

Building Blocks for Strong Communities

Results of Key Informant
Interviews

Susan Carter

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Susan Carter

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March 2006



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Canada 

Preface

This report is one of four produced by Imagine Canada and the Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN) as part of a study of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and small- and medium-sized community organizations (SMOs) in Canada.

The study compared the structure, development and supports for SMEs and SMOs in Canada and also examined supports available to SMEs and SMOs in other countries. Drawing on learnings from Canadian and international experience, the study made recommendations on how public supports for SMOs in Canada could be improved.

The other three reports produced as part of this study are:

Building Blocks for Strong Communities: Key Findings and Recommendations

Building Blocks for Strong Communities: A Profile of Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises in Canada

Building Blocks for Strong Communities: A Profile of Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises in Canada.

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Introduction

As part of the study on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Small and Medium Nonprofit Organizations (SMOs) a number of key informants were interviewed for their insights and perspectives. The thirteen key informants were individuals with considerable experience in the business world or the nonprofit world or both. They have experience and expertise as practitioners, academics, business people, and public servants, and from several jurisdictions. A list of the questions that shaped the interviews is attached. Each interview had a particular focus and emphasis according to the background and interests of the key informant. Their responses were then grouped according to the major subject and themes. All of the content of this report came from the interviews with the Key Informants. A listing of those Informants is attached.

The results from the Key Informant Interviews are striking in their consistency with the results of the literature reviews and environmental scans. The Key Informants frequently provided more real-life examples and concrete proposals for tackling critical issues but their analysis of the central issues and proposed directions was very aligned with findings from other quarters.

Their input was extremely valuable and we thank them for their time and thoughtful responses.

Public Policy Purpose

Public policy purpose underlying supports for SMEs rests on their contribution to the economy, and the importance of that contribution given the size of the sector. Attention to the SME sector at the level of public policy and support became a focus in the 1980's as the size of the SME component was documented and demonstrated. SMEs are seen as critical for the creation of jobs and the strength that they can bring to local economies. They are also viewed as an engine for policies of economic development, for either disadvantaged population groups or particular regions or communities.

Public policy purpose for SMOs differs in some major respects. Where support for SMEs is based on what they do (as opposed to their worthiness), the same standard is not necessarily applied to SMOs, but should be given their very significant roles in community. The policy rationale underlying supports for SMOs which in some cases are similar to those for SMEs, fall into the following categories:

- contribution to the economy: they create jobs, and at 1.3 million, are bigger than many industry sectors which benefit from public support and investment;
- service delivery; as they key vehicle for delivery of public programs and services, their well-being is therefore in the public interest;
- innovation: they are the well-source of social innovation;
- citizenship: they are the learning ground for democratic skills and citizen involvement;
- social Inclusion: they are a central vehicle for engaging disadvantaged groups and regions;
- resilient communities and social capital: SMOs are the heart of strong communities and the generation of social capital.

“Governments should value and support SMOs for what they bring to community life”

“The answer to improving the quality of life in community lies primarily with SMOs”

Central Contributions and Success in Each Sector

The overriding success for SMEs is measured in jobs and rate of return, not necessarily the number of jobs (for firms which have sustainability rather than growth as their objective) but the right number of jobs, and the rate of return or bottom line. Many pointed out however that this view understates the SME objectives in terms of product/service and quality, which in many cases figure even more prominently in their decision-making than the bottom line. But broadly speaking, rate of return and profitability serve as a crude but widely recognized measure of success for SMEs.

Success for SMOs is defined more in terms of outcomes and of whether the organization is carrying out its mission, improving the quality of life for the communities/populations they serve – which is much harder to measure.

Both SMEs and SMOs have substantial stakes in the communities where they operate and both spend time figuring out how to survive. There were suggestions that SMOs search for survival is really a search to keep up with the changing needs they serve and the changing environment in which they do so.

A number pointed out the cross-overs between SMEs and SMOs: nonprofits make huge contributions to the economy and organizations in the for-profit sector make significant social contributions: the difference is what is done with any surplus – become profit or turned back in to the organization or the community.

Many of the key informants also pointed out the need to be sensitive to the differences within each of these sectors. Within SMEs, there are enormous differences at almost every level between a family-owned business and a public one. And for SMOs there are great variations in terms of operations, revenue sources, entrepreneurial activity and decision-making across faith institutions, arts organizations and social services, to mention just a few points on the continuum.

The respective challenges that SMEs and SMOs face and the strategies they adopt are the subject of much of the rest of this paper.

Life Cycles/Transition Points

SMEs and SMOs

Life cycles of SMEs are more documented and understood than those in SMOs although there are certain similarities in what constitute some of the transition points.

Several suggested that SMEs form and disband more quickly, that SMOs are more likely to hang on longer, perhaps due to the presence of volunteers. SME cycles are often driven primarily by internal factors, i.e. management and growth, whereas SMO cycles are more affected by external factors including needs being served and funding availability.

Some of the central transitions experienced by both SMEs and SMOs look alike: SMEs often wrestle with “founder syndrome” as the creator of a firm has difficulty moving to a next stage of management and operations. This phenomenon is familiar to many SMOs where the original team or the founder has trouble either delegating to staff hired to take on some of the roles or designing a structured organization where roles are differentiated.

On the SME side, there are supports targeted to particular stages in the life cycle – particularly start ups, high-growth firms, and to a lesser extent “troubled” firms. In addition funding is sometimes available to help small firms through particular transitions such as ‘re-engineering’ initiatives.

SMOs could certainly benefit from deliberate assessment and supports that recognize certain stages in their development. The network hubs (described below) could have such support among their programs and services. Similarly, training programs could recognize such transitions and build them into their curricula.

Innovation

SMEs

Innovation is a clear contribution regardless of the field, leading to greater productivity and to collective skill and knowledge in the field. Innovation is closely related to entrepreneurial skill, “reading the market” and the readiness for new products and services. Some have suggested that true break-through innovation is more likely to happen in small businesses where there is often no choice but to figure out a new way to build a product/deliver a service: in larger firms, they suggest, with resources already invested in particular technologies or approaches, the change is more likely to be more incremental.

Several referred to the conditions favourable to innovation, including to value of clusters where academic institutions and young entrepreneurial companies are located close to one another and can create a critical mass partly through physical proximity. Positive tax incentives can also multiply the effect by persuading others to relocate there. In addition there are a number of measures in place to encourage or support innovation, ranging from R&D tax credits to loans or grants focused on innovation.

SMOs

Many – in fact most – social innovation originates with SMOs – some from organizations experimenting with new forms of program design or service delivery, and some from organizations which are created in the first place for the purpose of implementing a new approach or publicizing and mobilizing around an emerging issue. Most of the issues on the social policy agenda today first saw the light of day through such innovations.

Government supports for innovation by SMEs focuses on R&D and technology, i.e. in the laboratory, but for SMOs, the community is the laboratory. Much of the innovation by SMOs is at this micro level, at the level of neighbourhood or particular school or recreation centre: often it is rooted in that particular community and does not export well. That being said there remains a need to be able to facilitate and encourage the development of community-level innovations and to take the innovating if not the particular models to scale. (In other words, while the Dufferin

Grove Park Pizza Oven may have proved very effective as a catalyst to neighbourhood solidarity, the central question is what supports would be useful in allowing different innovations of this sort and this scale to emerge elsewhere).

For SMOs, the key innovation factors are leadership but also governance, i.e. boards of directors. Boards are rooted in communities: SMOs are there to respond to needs and the needs continue so organizations HAVE to adapt and innovate and Boards are there to do this.

Innovation by SMOs is often inhibited by lack of time (i.e. the pressures of delivering core programs and searching for resources) and by the absence of good information; respondents were unanimous that solid information about what works and what doesn't and 'what is out there' is critical. The provision of such information would make a large difference in the capacity of SMOs to undertake more innovation.

Management

SMEs

The management of SMEs is crucial – in fact it is usually cited as the single most important success factor, and the majority of small business failures is attributed to internal factors, primarily failure of management. Many point out that despite the large number of academic business programs, a large percentage of those who create a business do not have any particular training or knowledge and “learn by doing.”

At the heart of management is the capacity to have the clear idea, a solid plan and then the right people to carry it out. The value of a separate governance structure like a board of directors is to keep an eye on how each of these elements are playing out and ensure that the central purpose – the idea – is not being neglected or pushed aside by other pressures and that the plan is adapted and adjusted as necessary so that it continues to advance the idea.

There are many supports in place to help small business managers. Governments and industry associations offer information, advice, tools, training and “back office” supports in many different forms which are elaborated elsewhere.

SMOs

The management of SMOs is equally important but much less supported. The management of a SMO is typically very ‘thin’, several said, with few staff to carry out the many tasks required, with the result that senior managers tend to be perpetually in ‘fire fighting’ mode, with little time or capacity to keep their eye on the central mission and the plan/strategies to address it. A majority of SMOs typically have very flat organizational structures with little ‘middle management’ but rely instead on project coordinators and often volunteers to carry out much of the work.

There is a major need for management training for the SMO sector. There are several nonprofit leadership and management training programs in place, but far too few to meet the demand or the need, and often not affordable or accessible for typical SMOs (i.e. not enough money, or not enough time, i.e. time away from a two or three-person operation that needs to have its doors open full-time).

A second way to help address management issues is through pooled or shared services – central or pooled service providers who can, as for small business, provide management planning and advice, coaching, and assistance with the management of transitions as well as functions such as human resources functions, accounting, communications, legal, planning and so on.

Financing

SMEs

The SME sector faces financial challenges in terms of both equity and debt financing. These challenges are well documented and the list of public or government supports in place for this purpose is extensive. The support programs and policies fall into two broad categories: direct assistance through such measures as loan guarantees, seed and even pre-seed funding for start-ups, measures in the Income Tax Act etc; and a second category of assistance to broker or facilitate or inform about access for various kinds of financial resources. Opinions vary on the adequacy of these measures; most suggest that SMEs remain under-capitalized, particularly in the middle category, and generally have more difficulty accessing funds than do larger firms, but differ on the value of more and better access. Some expressed the view that measures such as government grants are “more trouble than they’re worth” and that they create expertise in proposal writing (“grantpreneurs”) rather than in running the business.

(Another dimension of SME financing is the issue of procurement or access to government business; this is addressed separately below.)

SMOs

Financing and funding is the largest of all issues for SMOs. The increased difficulty in accessing funding (from governments and other funders) due to growing administrative strictures in the name of accountability, together with the associated proposal, compliance and reporting procedures, added to the growing shift away from funding for operations or ‘core’ in favour of short-term funding for specific projects have created a severe lack of sustainable, predictable funding. These problems are compounded by the dissonance between short-term priorities and funding on the one hand, and long-term, on-going needs and issues on the other. Even where the overall amounts being invested by any particular government is increasing, this has been more than offset by the additional complexity in accessing and spending these funds. Service contracts with business usually have few strings but those with SMOs have myriad conditionalities – which in fact often undermine the quality and timeliness of implementation.

The other principal sources of revenue for SMOs – earned income and donations – are usually insufficient. And some of the other forms, such as debt financing, have traditionally fallen outside the realm of possibility. The key dimension is the accumulation of an asset base: lending traditionally is based on the existence of assets which can be borrowed against, so in the absence of such assets, or anticipated return on investment, lending has been rare. Organizations need “patient capital” to be able to leverage private financing and to be able to reinvest and use over long periods of time.

A further reason mitigating against lending relates to the particular risks and consequences of failure (“no bank wants to be the one described as responsible for the closing of the women’s shelter”).

There are a few examples of way to address some of these issues. Work is underway to create a Charity Bank. On another front, an investment fund for SMOs in Quebec owned and operated by organizations and financed by both private and public monies, has had a lower loss rate than that for enterprises and the resulting innovations were extraordinary.

Many spoke about the importance of having diverse sources of funding. This is sometime described as avoiding over-dependence on one form of funding, and refers to a situation where funding from one source, or one funder, constitutes such a large percentage of overall revenue that removal of that source would put the organization at risk.

Funding challenges for the sector are not unique to Canada. Many informants spoke about initiatives that have been developed in other jurisdictions. The types of initiatives include

Efforts to improve the way in which governments undertake project funding including such things as multi-year funding where possible, shared or front-end application processes, “passporting” (the British term) whereby organizations with a proven track record or those who have contracted with a department before use simplified procedures [many proposals of this sort were included in the study by the Treasury Board Secretariat under the VSI and subsequently laid out in the Code of Good Practice on Funding].

A second category cited by a number of respondents consists of building a certain level of operating or core costs into contracts or grants: the Treasury Board study (above) referred to this as ‘strategic investment’ and laid out how costs of components such as technology, communication, staff development etc. could be built in to contracts [these were put forward as recommended measures but it is not known to what degree they are being implemented]; in England government and the sector are currently working on a “Compact Plus” model whereby full cost recovery for infrastructure and operations would be calculated and built in to contracts for goods and services.

A third direction is that of core funding by governments, in recognition of the role played by sector organizations in building strong communities: the Quebec Government under the terms of a 2001 Policy on Community Action agreed to fund community action organizations (defined as all SMOs excepting faith, coops and labour orgs and social economy, which have access to different programs for business) on a three-year renewable basis for a significant portion of their operating costs.

A fourth stream recommended to cited by many is entrepreneurialism or the development of revenue through ‘related business’; a number of examples were cited, from the former Addiction Research Council in Ontario selling abroad some of the services it contracted to provide free of charge at home; or the Family Services Association selling EAP programs widely (while noting that people from the private sector are hired to run these).

Networks/Partnerships and Infrastructure

SMEs

A range of networks and umbrellas exist for SMEs; some are local cross-industry (local chambers of commerce, service clubs), some are industry-specific, in both cases usually rolling up into provincial and/or national umbrella organizations; and some, such as the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, have individual members directly served by regional offices as well as national (with a separate Quebec wing). These organizations constitute a voice for their members collectively and for their issues and perspectives. They often conduct research to inform their membership and to document and shed light on their needs and concerns. They provide useful concrete services and they constitute a forum for discussion and collaboration.

These organizations are financed in most instances by membership fees, although in some cases they take on particular projects for governments. Many respondents discussed the real contribution of these infrastructure organizations, particularly in more rural parts of the country.

SMOs

Infrastructure networks are much thinner and occasional in the nonprofit sector than in the SME area. There are a number of organizations that operate across Canada with a series of branches and affiliates; the YMCA, the United Way, the United Church of Canada, the Boys and Girls Clubs, Canadian Cancer Society and so on all have a organizational members in different locations.

A second type of networks is the coalitions across subsectors. Some of these are groupings under umbrella organizations e.g., the Canadian Conference of the Arts, the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, the Canadian Council for International Cooperation or the Canadian Association of Youth-Serving Agencies, while others are purpose-built coalitions, e.g., the Canadian Environmental Network of small environmental organizations across Canada, or the Canadian Health Charities Council. While these exist in a number of subsectors, others do not have a recognized on-going overall umbrella organization or coalition.

A third category are the umbrella organizations which address large horizontal areas of sector activities e.g., volunteerism, philanthropy, or policy action. Organizations such as Imagine Canada, Volunteer Canada, Philanthropic Foundations Canada and Community Foundations Canada fall within this category.

Additionally, the last few years have seen the beginnings of some geographic cross-sectoral coalitions or networks at the city-level – and a few at a regional or provincial level. Networks such as the Calgary Chamber of Charities or the British Columbia Voluntary Organizations Coalition are deliberately cross-sector and provide opportunities for collaboration and collective action. But these are few (a total of barely a dozen) and far between and most are still fledgling.

However the fact remains that membership in any of these networks is the exception rather than the rule. Estimates are that at least 75% of SMOs are not part of any network. They operate alone.

“The loneliest job in the world, running a small nonprofit”

“There is a thirst in the sector to connect and network”

Networks can facilitate collaboration but can also play a key role in providing for the pooling and sharing of information and services (as described in the following section). Networks can grow from focused educational centres providing training and knowledge, or from cooperatives, or from deliberate geographic or sectoral issue bases and making common cause.

The value of networks of various forms is widely recognized. In the US, observers note the emergence of new kind of infrastructure to meet these SMO needs: nonprofit consultancies, state associations (now almost 3 dozen) and MSOs (see below). These have come from grass-roots push for such developments, from entrepreneurial approaches by those who recognized the gap, and been given a boost from certain grantors.

Information, Tools and Services

SMEs

There are many sources of information and services to assist SMEs. Many governments operate offices to serve small business, some physical, some electronic and some both. In Canada the Office of Small and Medium Business has just relaunched Strategis web site by Industry Canada, which is a gateway to a wealth of information useful for anyone starting or running a business; BizPal was cited as a helpful source for start-ups with information and advice on everything from start-up funds to regulations and licensing to legal help. And several provincial governments have additional services. Governments in other countries do likewise.

A second useful contribution is information. Information about market patterns, trends in the labour market and in consumer directions are all valuable to a small business operation at any stage.

SMOs

The absence of information, tools and services for SMOs is a major gap. As described above, some organizations are part of national networks which undertake to play this role for their member organizations. But the vast majority are not part of any such network and so set out to collect all the information they need to do their job, to set up sound accounting procedures, complete the legal work to form and maintain their legal status, recruit and train staff and volunteers both to help with the work and to sit on the board of directors, to launch major fundraising campaigns and to design and carry out the central mission of the organization. This situation was cited by several as the most important issue for SMOs – the unmet need for support in carrying out their work.

Marketing supports are a further dimension: SMEs have assistance to develop markets inside and outside Canada. However there is no supporting information to help SMOs do likewise.

A number of models developed to address this need elsewhere were referenced in interviews. These examples are all of central community- or city-level “hubs” where a range of services can be accessed by SMOs. Some include purchased services; a number involve pooled or “bulk” services; most include access to advice and critical information; and some include shared facilities or staff.

- MSO's (Management Services Organizations) operate in many cities in the US: they provide a large repertoire of goods and (often donated) services for NPO's, typically on a fee for service basis.
- In Wales, the government transfers funds to WCVA (the umbrella organization for the sector) which in turn distributes to organizations for such functions.
- In British Columbia the Tides Foundation operates "incubators" for start ups and small organizations, providing advice and services – human resource, legal, accounting etc. for modest fees.
- In Toronto, Windsor and many other locations, collectives or groups share facilities and infrastructure supports.

As well as helping realize economies of scale and possibilities for coordination and collaboration, such cooperatives or networks can, as was pointed out, also contribute to some "rationalization" within the sector, where similar or like-minded organizations can be encouraged to create alliances and even join together.

Such network hubs serve a public purpose in enhancing possibilities to strengthen service delivery, to realize efficiencies, to strengthen SMOs themselves and to build community capacity.

Regulations

SMEs

People from the SME world frequently have strong views on regulations – both the content ('so often developed in response to a single incident'), the multiplicity and layering from different level of government, and the growing complexity in compliance and reporting that they entail, both singly and certainly cumulatively. SMEs plead with governments for relief from the regulatory 'handcuffs' and beg to be let out from under the "perpetual and ever-growing paper burden". Most governments undertake periodic exercises to streamline or clear out their regulatory requirements, or at least review their on-going relevance. (BC was cited for its recent initiative to cut the overall number of regulatory requirements by 30% but announced recently that they had hit 40% and were continuing).

SMEs, like SMOs, are feeling the effects of increased rules and procedures designed to ensure accountability and consistency with procedures and the pleas to design 'smarter' rather than 'more' are constant. For both, the time required to carry out this work seriously undermines their ability to do their central job.

SMOs

SMOs express fewer problems than previously with the content of regulations governing charities since there have been some streamlining and clarification of these regulations. A number of issues remain with the content of the regulations but the view was expressed that progress has been made. It was noted however that compliance even with these simplified reporting measures continues to need attention.

The major and growing problems remain with the procedures in place to govern the accessing, reporting and accounting for funding from governments. There was unanimity on the need to ensure accountability through better processes rather than the myriad “hoops” which are poorly designed, implemented, and impede the work being undertaken in all sectors. A review of these measures to determine the validity and value of each was suggested as a first step to simplification while not losing sight of the need for accountability.

Taxation

SMEs

Several aspects of the tax regime were described as hostile and impediments to small business. The rates of taxation on capital are enough higher than in the US that they constitute an incentive to relocate. Overall rates of tax on income serve as a deterrent or a brake on entrepreneurial spirit. And payroll taxes – like so much employment legislation – are seen as a drag on productivity and potential. Furthermore, because the tax system is used as a vehicle to deliver a number of incentives or deterrents, its increased complexity places further demands on the small business owner.

SMOs

SMOs have fewer but very familiar concerns about the tax system – namely with the provisions in the Income Tax Act around the treatment of political activity (see advocacy) and a few other areas, notably related business (see above).

Procurement

SMEs and SMOs

The issue of procurement or access to government business was raised by several respondents. It is an issue that figures prominently in certain other jurisdictions, notably the USA and to a lesser degree in the UK. For both SMEs and SMOs, the issue is primarily about fair (and equal) access, i.e. not being excluded in favour of large players. And yet it appears that smaller players have had some access to government work: a recent CFIB survey found that half their members reported having had government contracts. The US Government in a recent policy statement on SMEs featured procurement as a major blank in their arsenal: they have created a system of “set asides” to ensure that small business will have better chances for government contracts.

The current directions within the Canadian government however are clearly and deliberately in the direction of relying more on large firms, which in turn could subcontract with smaller firms. This is raising concerns by small firms.

The question of SMO’s access to contracts for government work was addressed in the Treasury Board Secretariat (VSI) work on financing, with recommended measures such as inclusion on standing offer lists. (A December announcement by the federal government – PWGSC – informed small and medium businesses about steps in place to help them compete for government contracts. The announcement specifically included nonprofit voluntary sector organizations and invited them to register in a new standing offer data base.)

Focal Points and Profile from Governments

SMEs

Some key informants referred to the role and potential benefit of political and administrative focal points for the sector. England has a joint standing parliamentary committee on the sector as well as several distinct councils and offices that focus on enterprise in particular population groups and regions.

Views in Canada differ about the value of high-profile focal point (i.e. a minister or even department) for small business. While there is general support for dedicated agencies or departments which can provide a range of services and tools to small business, it was pointed out that a dedicated minister is usually a junior minister and the position often lets others “off the hook.”

Publicity campaigns or awareness campaigns designed to raise awareness and “value” small business were seen as moderately helpful in building a culture of entrepreneurialism.

Focal Points and Profile from Governments

SMOs

A focal point to relate to the nonprofit sector is viewed as useful but only if it has certain characteristics – only if it were high profile and from a portfolio that could relate across the whole of the sector rather than one component.

(In the UK, the Government, following the annual meeting between Ministers and Sector representatives to review progress on the Compact, announced the establishment of a new Commissioner to oversee the relationship between public bodies and the Voluntary and Community Sector.)

Respondents agreed with the value of marketing and awareness campaigns to increase the profile of a sector that is often invisible.

Appendix I – List of Key Informants

Nancy Hughes Anthony – President and CEO, Canadian Chamber of Commerce

Alan Broadbent, CEO Avana Capital; Chair Maytree Foundation

Robin Cardozo, ED, Ontario Trillium Foundation

Brenda Gainer, Director, Nonprofit Management and Leadership Program, Schulich School of Business, York University

Ted Jackson, Associate Professor, School of Public Policy and Admin, Carleton U.

Sol Kasimer, CEO, Altruvest

Nancy Neamtan, President and DG, Chantier de l'économie sociale

Susan Phillips, Director, School of Public Policy and Administration, Carleton U.

Lois Stevenson, Director, Economic Framework Policies, Strategic Policy, Industry Can.

Catherine Swift, President and CEO, Canadian Federation of Independent Business

Alan Zeesman, Director General, Community and Partnerships Directorate, SDC

Dennis Young et al: Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, Georgia State University And
CEO National Centre on Nonprofit Enterprise, Washington

Elisabeth Boris, Director, Urban Institute Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy (Washington)

Appendix II – Interview Protocol

The Canadian Policy Research Networks and Imagine Canada are conducting a study on small and medium for-profit organizations and small and medium not-for-profit organizations, to compare success factors and supports and the models and examples one sector might hold for the other.

In this work we are defining of small/medium companies as those with fewer than 500 employees. On the non-for-profit side we are using the same definition, while noting that half the nonprofit sector has no paid employees, and nearly all the rest fall into the categories of small or very small.

1. What constitutes success for small/medium for-profit *{small/medium not-for-profit}* organizations? Does this differ for large organizations?
2. What factors are critical to success for small/medium for-profit *{small/medium not-for-profit}* organizations (e.g. management, HR, environment, networking, capacity for innovation, resources, infrastructure)? How do these evolve across the ‘life cycle’ of organizations? Do they vary by size of organizations? By industry sector? By nature of the business/services?
3. What resources, policies, and supports are available for small/medium for-profit *{small/medium not-for profit}* organizations in Canada? Universal or tailored by size? Point in life cycle? Industry sector?
Are these achieving intended results? If not, why not?
4. What are the central gaps, problems and issues regarding resources, policies and supports for small/medium for profit *{small/medium not-for-profit}* organizations in Canada?
5. Do you know about similar approaches in other jurisdictions – provinces or other countries – and their outcomes?
Do you know about previous efforts in Canada or elsewhere, and their outcomes?
Could these be applied to small/medium not-for-profits as well as for-profits?
6. Both small enterprises and nonprofits engage in innovation or break new ground in identifying new issues or developing new approaches: how is such activity facilitated or impeded? How is it recognized?
7. Both small enterprises and nonprofits have a progression or life-cycle: what are some of the critical junctures each encounter and what are some of the ways to respond? What helps or hinders?



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