the support and development of young people, there are a series of statements and sentiments that are commonly expressed, "Youth are the leaders of tomorrow", "Young people are our greatest asset" and so on, however, the great language and thoughts often lack the backing of action. The initiation of this project works to address two challenges that currently face young people in the province of Ontario, lack of meaningful employment opportunities and a lack of knowledge and exposure to the co-operative business model as an

option for making contributions to communities. To elaborate, young people between the ages of 15 to 24, especially young people under the age of 21 tend to have very similar low-wage, limited opportunity jobs that are most often in the service industry with restaurant or retail establishments. While these jobs fulfill the basic need of employment they offer limited ability to develop skills that distinguish the experience of one young person from the next. Developing a diverse and transferable skill set is essential to being able to apply for and attain jobs that are more meaningful and move people in the direction of their desired career. Such things as being involved in the operations and development of a business, being able to speak in front of and facilitate groups and developing workshop curriculum are unique and valuable skills that young people can get through their involvement in this co-operative.

Related to this is another significant element that is missing for young people. Co-operative education is not a very significant part of the current curriculum in Ontario at any level of education, if at all (Lans, 2005), so when students are in business classes, history classes or social science classes, they are not exposed to the co-operative model. The co-operative model does not need to be an exclusive option but it does need to be included in the options so that young people are able to understand and consider where and when the co-operative model can meet certain needs. With a series of workshops specific to co-operatives and examples from the co-operative sector, the work of this youth co-operative can help to fill a void that currently exists in the curriculum. There is also a value and an opportunity that comes from creating a space for peer-to-peer education.

As young people are examining the environment and community needs that surround them, it is hoped that the skills developed by working in the co-operative and having a greater understanding of their community will create opportunities and an interest amongst member-participants and presentation participants of ways that they can get involved in their communities to address the needs that they see and to make positive contributions. The engagement of young people and the support of them in their contributions to communities are investments that will pay off currently and well into the future (Crowe, 2007). Young people are an integral demographic component to any community and there are many opportunities for shared learning's, support and mentorship amongst all generations, and an integrated community is undoubtedly a stronger community.

III. Literature Review

Meaningful employment during high school and college or university is a challenge that many people face across the province. Compounding this challenge is the impact that lack of experience can have on job and career opportunities following graduation (Brown & Thakur, 2006). Relevant job experience and experience that sets applicants apart from the competition are key criteria when seeking employment, however, many young people are doing very similar jobs during their teenage years and few have opportunities to gain exposure to a variety of differential transferable skills. In an effort to counter some of these challenges young people are actively seeking ways to change their opportunities and to seek out those opportunities that match the dreams they are looking to pursue. One of the great phenomenons that rural and Northern Ontario communities are experiencing is youth out-migration. Significant young people are leaving these small communities for larger urban centres, where the perception of great

opportunities and higher quality of life are very attractive (Gabriel, 2006). Supporting the research of Gabriel, Larson takes another approach to life of young people and how their connections to their communities influence the decisions that they make. Over time the thoughts about the abilities and capacities of young people has changed, we are currently in a positive time as there is growing recognition that “young people are motivated and able to be constructive agents of their own development... development involves more than preventing problems; adults are most effective when they support the positive potentials within young people” (Larson, 2006, 677). Supporting youth development is not suggesting that there is not room or value to interaction and mentorship from adults, in fact, it is just the opposite, and adult recognition and can do a lot to support positive youth development. Also supporting this research are Zeldin and Macneil (2006), through their research on meaningful adult and youth engagements in organizations. Their research indicates that both parties experience benefits when working together. While the day-to-day operations of this co-operative will involve different types of relationships with adults, these are still relationships that can help the co-operative sector as well as the operations of individual co-operatives.

Also shaping this initiative is the lack of co-operative education that is included in education curriculum at all levels (Lans, 2005). As young people are learning about business and various business models and the ways that community needs can be addressed in their high school and university classes, this proposed model seems a logical place to work for greater integration of co-operative education. At the high school and college/university level of education, young people are capable of public speaking, facilitating workshops and developing their own business skills and there certainly is an interest amongst many to develop these skills.

As far as practical examples go there are limited examples to draw on regarding youth involvement and initiative across the country. Here in Ontario, the francophone provincial association, Conseil de la Cooperation de l’Ontario, is developing a youth services program for secondary school francophone students, during the summers they can set up small service co-operatives, offering such things as babysitting or painting services through a co-operative structure. They are supported in the development and taught about the co-operative model throughout the process (CCO, 2007). In Atlantic Canada, the MYDAS (Mobilizing Youth to Deliver Advisory Services) was developed in 2005. This particular program trained teams of two university students to deliver co-op advisory services during their summer university breaks. Funding of the program has declined since its inception and now only one team of two is still working (MYDAS, 2005). The Core Neighborhood Youth Co-operative in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, is a co-op that provides at risk youth with an opportunity to undertake economic projects with an environmental focus. The youth members are involved in gardening, bicycle repair and the production of outdoor furniture (Tupone, 2003). This is an inspiring project, however, I want a project that integrates young people and does not just focus on youth at risk. The case studies that are presented in *Youth Reinventing Co-operatives* are extremely inspiring, some of the examples are more applicable than others to the Ontario environment, however the showcase of all of these co-operatives shows that young people are identifying with the co-operative model and seeing opportunities for empowerment and community contribution through co-operation.

Of all of the youth co-operative examples that were researched the one that has had made the greatest inspiration to the development of this youth co-operative, is The New Practice in Vancouver, British Columbia. There are four worker-owners of this co-operative, they are all university students and all participated in the BC youth co-operative cap together. They present workshops about co-operatives and using the values and methodology of co-operatives to high school students. The New Practice has served as inspiration for this co-operative and they have been great resources to the development of this project. This model is most relevant because it meets the multiple needs that have been recognized: education, employment, partnerships and skill development.

IV. Project Design/ Logic Model

The design of the pilot locations is intended to mirror the design and structure of what the provincial co-operative will look like if the pilot is successful. There is room to make changes to the design and structure as it is tested through the progression of the pilot. The design of this co-operative has inputs, activities, outputs and short-term outcomes that address three different yet related groups—the member-participants, the co-operative sector and the educational institutions. Overall, this co-operative will work to change the access that young people have to knowledge about co-operatives, transferable skills and meaningful employment. Roles have been identified for each of the groups providing inputs and ultimately through the operations of this co-operative some of the outcomes that the groups will be working towards include: developing relationships with existing co-operatives to promote and share examples of from within the co-operative sector; creating an environment, inside and outside of the classroom where co-operatives are recognized as one of the business models that is essential to our economy; and over the long-term, changing the employment opportunities for young people and academic curriculum that is distributed throughout the Ontario education system. All of these inputs activities and outcomes are articulated in Figure 1, the project logic model.

Figure 1. Youth Worker Co-operative, Logic Model

Long-term outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To change the employment options that are available to students, To have academic institutions recognize co-operatives as one of the business models that people can use and to integrate education about co-ops into school curriculum. 		
Intermediate outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meaningful employment of youth through a co-operative, that provides innovative and interactive workshops on co-operatives and other subjects to other young people in the province of Ontario. Recognition and utilization of the co-operative model as a means of ownership, voice and business development with peer support. 		
Short-term outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the transferable skills of youth member participants, such as public speaking, facilitation, scheduling, and business operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing relationships and partnerships with existing co-operatives so that the member-participants can know more about the existing co-operative sector and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making available training material and about the co-operative model, in a peer-to-peer relationship, while demonstrating the co-operative model in action.

		be able communicate this knowledge	
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 initial members recruited by November 2008 (4 per region) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise \$50,000 to \$75,000 in start-up funding from co-operatives and co-operative granting agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 presentations scheduled in each pilot community by end of January 2009 (at high schools, colleges or universities); they don't have to all take place in January but the schedules are at least in place
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment for initial members, through web tools, direct recruitment, presentations at the Co-operative Young Leaders program (CYL) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial support of the co-operative for its development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with members of the co-op to hear what their business does
Inputs	Young worker-members (3-4 per pilot location, ages 17-25)	Co-operative organizations (Co-ops and credit unions, large and small)	Educational institutions (high schools, colleges, universities)

V. Methodology and Implementation Plan

As this youth worker co-operative comes together the plan of how and when events, meetings and actions need to take place is beneficial for the on-going enthusiasm and momentum of its development. In launching the pilot project for this co-operative young people in the regional pilot communities will benefit from the program through development of their understanding and their ability to implement the co-operative model. These outcomes will be achieved through meaningful job experience, developing such transferable skills as, facilitation, public speaking, networking and time management, and first hand experience in the development and operations of a co-operative. One of the goals of this project is to expose young people to the basics, the diversity, and to the size of the co-operative sector. In addition, students and schoolteachers who hear the presentation will benefit from the project by being exposed to and developing an understanding of another form of business that exists in their communities to meet their needs and how co-operatives can be developed to meet needs that they identify. A third group that will benefit from this project are co-operatives throughout Ontario, as young people become more aware of their business, seek ways to get involved and look to them now and in the future for opportunities. Overall, this project works to benefit students, teaching professionals and the co-operative sector by increasing the knowledge about co-operatives and empowering youth in communities across the province.

The Ontario Co-operative Association will host the pilot project for this worker co-operative. This is a strategic relationship in a few respects. The Ontario Co-operative Association will be able to more effectively meet and expand their work with youth. The youth co-operatives will be able to access the regional and provincial resources and networks of co-operative professionals. Currently, the Ontario Co-operative Association offers a summer leadership camp program for young people ages 14 to 18, to attend camp for a week, learning about team

building, leadership, co-operatives and credit unions and self-discovery. Young people can attend the program for up to 3 consecutive years, with each curriculum building upon the curriculum from the previous year. On Co-op also offers an internship program, which is much smaller, with 15 interns per intake, yet essential to the sector. This is a career-focused internship, eligible to university and college graduates who are under the age of thirty. For twenty-six weeks they are placed with a co-operative or credit union across the province and given work experience in the sector, with the goal that they will continue to work in the co-operative sector upon the conclusion of the internship. Therefore, there is a very evident gap in the ways that youth are being engaged and educated in the co-operative sector between their experience in the Co-operative Young Leaders program and the completion of their undergraduate or college degree. While On Co-op does not have the resources or the staff capacity to meet and engage with this group, they certainly have the resources and voice within the sector to offer support. A more detailed description of the roles and responsibilities that On Co-op will take on during the pilot will be outlined in the Roles and Responsibilities section. From these initial stages, the goal has always been that upon evaluation of the pilot project, the pilot is to move from being hosted by the Ontario Co-operative Association to being able to incorporate as its own co-operative. As a result their will be a unique name, logo, marketing and website developed that is independent of On Co-op, while still providing recognition for their support.

From the perspective of the worker-members having On Co-op host the pilot project allows for the group to develop and work through various aspects of the business and to be provided with support from the staff at On Co-op, such as training, development and accounting, as well as connections to co-operatives and credit unions across the province. Having the support of On Co-op will likely be critical to the development and evaluation of the pilot, regarding whether or not this project has the capacity to incorporate and stand on its own. It is also hoped that organizations, that contact On Co-op inquiring about educational information on co-operatives, will be referred to the youth co-operative where applicable. In addition, the spin-offs developed from this project could be significant. As young people become more familiar with co-operatives and how they can form them to meet their needs, there will likely be an increase in the number of co-operatives developed. This project will also increase the number of people who are knowledgeable about co-operatives in communities across the province. Both of these spin-off benefits will ultimately contribute to the growth of the co-operative sector, increasing local awareness about co-operatives and supporting another mandate of the Ontario Co-operative Association, which is the development of regional co-op development networks across the province.

Other stakeholders that will be a part of this group, that will benefit from and contribute to this co-operative are the co-operatives and credit unions within the sector, and the schools and school boards in each of the pilot communities. The co-operative and credit union sector will benefit by having a non-partisan group promote the entire sector and co-operative model. This provides awareness about the diversity of co-operatives within Ontario and the numerous ways that they meet the needs of communities and members within those communities. By supporting the youth co-operative business, the co-op can access a demographic in a way that co-operatives and credit unions cannot currently access to the same degree. For example, rarely do schools allow companies, co-operatives or otherwise, to come in and do presentations about their organizations, because they view it as solicitation. However, by promoting and educating their

peers on the co-operative model, and using existing co-operatives as examples, the youth co-op is not soliciting nor is it solely promoting one co-operative or credit union. The regional groups will also be encouraged to use examples of co-operatives in their region as much as possible, again to promote the diversity, adaptability and relevant application of the co-operative model in communities large and small throughout Ontario.

As mentioned schools (inclusive of colleges and universities) and school boards will also be stakeholders. In addition to being the primary target market for the services of the youth co-operative, the schools benefit by being able to provide knowledge that is not currently provided to students, because currently even if there is mention of co-operatives it is very minimal. The co-operative model is only one of the business options that are available but it is also a type of business that is able to meet social, economic and environmental needs of communities. Rather than suggesting that teachers be expected to add to the material that they already cover, this is a way for students to gain experience, to complement the current curriculum and to develop meaningful skills through their employment.

The listing of the main stakeholders and a summary of their interest in the project are provided in figure 5.

Figure 5. Stakeholder Summary

Stakeholder	Stakeholder Interest(s) in the Project	Assessment of Impact	Potential Strategies for Obtaining Support or Reducing Obstacles
Ontario Co-operative Association	Can hold a grant or include the pilot into a grant application. One of their strategic focuses is to increase youth engagement and there is certainly the potential that they will be seen as leaders in the province with their support for this program. There are also significant co-op development spin offs that are likely to result from this project.	Until the project works through its initial start up phase, On Co-op and the project itself may be restricted by the requirements of the grants. A	They are already very supportive but a stronger business plan needs to be developed and presented for them to feel more comfortable for their support of the program. On Co-op will be and has been involved in the entire development of this project. Once the project begins it will become important for On Co-op to identify its role in the project (support, advisory, etc.)
Ontario Credit Union Charitable Foundation	There is a credit union in nearly every community (large and small in Ontario); again this could be a possible source of funding and a strategic investment and involvement for credit unions in terms of increasing their interaction and access to youth populations. Currently credit unions tend to view CED as more charity type supports (donating jerseys for local sports teams, making a donation to the Heart n' Stroke Foundation) rather than actual	A	The Charitable Foundation provides project funding to youth initiatives. This is a way to gain access to the credit union system and from there to develop specific and strategic partnerships with credit unions in the regional areas. Initial credit unions to pursuer will be Superior Credit Union in Thunder Bay, Alterna Savings in Toronto and Meridian Credit Union in Guelph. Developing a financial literacy workshop may also be a more direct way of gaining the support of the credit union sector.

	engagement in and support of the local community.		
Local schools	Local schools act as the conduit to local opportunities, therefore being able to come into local schools and deliver workshops on the co-op model and the development of youth enterprises will again help with access large and diverse youth populations.	A	Education is required to help teachers and school boards understand the co-operative model. The co-operative model needs to be presented as an option for entrepreneurial studies classes and leadership classes but also world issues class and social studies classes to see the diversity of co-op applications.

With this project being structured as a worker co-operative, it requires a small project staff in addition to the 12 initial members-participants. The additional staff will consist of a project manager, who will oversee the co-operative and be available to support all of the regional locations and members-participants across the province. During the pilot project, additional project staff would include the On Co-op accountant to process invoices, and payment for the co-op. During the course of the pilot, it would be great if one of the worker-members could meet with the accountant to learn how to do those tasks so that upon the incorporation of the co-operative these tasks could be completed internally.

Below are detailed lists of the roles and responsibilities for each of the key project staff and the host organization. These lists of roles and responsibilities will become job descriptions in the future.

Project Co-ordinator: This individual will be responsible for overseeing the entire co-operative, supporting the overall direction, logistics and worker-members as they build the awareness and viability of the co-operative in their region.

URoles and Responsibilities

- Responsible for co-ordinating orientation training for the co-op members, and other training experiences as identified by the co-op members;
- Organize bi-weekly check-in meetings with the co-op members, via teleconference to see how each region is doing, challenges, successes, questions, concerns;
- Work with co-operatives, school teachers and other community leaders in the pilot communities to recruit members to the co-operative;
- Work with co-op members and the Ontario Co-operative Association to gain access to school boards, colleges and universities to be able to present the initial workshop and then to be able to arrange workshops for the members;
- Meet with schools and community organizations in non-pilot locations across the province to promote the youth co-operative and to help recruit other groups of students/community members to become worker-members;
- Assist with the co-ordination of workshops, visits, travel, contacts, etc.;
- Work with the web developers to ensure that the co-op site is user-friendly and accessible to worker-members and members of the general public that are interested in visiting the site. (Hopefully as the co-operative grows this could become the job of one of the worker-members);
- Monitor the pilot program on an on-going basis to determine how it is developing and at what point to begin the transition from pilot to incorporation as a stand-alone co-operative. When it is clear that incorporation is the next step, the project co-ordinator will

have to work with the group and others knowledgeable about worker co-operatives to determine all of the structural details, such as board structure, share structure, etc.;

- Overall, to be available to support the on-going operations of the co-operative in all regions.

Worker-members: This will be the largest component of the co-operative, this is its heart and sole and this group of students will ultimately shape the co-operative, moving it from an idea and bringing it to life.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Working with all of the co-op members to research and develop workshop curriculums
 - o Various levels of curriculum, various lengths of workshops, examples that are applicable to different regions
- Working within their respective regions to make contacts within schools, community organizations and with teachers they know to promote the co-operative and to inquire about coming in to do a workshop or a workshop series;
- Maintaining statistics, contacts, etc.;
- Checking in regularly with the web portal to reply to inquiries, keep the blog updated;
- Attend conferences and community events where possible to talk about their involvement and to share the model with others, and within Ontario to help recruit other regional groups;
- And of course... delivering the workshops!

Figure 2 presents a schedule of the timeline for this project, when various roles and operational elements will be developed. The schedule has been developed on an 18-month timeline and pertains to the development of the pilot project, not the full development and incorporation of the co-operative.

Youth Worker Co-operative- Gantt Chart

Task	J-08	F-08	M-08	A-08	M-08	J-08	J-08	A-08	S-08	O-08	N-08	D-08	J-09	F-09	M-09	A-09	M-09
Task																	
Develop basic structure of the co-op	█	█	█														
Develop pilot structure	█	█	█														
Research grants for pilot	█	█	█														
Complete at least one grant																	
Begin introducing the pilot to co-ops, committees with On Co-op		█	█	█	█	█											
Send out the proposal to co-op developers, stakeholders for comment		█	█	█	█	█											
Speak with members of The New Practice for their feedback, best practices	█	█	█	█	█	█											
Keep On Co-op informed on the progress and project developments	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Conduct an online youth survey of CYL participants, and other youth networks			█	█	█												
Conduct phone surveys with school principals, meet with school boards			█	█	█												
Research youth marketing/website developers			█	█	█												
Pilot introductions to a fee structure for the workshops			█	█	█												
Approach co-ops in the pilot regions to begin introducing the co-op					█	█	█										
Website																	
Research youth marketing/website developers			█	█	█	█											
Get quotes from website developers			█	█	█	█											
Look into funding options for technology development			█	█	█	█											
Select a web developer							█	█									
Have website with portal developed							█	█									
Launch website to worker-members										█	█						
Launch website to public										█	█						
Recruitment																	
Develop a job description for worker-members					█	█	█										
Contact teachers, professors, community leaders about potential youth members					█	█	█	█	█								
Send out notices to past CYL participants about applying to the co-op					█	█	█	█	█								
Present at the Senior CYL sessions about the pilot and application								█	█								
Select the initial 12 worker-members									█	█							
Training																	
Develop a 3-4 day training program for worker-members							█	█	█	█							
Approach speakers for the training							█	█	█	█							
Book a location for the training							█	█	█	█							
Put together training materials, packages									█	█	█						
Deliver the Training											█	█					
Work on modifications to the Co-op 101 workshop											█	█					
Workshop delivery- practice at training with feedback											█	█					
Workshops																	
Develop the "What is a Co-op" workshop series (refer to budget for details)								█	█	█	█	█	█				
Develop 2 other workshops that can also be advertised and delivered								█	█	█	█	█	█				
Monitor the development of how the workshops are delivered											█	█	█				
Put presentations and support materials on the web portal											█	█	█				
Launch																	
Have at least one presentation take place in each of the regions by end of Jan 09													█	█			
Have an upcoming schedule of presentations in each region														█	█	█	█

Figure 2. Youth Co-operative Gantt chart.

Initial Budget

The proposed budget, as seen in figure 3 is for the pilot project, therefore there is an assumption of three regional co-operatives for the formation of the initial co-operative model. Revenue sources in the current budget are gathered from the delivery of three types of services: one hour workshops, 3 hour or half day seminars and consulting time, that is billed at a per hour rate. Assumptions for each region and each service that the co-operative will provide are articulated in the right hand column of the table. The fees for the services are designed to adequately compensate the worker-members for their service (\$25 per hour), as well as contribute a significant portion of the revenues back to the co-operative to support its growth. Most of the services break down to about a 45/55 split, with 45% of the fee going to the worker members and 55% of the fees staying in the co-operative.

The great expenses in developing this project will come from 2 main areas. One area will be training the worker-members on the software, presentation delivery skills, workshop curriculum development and education about the current co-operative sector. The second and greatest expense will be the development of a website portal that will have a password protected access area for the worker-members, allowing them to share and store their program materials, as

Youth Worker Co-op- Initial Budget

Revenue							
Workshop Fees	Price for Presentation	\$ to Students	\$ for Travel	\$ to Co-op	Est. # works	Est. Revenue	Assumptions
1 Hour Workshop/Introduction	\$200	\$25/student	\$20/student	\$110	90	\$18,000	max. 2 presenters, 3 workshops per month per region
Seminar (3 hours)	\$400	\$75/student	\$20/student	\$115	30	\$12,000	max. 3 presenters, 1 per month per region
Visioning/consulting services (per hour)	\$100	\$25/student	\$20/student	\$55	15	\$1,500	1 student at \$100, 5 hours per region per year
Total before						\$31,500	

Revenue to Worker-Members				
	Amount to Students	Est. # of works	Est. Revenue	Assumptions
1 Hour Workshop/Introduction	\$25 per student	90	\$2,250	max. 2 presenters, 3 workshops per month per region
Seminar (3 hours)	\$75 per student	30	\$2,250	max. 3 presenters, 1 per month per region
Visioning/consulting services (per hour)	\$25 per student	15	\$375	1 student at \$100, 5 hours per region per year
			\$4,875	

Revenue to the Co-op				
	Amount to Co-op	Est. # of works	Est. Revenue	Assumptions
1 Hour Workshop/Introduction	\$110	90	\$9,900	max. 2 presenters, 3 workshops per month per region
Seminar (3 hours)	\$115	30	\$3,450	max. 3 presenters, 1 per month per region
Visioning/consulting services (per hour)	\$55	15	\$825	1 student at \$100, 5 hours per region per year
			\$14,175	

Expenses

Presenter fees (covered in fee structure)				
Presenter fees based on assumptions	\$30 per student		\$4,500.00	
	\$75 per student		\$6,750.00	
	\$25 per student		\$375.00	Assumptions
Wages for project co-ordinator	\$30 per hour		\$27,000.00	20 hours per week
Training Program			\$5,000	3 days for 12 people, speakers, accomodations, meals
Web Portal			15,000	More research needed for a more accurate quote
Monthly conference calls	\$100		\$1,200.00	
Workshop materials			\$500	A brochure about the co-op, little paper, heavy on the visuals, low on the paper
Travel- per student per workshop	\$20		\$5,400.00	
Approx. Total Expenses			\$65,725.00	

Grants for Start-Up

FedNor
 AAC
 The Co-operators
 something that supports technology development
 Ontario redit Union Charitable Foundation
 Meridian- Good Neighbor Program

Looking at the Assumptions, the estimated revenues and expenses approx. \$35,000 will have to come from grants

Contributions from co-ops and credit unions in the province may be one way of reducing the impact of the expenses
 With a grant for technology development we may be able to pay for the web portal over more than one year.

Figure 3: Initial Budget for the Pilot Project.

well as a site that is accessible to the public, co-operatives, students, teachers, etc. who are interested in visiting the site to learn more about the organization. If we can get a grant or a loan that will allow us to pay for this expense over time then this will significantly reduce the current deficit that the budget indicates.

Other revenue sources are possible if the co-operative incorporates including a fee for each regional group to access the web portal. To decrease the current deficit, it may be possible for the pilot regions to also contribute an ‘access fee’ back into the co-operative over time, which would equate to an owner investment into the co-operative. Additionally, exploring a multi-stakeholder structure could allow for co-operatives, credit unions or schools to become members and thereby receive discounted or additional services for their membership.

VI. Monitoring Plan

Over the next few months there will be numerous event and tasks that need to occur in order to get the pilot to the point where it can launch and begin operations. The Gantt chart will provide the on-going overview and vision for the direction of the project. From May of 2008 to January 2009 (the target day for the launch of the pilot), a monitoring chart will be created every month to prioritize the tasks and make sure that the project is moving forward according to

schedule. By developing the monitoring report/plan on a monthly basis, tasks can be anticipated and also modified in a more timely manner. In October when the 12 initial worker-members are expected to be hired, the number of monitoring tools will increase as regular group meetings will begin, regular check-ins with individual members will begin and stats will also begin being collected. Stats collection will be for such things as number of inquiries (phone calls, emails), and the number of meetings with potential clients (school principals, teachers, university professors and co-operatives). To illustrate how the summer tasks will be monitored, Figure 4 is the monitoring report for the month of May. In May the majority of the work will involve setting up the framework for how the project will advance over the remainder of the summer months.

Figure 4. Monitoring Report for the month of May 2008

Activities	Dates	Status	Timeliness	Explanation for delay	Alternative Action	Attainment of Output
Develop a youth recruitment package	Start: May 1, 2008 End: May 31, 2008	Not started	As planned	N/A	Completion by May 20, 2008 would be ideal	Target: Develop 2 packages, 1 for youth, and 1 for teachers to identify students who may be interested, well suited.
Financing from co-ops	Start: May 1, 2008 End: May 26, 2008	Not started	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: Complete funding applications for at least 2 of the 3 key co-op funders of this project: Meridian, Ontario Credit Union Charitable Foundation, The Co-operators
Survey schools in the pilot locations	Start: April 21, 2001 End: May 15, 2008	Not started	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: Speak with 3 high schools and 2 colleges and universities in each pilot community
Approach co-ops in the regional areas with the proposal	Start: May 1, 2008 End: May 31, 2008	Not started	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: Meet or speak with some (3) of On Co-op's partner co-operatives in each of the regional areas to introduce them to the project and determine ways they can be involved (support, financial, curriculum material)

Having tasks broken down into their component parts and assigning timelines to them will help for time management in the development of the project and will make evaluation easier as measurements of specifics is far more accurate and informative than using a more general to-do list.

VII. Evaluation Plan

The evaluation plan of this project will be very similar to the monitoring plan in that the indicators used for evaluation will differ depending upon the stage of development for the project. For example, the indicators used to evaluate the development of the pilot project will be used to inform the development of the pilot; what things work well, what modification needs to be made, etc. The evaluation of the pilot project will then inform and ultimately decide if the pilot should incorporate into a co-operative. Figure 5 presents an evaluation matrix for the logic model and some of the indicators that will assess the development of the overall project. As the project is developed and monitoring feedback is gained, it is likely that there will also be changes and additions to the evaluation matrix.

Overall, the evaluation matrix will seek to provide specific and measurable evidence to the impact that this project will have on youth empowerment, youth employment, educational enhancements and the development of the co-operative sector in Ontario.

Figure 5. Evaluation Plan Matrix

Outcomes	Indicators	Data Gathering Method(s)	Source(s)	Timeframe
Long-term outcome 1: To change the employment options that are available to students (17-25)	Number of regional locations	Internal statistics collection	Project manager	Annual
	Number of jobs created	Internal stats Member #s from inc. youth co-ops	Project manager The co-ops or FSCO	
Long-term outcome 2: To have academic institutions recognize co-ops as one of the business models & integrate co-op content into the curriculum	Number of workshops being delivered	Internal stats collection	Member-owners	Monthly tally, annual comparisons
	% of co-op content in Ontario secondary and post secondary school curriculum	Survey	Participating educational institutions	Beginning of project, 3 years, 5 years, 10 years
Intermediate outcome 1: Meaningful employment of youth through a co-operative	Number of jobs created	Internal stats collection	Project manager	Annual
	Member owner feedback	Annual interviews and exit interviews with member-owners	Member-owners	Annual and at conclusion of employment
	Length of time with the co-op	Involvement in the sector after age 25		1 yr, 2 yrs and 5yrs after leaving the co-op
Intermediate outcome 2: Recognition and	Number of inquiries from young people (under 25) about the	Statistics collection of numbers for phone, and email	Member-owners	Monthly

utilization of the co-operative model amongst young people	co-op model Number of youth co-ops developed and incorporated	inquiries, also # of groups requesting meetings with a developer	FSCO, On Co-op	Quarterly (can use to cross-check)
Short-term outcome 1: Develop the transferable skills of youth member-owners	Audience engagement Ability to answer questions Contributions to the co-op (sit on a committee, be a Director, etc.) Evaluation feedback	Peer feedback (form & observation) Project manager feedback (observation) Participant evaluation forms	Co-workers Project manager Workshops participants	Quarterly During training and then bi annually Following each workshop
Short-term outcome 2: Develop relationships and partnerships with existing co-ops	Number of co-ops and credit unions that contribute to the co-op: financially, with resources or by providing training	Amount of granted money Stats collection	Financial reports Internal tracking system	Monthly during the pilot, and then annually after incorporation
Short-term outcome 3: Co-op education to students in secondary & post secondary school	Number of workshops per month per region Workshop attendance	Facilitators to collect stats Workshop evaluation forms	Member-owners Participants	Upon completion of each workshop

VIII. Sustainability Plan

From the initial idea for the development of this co-operative, the intention has always been that this will be a co-operative that changes the landscape of the co-operative sector in Ontario. By creating an opportunity for young people to utilize the co-operative model to create employment for themselves, and by contributing to the education that is available to them and to their peers, young people will gain exposure to business that aligns with their values. Creating the framework of this co-operative as a worker co-op allows for the member-owners to continually shape the operations of the co-op while maintaining the vision of youth empowerment. The good feeling of creating space and providing young people with the support to develop connections through co-operation is not enough to sustain this co-operative into the future. There are a number of realities that will impact the sustainability of this co-operative, inclusive of, but not limited to the following: financial circumstances-- partnerships, the political environment-- politics, the relevance and meaning of membership, and the reality of continual turnover due to the student/ young adult life-- participation.

To address the financial sustainability of the co-operative developing a revenue stream will be critical, therefore partnerships are essential to the future of this project. Start-up will be very dependent upon grants and access to grants is made possible because the Ontario Co-operative Association has agreed to host the pilot. Having On Co-op host the pilot allows the group to begin working and revising the co-operative structure before incorporating. However, within the first 2-3 years of operations it will be necessary for the co-operative to be able to move away from this dependence on grants and be able to rely on and build upon a revenue stream. To develop to this level meeting with and surveying potential educational institutions and co-

operatives who would be interested in utilizing the services of this co-operative is necessary. From these stakeholders the co-operative will need to form partnerships and know if they are willing and able to pay for such services and how much. If this is not possible, the group will then have to identify alternatives; perhaps increased sponsorship from Ontario's co-operatives and credit unions or maybe sponsorship directly from the Ministry of Education on behalf of all schools as an investment into the curriculum. Gathering and evaluating this information will be one of the key functions of the pilot project. Related to this a plan for the financial sustainability of this co-operative will be the evaluation of the operational sustainability. If both the financials and the operations indicate interest and positive results incorporation of the pilot structure into a formal co-operative is an ideal movement toward the long-term future of this project. Incorporation will add legitimacy to the group, to the structure and it will provide access to sources of income and funding, and provide some protections to the individual member-owners that would otherwise be unavailable without incorporation.

The political environment will also have a role in the sustainability of this project. There are two different groups that will play a role here: the co-operative sector and the education sector. Both parties need to see value in the services being provided by this co-operative and both need to see these services as complementary and in partnership, not in competition with the services that each currently provides. From the beginning of this project the services provided by the youth will be presented and delivered as complementary to the co-operative sector, as a way for the co-operative sector to support the interests and initiatives of young people as they learn, experience, demonstrate and work through the values of co-operation. Frequent updates and reports back to the co-operative sector will ensure the transparency of the information that the member-owners are sharing with their peers, about the co-operative sector and also on any other workshop topics that are developed.

Additionally, the education sector needs to see the value of young people 'learning through doing', and actively contributing to the educational environment in a positive way. The services provided by co-operative are also not meant to criticize the works of teachers but to complement them and the curriculum by providing knowledge in a style that is not currently readily available. Navigating these politics will require on-going monitoring and evaluation and transparent partnerships with both of these stakeholders.

The third main factor contributing to the sustainability of this co-operative will be the participation of the member-owners themselves. They will need to be engaged in all aspects of the business development. In addition to employment and delivering workshops to other students, other critical inclusions for the worker-owners will be learning about, being involved in and making decisions about the operations and strategic direction of the co-operative. The structure of the Board and Board training will be critical for this group. Although the group has not incorporated yet the structure is already being researched and having an advisory board particularly for the pilot project will allow for a more realistic development experience and hopefully an easier transition into incorporated operations. Taking factors about the lives of young people into consideration will also contribute to the sustainability of this project. Policies will have to be developed to articulate how membership is dealt with as students move, which is likely the case when attending post-secondary school. Participation in all aspects of the co-

operative will give member-owners the ability to best understand the co-operative and how the co-operative model can be used in other applications to meet other needs.

In summary being conscious of the value and reality of partnerships, politics and participation are significant elements that will contribute to the viability of this project into the future.

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Appendix B

Youth and Co-operatives: Briefing paper for CCA Youth Action Strategy (February 2009)

Background

The Canadian Co-operative Association is celebrating its 100th Anniversary in 2009, with the theme of *Celebrating a Century of Co-operation: Honouring the Past Building the Future*. Special events throughout the year allow CCA and co-operators across Canada to reflect on the past, while looking to the future with insight, inspiration and numerous opportunities for 2009 and the next one hundred years.

This briefing paper aims to provide an overview of what young people are currently experiencing as they search for engaging and meaningful careers. This paper:

- highlights the current entry points for young people into Canadian co-operatives;
- identifies some of the gaps in youth engagement, and;
- puts forward proposal for initiatives that CCA and other co-operative members at various levels, throughout the sector can undertake to increase the involvement of young people and the sustainability of co-operatives for years to come.

Additionally, this paper recognizes that CCA has had a history of youth involvement which has changed and evolved over time. As the CCA Anniversary approached, CCA made a commitment to develop a Youth Action Strategy as one of the major initiatives shaping the centenary celebrations. The commitment to develop a Youth Action Strategy looks to the future, increasing the awareness and participation among young Canadians in co-operatives.

The CCA Board is asked to consider this paper, the proposals set out to increase youth involvement and engagement in the co-operative movement and determine a strategic direction for CCA to take a leadership role (in partnership with other stakeholders) with youth and co-operatives. A number of strategic questions have been prepared at the end of this paper to help shape the discussion at the Board meeting in February 2009.

Canadian Co-operative Association and Youth: a brief history

Youth engagement has been on the radar of the co-operative movement for generations. The need to increase the membership of young people in co-ops was recognized as early as 1949 when the Co-operative Union of Canada would organize youth nights during their annual congresses.

However, over the next 40 years the active participation of the boomer demographic influenced the evolving needs addressed by the Canadian co-operative movement. By the early to mid 1990's the context began to shift. As the boomer population began to prepare for retirement, the need for youth participation surfaced again as a means of solving upcoming employee shortages. In the face of this context CCA began to look for sustainable solutions including:

- In 1991 the CCA board of directors made a commitment to the development of young people. This commitment was reaffirmed in 1994 when the board recognized the need to encourage young people to be involved.
- In 1995 CCA developed a comprehensive idea portfolio entitled “Today’s Youth Tomorrow’s Leaders” providing tools and activities that could encourage participation of children and young adults (10-24) within co-operatives. In the 90s CCA also produced 3 learning modules for high school students and 1 module (Tales from the Rainbow) for primary school children.

In the late 1990’s CCA went through a period of restructuring and re-organization and, as a result, youth engagement was put on hold.

In 2008, for the first time, the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) and le Conseil Canadien de la Coopération et de la mutualité (CCCM), worked in partnership to organize a Congress in Winnipeg. One of the events highlighting the joint national congress was a Youth Forum between young Anglophone and Francophone co-operators. The day before the Joint Youth Forum the Anglophone and Francophone youth met separately as both groups are organized in a different manner and to a different degree and therefore had separate business to attend to.

The CCA Youth Forum (June 25, 2008)

To set the context for the CCA Youth Forum at the 2008 Congress, a background paper was prepared for participants to help to provide some context for the discussion. The paper harvested information from a wide range of sources including informal interviews and member websites, as well as materials published by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, Statistics Canada, HRSDC, the National Young Leaders Task Force of the Credit Union Central of Canada (CUCC) and CCA. This background paper has been posted to the CCA Board website for you to view.

In compiling information from these sources, the report stated that young people in Canada face three areas that present a combination of obstacles and opportunities: **education, employment and empowerment**. Such issues as the high cost of education, access to professional development and the gap between experience and recognition create challenges for young people in every sector. In the co-operative sector, these challenges are further complicated by a lack of public awareness about co-operatives, a lack of co-operative education being integrated into academic curriculum and the unique way that co-operatives engage in business.

The fifteen young people who participated in the CCA forum were asked four questions:

- Where do you see yourself in the co-operative movement in 10 years? (Ideal future)
- Where do you see the co-operative movement in 10 years?
- What are the barriers to co-operative youth engagement in Canada?
- Working in groups, participants were asked to prepare a timeline and estimate the cost of possible opportunities to meet the needs identified in the previous exercises.

The youth identified three areas where they saw themselves playing a greater role in co-operatives and, by coincidence, these three areas were:

Education

- A number of participants have been through the provincial co-operative camp programs or involved in them through some capacity and are looking to remain involved or to become more involved in the development and co-ordination of these programs.
- There was also interest in formal education and being champions for co-operative curriculum development at the primary and secondary school levels, as well as the development of co-operative and social economy programs at the undergraduate level and continuing programs at the graduate level.

Employment

- The very positive result from this section is that once young people are exposed to co-operatives, there is a great interest amongst them and their peers to remain working for co-operatives and to build a career within the co-operative community.
- The scope of the sector, from grassroots to national level involvement, as well as the diversity of roles and sectors within co-operatives and credit unions was a very appealing feature to the young people.

Empowerment

- Many participants are seeking to develop more training opportunities for young people, and also accessing and/or developing tools and resources for young people to develop their own co-operative initiatives.
- Participants also noted how important governance is to co-operatives and how fundamental and valuable board experience is within co-operatives. Young people are seeking more opportunities to learn more about co-operative governance and to take on a director role with a co-operative.

While there was a lot of optimism and hope for the future amongst the participants of the CCA Youth Forum, the participants were also very candid about the barriers young people are experiencing in Canadian co-operatives. The identified barriers are summarized into three main areas:

Stereotyping

The discussion provided insight into how young people feel they are perceived and how they view experienced co-operators. Differing views on the value of experience, the value of learning (on and off the job) and the perception of innovation and creativity create barriers to communication amongst demographic groups within co-operatives and perpetuate the existence of stereotypes.

Lack of...

While experiencing a “lack of...” something, is not a new obstacle for co-operatives to overcome, the perceived list of things that can be lacking in co-operatives continues to impact the engagement of new and young co-operators. Some of the things that were identified include, a lack of resources, such as money, supplies, general information; a lack of time, for mentorship, succession planning and training; and an overall lack of money which makes it difficult for co-operatives to remain competitive options for young people.

Cultural barriers

- It is important to note that many of the challenges that were identified through this theme are challenges that are not uniquely experienced by young people, but are experienced by all demographics throughout the co-operative movement.
- Involvement and integration into co-operatives can be challenging because the principles and values that are foundational to co-operatives are often placed in great contrast to a dominant capitalist ideology of individual gain and growth.

Attending the 2008 CCA Youth Forum were young co-operators that are currently involved in the sector in a variety of capacities. Some have been involved for many years and others have more recently been introduced to co-operatives. This reflects the make-up of people of all ages within co-operatives. Recognizing and addressing this diversity was a topic that was woven throughout the Youth Forum discussions. The participants were very clear that a strategy for co-operative youth must recognize those already introduced to co-operatives, as well as those who have not yet become involved.

Overall, the 2008 CCA Youth Forum was an insightful first step in identifying the components of a comprehensive, effective, and realistic strategy for young Canadians in co-operatives.

Points of Entry and Gaps into Canadian Co-operatives

As CCA and its members and partners within the co-operative community increasingly look to young people for their involvement and leadership in co-operatives it is important to know how young people are coming to co-operatives, how to strengthen these avenues of introduction and how to address areas where gaps occur.

For young people under the age of 14, there is very little exposure to co-operatives, with exceptions occurring with young people that live in housing co-operatives or children whose parents are active co-operative members. Across most of Canada, co-operative education is absent from primary and secondary education -- a challenge that has been addressed to varying degrees by various levels of co-operatives over time.

Young people between the ages of 14 to 18 have a few more options for exposure to co-operatives, primarily through the provincial co-operative youth programs. These programs have a rich history in many of the provinces and there have been some great success stories and spin-off projects of young people seeking out ways to remain active and engaged in co-operatives. In each province, the youth camp programs average 150 to 200 participants per year, and because these are such core programs to the provincial associations, there may be some way to support

their growth and build them up further. However, lack of resources have prevented many of the provincial programs from developing strong and lasting ways to maintain contact and keep engaged with camp participants after their camp experience.

A notable gap, and one where CCA, provincial associations and other co-operative members can focus their efforts is on young people between the ages of 18 to 25. For this demographic there is a lack of resources and engagement mechanisms available. Some co-operatives integrate students through school co-op programs or internship programs and a couple of provincial associations, such as On Co-op and the MYDAS program, have developed successful internship programs for college and university graduates. However, none of these programs are standardized across the country and the continuity of these programs is most often dependent on government funding.

College and university undergraduate curricula do not educate students about co-operatives. As a result, young people can move through their entire formal education without ever being exposed to co-operatives. For young people who directly enter into a career, they are likely to miss out on co-operatives if they have no previous knowledge or exposure. Other young people interested in pursuing their education at the graduate level have options to pursue studies at a number of renowned co-operative centres across Canada and through many different disciplines. The interdisciplinary nature of co-operatives creates a potential entry point for engaging increasing numbers of young people in co-operatives.

Finally, employment is a desirable way for young people to become engaged in co-operatives and to remain active in co-operatives for years to come. Many employees within co-operatives often get involved in other roles beyond their current position, through, for example, participation on the boards of other co-operative organizations. This is advantageous to the sector and will need to occur at an accelerated rate with the numerous retirements that will be occurring over the next few years. A great advantage to co-operatives is the great diversity in the types of positions and areas of work that they offer.

One of the challenges co-operatives face with regards to employment, is that few people, especially young people, actively seek out co-operatives as their choice employer. People of all ages working within the co-operative sector have stories of how they came to work for a co-operative unintentionally and once learning about co-operatives have found meaningful work and have built a career. In developing a youth action strategy it is important for seek out ways to make the succession of co-operatives less accidental and more intentional.

More Integrated Youth Engagement across Canada

To develop an action strategy for young Canadian co-operators, CCA has a key and crucial role to play. While many other co-operatives, co-operative sectors and provincial associations have already begun developing strategies to engage young people, CCA has the opportunity to network with existing groups who are developing strategies and brokering relationships that young people are seeking and to promote consistency in development across the country. As a national association, CCA is in a key position to provide a co-ordinating role amongst the provincial and sector-based youth-focused initiatives currently taking place and creating the linkages that currently don't exist across provincial and sector strategies.

While CCA is still in the development stage of the youth action strategy, the CCA Board is asked to consider a tiered and integrated approach during the development of the strategy. The following recommendations are a combination of research on other organizations and suggestions from the CCA Youth Forum participants, all suggestions are relevant and applicable to the overall areas of *education, employment and engagement*, as identified during the National Youth Forum in Winnipeg. We are aware of the timing within the planning cycle and as a result we have made modest recommendations that will take us to a place where more we can move forward on a more detailed strategy and become part of the strategic planning cycle. Included with the recommendations are a brief timeline and associated costs.

Recommendations

1. Engagement with Co-operative Youth Program Managers

Currently, the Co-operative Youth Program Managers, employed by the provincial associations, meet quarterly to share best practices and co-ordinate resources between their programs. CCA has been participating in these calls in an informal way, but there is an opportunity here to engage with this group in a much more formal manner, by becoming a standing and on-going participant. This means meeting regularly and working with this group to remain informed about their priorities and initiatives and sharing and gathering feedback about both CCA and provincial youth initiatives. (Next meeting: May 2009. Likely costs: conference calls)

2. Provincial and sector consultation

Many of the provincial associations and sector federations are building networks of youth within their provinces. CCA needs to conduct a mapping exercise to determine the stage of development for each of these provincial, sector and member youth initiatives and to encourage the development of provincial networks that can be accessed and used as champions within their communities. Through the consultations it would also be important for CCA to liaise with the francophone youth network and the existing sectoral youth strategies, such as the credit union and housing sector initiatives already in place. (Start spring/summer 09 and continue for at least 6 months. No costs should be assigned except staff time.)

3. Establishment of National Youth Caucus

The formation of a National Youth Caucus, co-ordinated by CCA would allow for on-going interaction and feedback between young provincial co-operators, the sectoral associations that are currently developing youth initiatives and established co-operatives who are making commitments to co-operative youth engagement. Additionally, it would be beneficial for this group to be made up one CCA board director, a CCA staff resource, an academic or student from one of the Canadian university co-operative sectors and a representative from the National Francophone Co-operative Network. This group of 10 to 15 would meet via phone or web conference, quarterly to share updates, best practices, discuss ways that they can co-ordinate their efforts and when appropriate provide recommendations to the CCA Board. The mandate and Terms of Reference for the Youth Caucus will evolve once consultations and mapping has occurred with youth and more concrete actions and a more autonomous action strategy has been developed. The Committee would report to the Board and provide regular updates on its

discussion and proposals for future activities. (Start date: Spring 2009 Likely costs Conference calls).

4. Using New Technology

The participants of the CCA Youth Forum felt it particularly important to work on creating opportunities for increased numbers and diverse ages of people to network and learn from one another through virtual interactions. Many of the suggestions by the participants focused on the use of technology to carry out consultations and share best practices e.g. via webinars. Additionally, working with the provincial associations to consult with some of their camp participants would also be beneficial. The use of technology is one of the key ways of developing the education and engagement recommendations. Overall, it is important to ensure that young people be active in a youth strategy, while working with and being supported by experienced co-operators.

5. Funding New Initiatives

Additionally, CCA needs to identify and explore ways to access funding and support to increase the number of young people that are able to access CCA, social economy and co-operative events that provide valuable opportunities for networking and professional development; such events include CCA's Annual Congress, the Institute for Co-operative Studies, encouraging staff to volunteer as facilitators for the provincial co-operative youth camp programs and the annual Canadian Association for Studies in Co-operation Conference.

CCA staff are proposing allocating \$5000 to the Youth Action Strategy development and liaising with sector/provincial youth strategies for the year 2009/10. The use of the \$5000 will largely be dedicated to developing webinars and setting up Caucus meetings via conference call. One of the activities of the Youth Caucus will be to identify other funding sources from co-operatives (in the form of sponsorship) and appropriate federal government funding sources.

The challenges are numerous and large amounts of resources could certainly expedite the progress that is made in engaging young Canadians in co-operatives, however, there are a number of equally valuable initiatives that CCA can begin now, by working with our co-operative members and partners and doing so without a large strain on resources. The most important component of the strategy is that it needs to begin now.

Summary of Key Points

- The Need: To increase the presence of youth within co-operatives, to make youth aware of the co-operative model and to make connections between all generations within the co-operative movement.
- The best way to engage young people is to talk with them, and to do this on a regular and on-going basis; therefore the development of a national youth caucus would serve to support and network other provincial and sector initiatives already taking place.

- With the changing workplace demographics co-operatives need to take a more active role in succession planning, to make co-operatives employers of choice, rather than chance career builders.
- Many of the challenges and barriers that young people experience when entering the co-operative sector, are also being experienced by many other demographics, regardless of age, therefore youth engagement strategies can have applications to wider demographics.
- The foundations of co-operative, the principles, and the structure of the business model are very attractive to young Canadians, and education and promotion are the greatest resources that CCA can offer.

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