

# Measuring and Mapping the Impact of Social Enterprises: Co-operatives

## Researchers

Rose Olfert, University of Saskatchewan

Mark D. Partridge, Ohio State University

Chipo Kangayi, graduate student, University of Saskatchewan

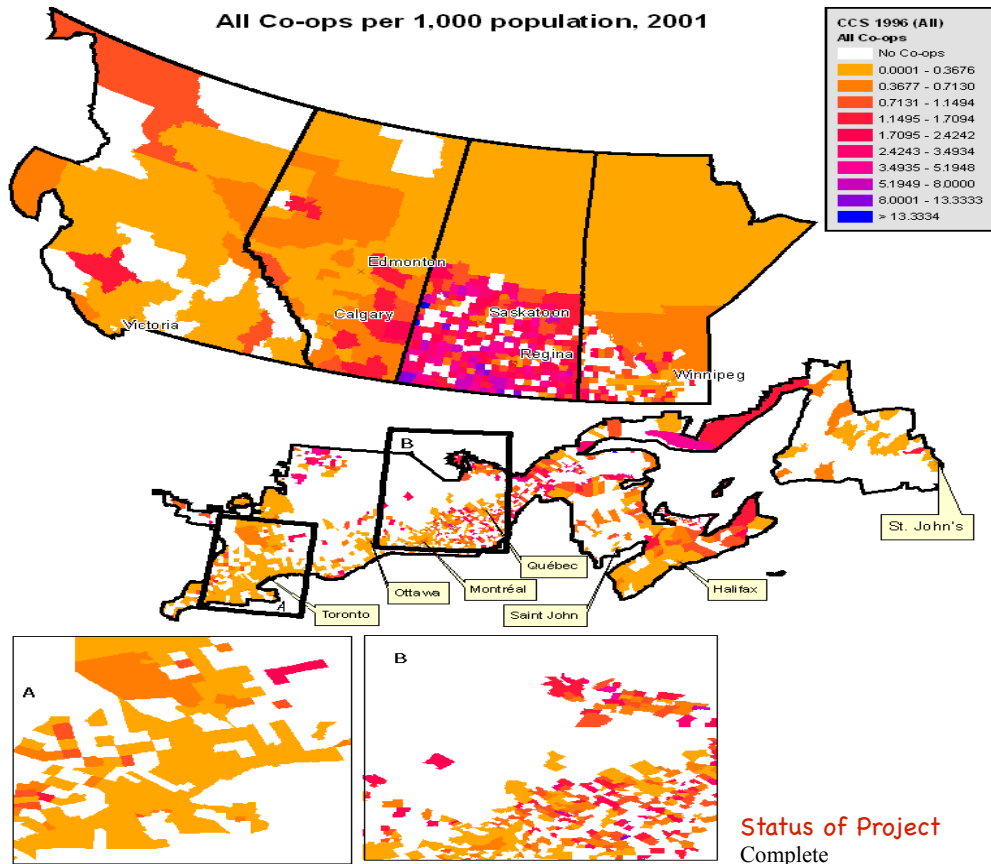


Figure 1. Distribution of Co-operatives, 2005

## Why Investigate the Impact of Co-operatives?

- The research proposes that as a form of social enterprises, co-operatives create and enhance the social capital within communities. These attributes may enhance communities, especially rural, to be viable and attractive.
- This premise is supported by a growing concern for the decline of most rural communities in most regions in Canada.

## The Research

- The major objective is to investigate the impact of co-operatives on community growth and vitality.
- In addition to Co-operatives Secretariat data, researchers used a set of geographically coded socio-economic variables to estimate a model of population change.
- Choice of dependent variable is vital because an area's growth vitality and growth is best measured by its population dynamics.

## Research Findings

- At the national level there was no marginal effect of co-op impact on community growth. However, some positive co-op effects were found when geography was reduced to regions and by co-op type. These results suggest there maybe scope for co-ops to built on their social capital attributes. Further research in this regard maybe informative.
- Figure 1 represents the spatial distribution of co-operatives across western, central, and eastern Canada. The northern territories are not accounted for due to data limitations. Saskatchewan seems to exhibit the densest co-ops.
- Data collected by the Co-operatives Secretariat show that there are 7,073 active co-operatives in these parts of Canada.

Updated 10 Avril 08 — CL4-06