

DRAFT

# YUKON DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

## NON-WAGE ECOMONY

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# Non-wage Economy Strategy

A Progress Report ■ April, 1987

Previous Yukon 2000 workshops on the non-wage economy were segmented into three components: subsistence harvests, volunteer work and housework. While the common elements among these three were specifically identified, it was quickly concluded that further basic research on each would be required if we were to fully understand their contribution to the Yukon economy.

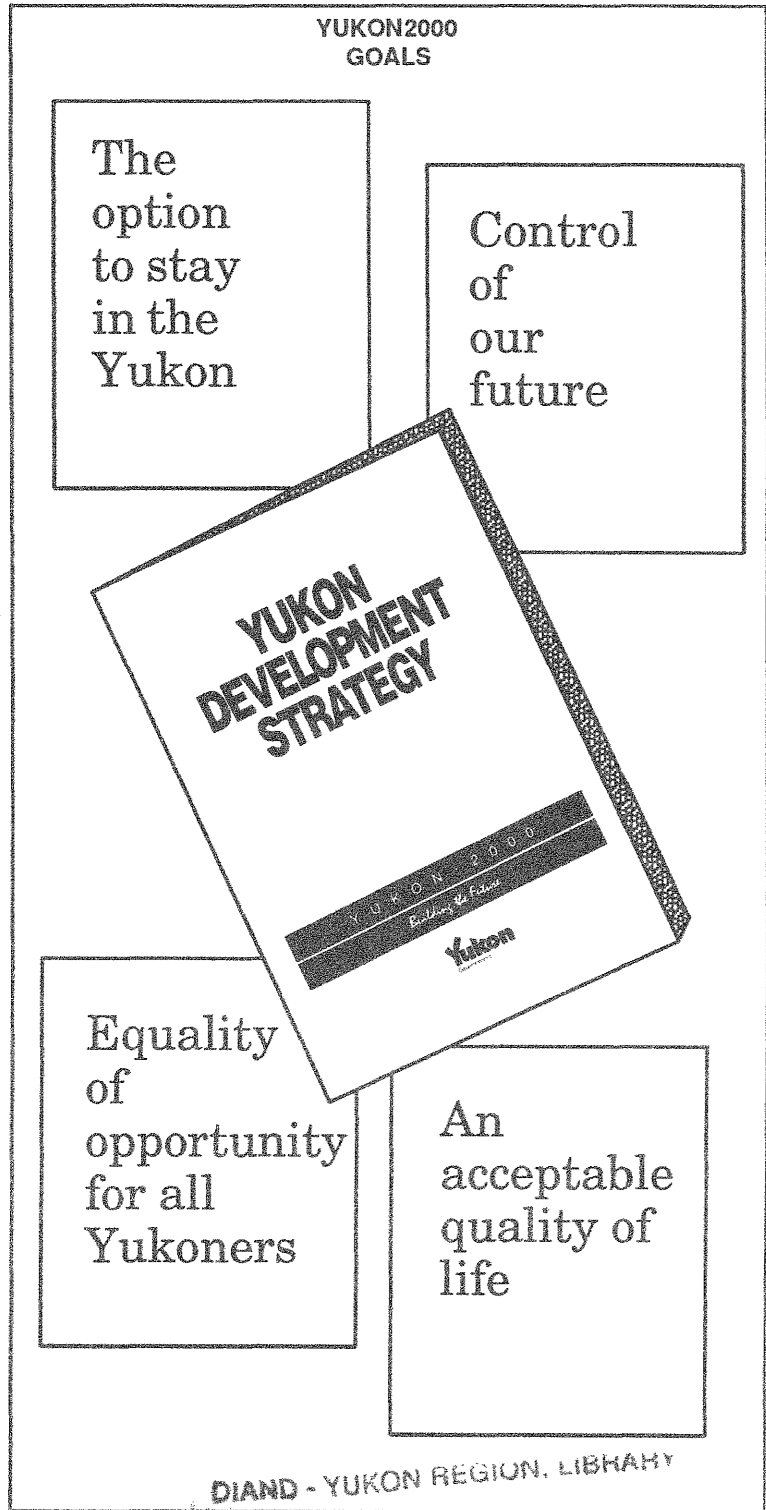
This paper is divided into two sections for the current discussions. The first section has directions and options for volunteerism and housework. The second section discusses the subsistence economy.

## VOLUNTEERISM & HOUSEWORK

The economic and social value of housework and volunteer work to the economy is significant, although no money is exchanged for services. Participants in the non-wage economy include the young, the old, men, women, the employed and unemployed.

There are over 300 societies registered with the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, many of which are run by volunteer boards and staff members. The Yukon government's "Boards and Committees Handbook" lists 83 boards which advise or otherwise assist government, most of which include members of the public. Some boards provide members with per diems to cover expenses, and others do not.

Canadians, on average, spend about three hours a week on voluntary activities such as the provision of welfare, educational,



health, religious and community services.

Housework has both monetary and social value. It includes the cooking, cleaning and home maintenance generally referred to as housework, as well as childcare and other family-related supportive activities. Housework represents a substantial amount of unpaid work per week, whether or not the houseworkers are employed outside the home.

## Directions

Volunteer activity is largely community-based, and therefore can provide a significant vehicle for increasing local control over community programs, events and community life in general.

*1. Recognize the contribution of participants in the non-wage economy by:*

- Providing training opportunities to improve the effectiveness of volunteer organizations.
- Ensuring that experience gained in the non-wage economy is given full recognition in hiring practices for the wage economy.
- Encouraging the development of flexible working arrangements to enable people to move between the wage and non-wage economies.

## Constraints

- \* shortage of volunteer and household-training opportunities
- \* lack of income security for homemakers
- \* lack of recognition of housework and volunteer activity
- \* limited opportunity for homemakers to move in and out of the workforce

## Options

*1. Make government-sponsored training courses open to volunteers when space is available.*

This would provide training opportunities to volunteers in areas of interest not covered by the City of Whitehorse or through the Department of Education. It may also increase the availability of training to rural Yukoners when training is offered in the communities outside Whitehorse.

The Yukon government's Public Service Commission provides a wide range of training opportunities for public servants through its Training Branch. These courses vary in length, from a few hours to several days. Some of the courses deal with topics specific to government, however there are general courses offered such as "How to conduct meetings", "Listening skills" and "Common-sense writing skills" which may be useful to volunteer boards and agencies.

Access to the programs could be arranged, space permitting, on a "first come-first served" basis; or a specific number of seats could be made available to community volunteers. Since the mandate of the Public Service Commission is to train public servants, the preferred approach would be "first come-first served" basis when space is available.

Training needs for volunteers in communities outside Whitehorse may be identified more clearly as the communities take greater control over the Community Learning Centres. This move towards local control is outlined in the Yukon 2000 Training Strategy. This increased control will help to recognize the community-based nature of the non-wage economy.

*2. Amend the Matrimonial Property Act to include pension benefits as a "family asset" for the purposes of divorce settlement.*

The inclusion of pension benefits as a "family asset" under Section 5 (1) would ensure that these benefits were recognized as a "joint contribution" by both spouses for the purposes of the division of assets on marriage breakdown. This option would help to provide some financial security for divorced

homemakers, and also would help to recognize the value of the homemaker's contribution in an equal partnership.

Contributions to a pension fund often form a significant part of the family savings. In particular, many women are unable to contribute to their own private pension fund, therefore relying on their husbands'. When there is a divorce, the woman may be without pension protection to which she contributed - at least in kind - during the marriage. Canada Pension Plan benefits are already subject to division, but private pension or superannuation funds are not. Their division is dealt with by provincial and territorial legislation.

The provision of pensions for full-time homemakers is dependent on pension reform for which the Department of Health and Welfare Canada has responsibility. The Yukon government is participating in joint federal/provincial/territorial discussions dealing with pension reform.

*3. Recognize the value of the skills acquired from the non-wage economy for employment purposes.*

The Yukon government is moving towards the "de-credentialization" of the public service. This means that the experience and practical skills of applicants for employment are given consideration equal to "paper" qualifications. This applies where the positions do not require qualifications by regulation, for example a Class 5 Driver's Licence, membership in a Bar Association, etc. On-the-job-training may be required for some positions. This shift in emphasis towards the recognition of experience and personal suitability allows applicants with home-making or volunteer experience to compete more effectively for positions.

The Department of Education is planning to provide career counselling services in the communities. It is anticipated that this service will include assistance in applying for jobs and preparing for interviews. This will assist those with non-wage experience to relate their skills to positions for which they are applying.

*4. Increase the use of flexible work arrangements such as job sharing and completing work at home.*

Different employment options will facilitate movement between the wage and non-wage economies. The Yukon government allows

flexitime provided that the core hours during the day are covered. There are some part-time jobs in the Public Service, proportionately more in the communities than in Whitehorse. Seasonal employees are hired, however, seasonal projects are partly dependent on the government budget. Some improved benefits for part-time and auxiliary seasonal and on-call employees will be provided by policy once the new Public Service Commission and Public Service Staff Relations Acts and Regulations have been proclaimed.

The definition of auxiliary staff as "employees" will mean that their benefits could be included in the collective bargaining process if there are enough members to permit certification. The terms of the employee superannuation plan (which is being revised) are determined by the federal government. At the moment, the plan does not allow auxiliary staff to contribute.

Job sharing is possible within the public service by arrangement between a department, the employee and the Public Service Commission. The Yukon government's public service is small, however, and it may be difficult to find both "halves" of the same job if the job is specialized.

A survey is being conducted by the Public Service Commission's Employee Assistance Program to identify some of the work-related concerns of public servants. The issue of job sharing is included in the questionnaire, which will be analyzed during May.

The Public Service Commission could follow-up by completing a survey to address job-sharing specifically with a view to developing a potential mechanism to match potential job sharers.

Some types of work could potentially be done at home, for example, through the use of computer technology. This would enable people to participate in the wage economy in a more flexible way and could potentially benefit people with disabilities, allergies, transportation difficulties or other impediments to "regular" work situations. This type of arrangement could benefit government by reducing the requirements for office space. There is no procedure at present for formalizing such flexible work arrangements and it would require the development of a policy by the Public Service Commission in consultation with labour organizations.

The preceding discussion focuses on the Yukon government's public service. These options and work arrangements could be explored and adopted by the private and other government sectors.

*5. Develop a policy to define the degree to which volunteer activity can be accommodated in the workplace, and to define "conflict of interest" as it applies to government employees who are also volunteers.*

Some private sector employers have developed specific policies and statements of philosophy with respect to their employees' volunteer activities. Such policies or statements may outline flexible work arrangements for volunteer-employees for example. The Yukon government can accommodate flexible work hours, but this has not been related specifically to volunteer activity.

Some employees may feel uneasy about their volunteer activity being perceived as a government criticism, and may fear reprisals. One way to deal with this would be to develop a policy with respect to volunteerism for public servants. On the positive side, such a policy would clarify what is an acceptable role for a government employee who is also a volunteer. On the other hand, the development of a policy may result in rigid guidelines which are difficult to live by. It may be preferable to live with some uncertainty, but benefit by the potential for the development of flexible arrangements between individuals and departments.



## SUBSISTENCE

The subsistence workshops last fall concluded that although there were three major case studies of the value of the country food harvest in the communities of Old Crow, Teslin, and Ross River (with estimated totals varying from \$1.0 to 10.0 million), there was no comprehensive understanding of the value of total subsistence harvest, nor was there an understanding of its social, cultural, and economic significance.

In acknowledgement of these gaps the participants recommended continued research into:

- \* the socio-cultural value of the country food harvest (native and non-native).
- \* the economic value of the country food harvest.
- \* specific government initiative to strengthen the opportunities for individuals to participate (particularly in areas with a mix of wage and non-wage economies).
- \* new government wildlife management policy initiatives to ensure shared management of the resources in question.

In related recommendations the workshop suggested government should: increase the role of the community in resource management decision making; improve the protection of land and environment generally; continue to strengthen the government's pro-fur activities; allow more flexibility in the commercial use of wildlife.



## Actions to Date

With respect to the above recommendations government in the last six months, has:

- \* initiated a harvest management program, including hiring a (native) harvest management biologist, to begin working with individual bands and communities on the design of local harvest statistics collection programs. Local people will be hired (part-time) to assist in this program.
- \* co-management programs are being discussed in the communities of Pelly, Mayo and Carcross, to involve harvesters in the design of wildlife research and harvest regulations.

- \* the Wildlife Advisors Committee is being restructured to become a Wildlife Management Board. Native participation will be enhanced, to allow direct involvement in quota setting, and allocations across the entire territory.
- \* support for the pro-fur campaign is being continued. Financial support this year is going to the Indigenous Survival International and the Fur Institute of Canada organizations.



## Proposed Action

It was acknowledged that a more complete understanding of the nature, size, and significance of the subsistence economy would have many benefits in addition to allowing a thorough understanding of the Yukon's economy. This understanding is also crucial in land claims negotiations, resource development impact assessments, land use decision making, and in the allocation and management of the resources being utilized.

For some users, therefore, the significance of the subsistence harvest data for land claims and potential shared or co-management regimes, particularly if the latter are to be culturally sensitive, goes well beyond any concern for the entire Yukon economy.

Based on an initiative by the Council for Yukon Indians (CYI) and in acknowledgement of the Yukon 2000 recommendations the Management Committee of the Canada Yukon Economic Development Agreement (EDA) is providing funding for a new pilot study to examine the subsistence economy.

The evaluation project will have several general objectives. The first phase is:

- \* to refine the definition of subsistence from its very general common form to a more specific "working" definition(s);
- \* to design and test an evaluation methodology, which, while quantitative and economic, addresses, to the greatest extent possible, the socio-cultural

significance of the harvest as well as the simple collection of harvest statistics.

Following such a design phase specific investigations could be funded so that any given region of the Yukon could be investigated. Area specific projects would be most appropriately tied to a particular land claim settlement, land use planning program or shared management agreement.

## Objectives

- \* to address and contrast both the historical and contemporary subsistence activities, noting changes and shifts.
- \* to examine the institutional context and the prospects for institutional changes that would allow the use of subsistence data in the design of truly cooperative wildlife management regimes.
- \* to collect harvest data and address the difference between utilization patterns of native and non-natives; urban and rural; households and individuals.
- \* to collect harvest data and determine species utilization rates: big game vs. small game; bird species; fish; and plants.
- \* to re-examine the conversion rates from harvest data to economic data, including edible meat; the utilization of animal and plant by-products for other economic activities (crafts); firewood; medicines.
- \* to examine the social and cultural uses of the subsistence harvest and their nutritional value.
- \* to examine the economic costs of harvesting in an effort to examine both the costs and benefits and thereby discuss the net benefits.
- \* to examine the direct and indirect economic benefits generated by the subsistence harvest, particularly wage activities generated by the harvest: (e.g. equipment sales, arts and crafts, tourism).

### ■ Expected Outcomes ■

When and if these objectives are met (it is acknowledged that the pilot study or an area-specific application have potential methodological problems that may skew the emphasis of the work) it is hoped that precise recommendations could be forthcoming on the following:

- \* the protection, promotion, development and/or enhancement of the subsistence economy.
- \* the social and economic benefits, including increased employment benefits, income-generating enterprises, greater individual and community satisfaction, achievement and self-reliance.
- \* the potential supply and net worth of reviewable resources.
- \* land requirements and land use/resources conflict resolution.
- \* government policy, regulations and legislation.

- \* the extension from subsistence harvest into marketing opportunities and development (e.g. commercial sales, barter, as well as improved marketing, processing and service activities based on resource).
- \* potential for subsistence economy shifts caused by future alienation of land/resources (e.g. due to non-renewable resources developments, affecting the decrease of supply and demand).
- \* renewable resources management.

Given the magnitude of the tasks involved, it is not inconceivable that a complete understanding of the subsistence economy will take many years to compile. Nevertheless, by starting now, with a combination of specific short- and long-term projects we will be in a far better position to design resource management "systems" in a manner which comprehensively considers the worth of subsistence activities to the economy of the Yukon, particularly in rural communities.