

A Proposal To Strengthen Cuba's Farmer Co-Operatives¹ Through Co-operative Education and Training

December 7, 2014

- Purpose:** On Feb 12 - 14th, thanks to support from the Canadian Embassy in Havana and the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives, Ryszard Stocki, Peter Hough and members of the International and Cuban Teams will meet with ANAP leaders, farm coop members and trainers at Escuela Niceto Perez to further the development of a version of the worker Coop Index appropriate for Cuba's socialist coops. This work is part of an ANAP²-led, three-year education and training program to strengthen the co-operative skills of Cuba's farmer co-ops. Our first year has focused on the development of a Cuban Coop Index Tool to allow cooperatives themselves to measure and strengthen the integration of cooperative principle. The first workshop was held February 23 and 24th 2014. Neither the Cuban Worker Coop Index nor the Cuban Producer Coop Index will be sector-dependent - once developed and tested with pilot CPAs and CCSs, both can be readily used by worker and producer coops across Cuba. Already, over 400 new non-agricultural cooperatives have been created in response to Los Lineamientos. The product of our work with ANAP will allow cooperatives in ALL SECTORS to measure and improve their inner integration of coop principles and values, strengthening their ability to deliver the promise of the cooperative model. This twins with the objectives of both Cuba (Los Lineamientos) and Canada (support for ICA's Blueprint for a Cooperative Decade).
- Background:** This initiative grew out of a Dec 2011 workshop in Havana and subsequent Cuban engagement at IMAGINE 2012 and SUMMIT meetings in Quebec City in October 2012, the International Year of Co-operatives. This project is part of the "practical" track for the farm sector.
- Context:** Cuba's farm co-ops have an important role to play as Los Lineamientos³ moves Cuba towards a more co-operative, people-centered economy. Cuba's *private* farm co-operatives fall into two categories: worker coops (Agricultural Production Cooperatives or CPA's) and producer coops (Credit and Service Cooperatives or CCS's). They are represented collectively by their member-owned organization ANAP (National Association of Small Farmers). UBPC's - Basic Units for Agricultural Production, created from the division of large state farms in the early 90's following the collapse of the Soviet Union – are also worker coops.
- Opportunity:** To work together with the Cubans to develop a training model that will empower all three types of Cuban farm co-operatives to a) improve their internal (associative and organizational) integration of co-operative values, principles, management and governance and b) facilitate their ability to come together as strong second-tier entities.⁴
- Advisory Team:** International advisory team: Wendy Holm, Manuel Mariño, Sonja Novkovic, Marcelo Vieta, Tom Webb and Bob Yuill. Canadian Associates include Peter Hough and Ryszard Stocki. Cuban advisory team: Mavis Alvarez, Grizel Donestevez, Pablo Fernandez, Gonzalo Gonzales and Jesus Cruz.
- Method:** National training seminars, in-depth member and organizational training sessions with co-operatives. Bringing in compelling cooperators like Bob Yuill to speak directly with farmers. Train the trainers courses. Co-op Index benchmarking/progress evaluation. Full Cuban ownership of training model, materials.
- Overall Funding Sought:** \$ 250,000:
- √ \$80,000 to ANAP to support 3 yrs of meetings, travel, education and training, visits to exemplars
 - √ \$50,000 to support additional in-Cuba costs to facilitate greater participation
 - √ \$112,000 to support 3 years of international travel expense for non-Cubans trainers.
- \$ Raised:** \$ 26,000
- √ \$ 5,000 Pledged: Scottish Agricultural Organizations Society
 - √ \$ 4,000 Canadian Embassy in Havana
 - √ \$ 5,000 Atlantic Central
 - √ \$ 1,000 Canada Cuba Friendship Association
 - √ \$11,000 Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (2nd Coop Index workshop February 2015)
- Proposal:** ANAP's project proposal is posted at <http://www.wendyholm.com/ANAP.Prop.English.pdf>

¹ Wendy Holm, P.Ag. M.M.C.C.U., , wendy@wendyholm.com 604-417-2434

² ANAP (*Asociación Nacional de Agricultores Pequeño*) was founded by Cuba's private farmers in 1961.

³ Los Lineamientos is a set of policy guidelines adopted by the Cuban government in the Spring of 2011 – after extensive grass roots consultation - to renovate and modernize Cuba's economy consistent with the goals and values of socialism.

⁴ Cuba supports the creation of more complex, "new type" (second tier) cooperatives. To accomplish this effectively CPA's, CCS's and UBPC's must come to the table with the same solid understanding of co-operative principles, values and organization.

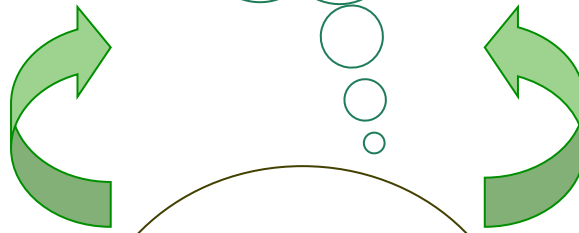
Complex Organizational Theory

Relationship based
Open systems
(interact with environment)
Open Membership
Democratic
Non-Linear
Context and path dependency
Decentralized, self-organizing

Complex Adaptive Systems Characteristics

Diversity
Interconnected independent agents
Adaptive capacity
Ability to learn
Decentralized decision-making
Relationships more important than individuals
Non-linear, path dependent

COMPLEX ADAPTIVE NETWORKS



ASOCIACIÓN NACIONAL DE
AGRICULTORES PEQUEÑO
Vladimir Novas - Coordinator

CUBAN ADVISORY TEAM CO-OP CHAMPIONS

Mavis Alvarez
Grizel Donestevez.
Gonzalo Gonzales
Pablo Fernandez
Jesus Cruz Reyes

INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY TEAM CO-OP CHAMPIONS

Wendy Holm
Manuel Mariño
Sonja Novkovic
Tom Webb
Marcelo Vieta
Bob Yuill

STRENGTHENING CO-OP CAPACITY WITHIN CUBA'S FARMER COOPERATIVES

FUNDING PARTNERS

Atlantic Central
Cdn Embassy Havana
SAOS
(building this ring)

PROJECT PARTNERS

Saint Mary's Univ.
Escuela Niceto Perez
Faculty of
Economics,
University of Havana
(building this ring)

Wendy Holm



Manuel Mariño



Sonja Novkovic



Marcelo Vieta



Tom Webb



Bob Yuill



October 27, 2014

We've been busy... A quick update on events!

1. We have now received, translated and reviewed the detailed feedback of ANAP and the professors at Escuela Niceto Perez to the Coop Index questions.
2. We have met (Sonja Novkovic, Peter Hough, Ryszard Stocki, Wendy Holm) to discuss our response; we are encouraged and prepared to move forward.
3. Towards this end, we have arranged with ANAP to hold a second workshop with Escuela Niceto Perez instructors in February 2015. Hopefully the product of this workshop will be a set of agreed-upon Coop Index questions that we can bring back to Canada, incorporate in the software, test, and then present to Escuela Niceto Perez in a workshop that also begins to transfer the training needed to offer this Cuban Coop Index tool to pilot coops.
4. As noted in our August 26 Update, we are pleased to welcome Dr. Jesus Cruz to the Cuban Advisory Team. Dr. Cruz had the opportunity to attend the 2014 Quebec International Summit of Cooperatives in Quebec City, allowing him to connect with networks important to this work.

To move this project forward, we need \$11,000 in funds to cover the costs of the February workshop. We have received \$11,000 in funds from the Canadian Embassy in Havana and the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives... of us are volunteers. So the costs are modest; airfare, meals and accommodation, in-country travel costs for Cuban participants, lunches for all participants and daily transportation costs (microbus) from Havana to Escuela Niceto Perez.

Below are links that provide further background on this project.

[August 26 2014 Project Update - Announcing Dr. Jesus Cruz as Cuban Advisor](#)

[June 6 2014 Project Report - Meetings with ANAP Concerning Coop Index](#)

[March 2014 Fundraiser](#)

[March 2014 Fundraiser \(Español\)](#)

[February 2014 Workshop Report - Escuela Niceto Perez](#)

[February 2014 Workshop Report \(Español\) - Escuela Niceto Perez](#)

[October 2013 Project Update - Project Launch](#)

Warm co-operative regards...

Wendy Holm, MMCCU, wendy@wendyholm.com

International Team Members:

Manuel Mariño, Regional Director, ICA Americas (direccion@aciamericas.coop)

Dr. Sonja Novkovic, Saint Mary's University snovkovic@smu.ca

Dr. Marcelo Vieta, University of Toronto marcelo@vieta.ca

Tom Webb, Saint Mary's University jtwebb@auracom.com

Bob Yuill, Scottish Agricultural Organizations Society bob.yuill@saos.coop

International Advisory Team Project to Strengthen Cuba's Farm Cooperatives through Support for ANAP's Co-op Education and Training Program



Wendy Holm (M.Sc.) a Canadian Agrologist and Agricultural Economist, has been bringing farmers and university students to Cuba since 1999. Since 2001, this work has been organized through ANAP, the Cuban farmers' organization. In the fourth and final year of Saint Mary's University's Masters of Management, Cooperatives and Credit Unions program, Wendy organized an international workshop on Cuba's cooperative path in Havana in December 2011 and provided background, logistical and networking support to the visit to four Cubans to the conferences Imagine 2012 and the Quebec International Summit on Cooperatives in Quebec City in October 2012. ANAP's three-year strategic plan to support cooperative training is based on a submission

Holm and Cuban colleague Mavis Alvarez tabled with ANAP – at the President's request - in early 2013.



Manuel Mariño (Contador Público Nacional, Universidad de Buenos Aires, Economista de Empresas, Universidad de Uppsala-Suecia) Since 2001, Manuel has served as the Regional Director of ICA-Americas and is based in San Jose, Costa Rica. Before this, Manuel was a consultant to ICA-Américas, Regional Director of the Swedish Co-operative Center for Latin America (based in San José, Costa Rica), and head of Swedish Co-operative Center development projects in Centro América, Uruguay, Paraguay, Kenya and Zimbabwe.



Sonja Novkovic (Ph.D.) is a Professor of Economics at Saint Mary's University. She teaches Global Economy and Society I in the Co-operative Management Education program. Her research interests are in the field of labour-managed and cooperative firms, social economy, and comparative economic systems. She has been engaged in the co-operative academic research through Canadian Association for Studies in Cooperation (CASC), the International Association for the Economics of Participation (IAFEP), and the International Cooperative Alliance Research Committee which she presently Chairs. Her current role as the Academic co-Director of Measuring the Cooperative Difference Research Network in partnership with the CCA also keep her involved with the Canadian cooperative sector. Her participation in a workshop on Cuba's move to a more

cooperative economy in Havana in December 2011 expanded her interests to the Cuban economy and its transformation.



Marcelo Vieta (PhD, Social and Political Thought, York University) is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Social Economy Centre, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto (OISE/UofT). He is also a Research Fellow at the European Research Institute on Cooperative and Social Enterprises (EURICSE) in Trento, Italy. In addition, he is Research Associate at York University's Center for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLAC) and sits on the board of the Canadian Association for Studies in Co-operation (CASC). In recent years, Marcelo has been researching and publishing on the historical conditions, the political economic contexts, and the lived experiences of the worker-recuperated enterprises of Argentina; the social and solidarity economies of Latin America; and the cooperative movements of Italy and Canada.



Tom Webb (MA) is an Adjunct Professor at Saint Mary's University and recently retired as Program Manager of the Master of Management – Co-operatives and Credit Unions program. He teaches Global Economy and Society II and organizes and conducts the annual Field Research and Study Tour to Bologna and Mondragon in the Co-operative Management Education program. A former Director of Extension at St. Francis Xavier University, he also has 25 years experience as a co-operative manager, member of several co-operative boards of directors, co-operative business consultant and advisor to two cabinet ministers and the Prime Minister on regional development. His research interests cover a range of co-operative management issues and he has spoken widely on various aspects of co-operative business. He is currently involved in a major SSHRCC funded project exploring accounting in co-operatives and researching and writing about co-operative capital and co-operative economics.



Bob Yuill is Deputy Chief Executive of SAOS Ltd. Founded in 1903, SAOS (the Scottish Agricultural Organizations Society) is owned by 75 of Scotland's agriculture and food co-operatives who have a combined turnover of circa £3.2 Billion. The 20 largest co-operatives have an individual membership of 28,950 people. SAOS works with circa 650 board directors on a continuing basis, providing business consultancy, research, education, development of competitive strategies, membership loyalty programs etc. The purpose of SAOS is to ensure that Scotland's farming, food and drink businesses benefit from the commercial advantages that are achieved through co-operation and collaboration. The Scottish Government has supported SAOS's co-operative development work since 1911. The focus is on support for remote communities, providing innovation,

governance training for co-op directors and the development of new markets for farmers and the food industry. Bob manages the SAOS team of project managers taking a leadership role in initiating and carrying out strategic and business development with a wide range of co-operatives and communities. Bob's specialist skills include business planning, strategy development, board governance, commercial feasibility and partnership arrangements. His expertise concerns innovating co-operative strategy for difficult issues such as developing commercial solutions for where there is market failure, removing capital / revenue constraints, improving governance, installing financial planning and control and negotiating commercial partnerships. Bob Yuill is a graduate of the Master of Management Co-operative & Credit Unions program at St. Mary's University, Canada and participated in a workshop on Cuba's move to a more cooperative economy in Havana in December 2011.