



IICRD

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BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES BY ENGAGING YOUTH

GATHERING OF COMMUNITIES

**SEPTEMBER 28 AND 29, 2006
 Victoria, BC**

**Thank you again for joining us!
 To ensure that we have a record of our first meeting, we have compiled a few notes and photos to try and capture our 2 days together.**



Team introduction

Participants

Josée Latendresse - Boscoville
Lloydee Chrispin - Boscoville
Penny Hume - Calgary
Tobi Sather - Calgary
Michelle Clark - Calgary
Lorena Pilgrim - Halifax
John Ure - Halifax
Nicki Glowacki - Hamilton
Jennifer Harper - Hamilton
Sue Delanoy – Saskatoon
Kesha Larocque - Saskatoon
Alice Sabourin – Thunder Bay
Josh Fisher – Thunder Bay

Linda Geggie - Victoria
Meghan Mergaert - Victoria
Philip Cook - IICRD
Michele Cook - IICRD
Natasha Blanchet-Cohen - IICRD
Jocelyn Helland - IICRD
Renée Lormé-Gulbrandsen - IICRD
John Cawley - The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation
Marc Langlois - Evaluation Consultant
Kimia Ghomeshi - TakingITGlobal
Sophie Kiem – Volunteer

peace, dignity and respect for children and our world

Key Points Covered in Day 1

Goals of the Initiative:

- To achieve widespread system change that includes youth (12-30) as partners in the process of creating strong communities, especially those that have been systematically marginalized or become disengaged

Objectives of the Initiative:

- To create opportunities for young people to participate and shape communities
- To test approaches – what works and what doesn't
- To share the learning with others

Distinction between Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Monitor for Accountability:** Program and administrative effectiveness and efficiency: did we do what we said we would do?
- **Evaluate for Learning and Improving:** Have lives and systems been changed? How?
 - *Individuals* in community projects (*Lives changed*)
 - *Community policies and practices* through comprehensive community initiative
 - *“Movement”*: capture lessons through assessments, disseminate to the learning community

Sustaining Social Innovation Model Highlighted

What Are We Here to Do? – Goals of the Gathering

- Establish relationships
- Begin to create a learning community and learn from each other
- Explore links between community development, resilience, and youth engagement

The Support Team's Role

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support communities • Challenge thinking • Facilitate learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect and disseminate information • Help change systems |
|--|--|

Who Are We?

- Philip Cook: IICRD's Executive Director responsible for vision and connection
- Michele Cook: Project Manager
- Renée Lormé-Gulbrandsen: Project Assistant
- Jocelyn Helland: Community youth Liaison
- Natasha Blanchet-Cohen: Research
- Marc Langlois: Developmental Evaluation on Independent Contract

- Kimia Ghomeshi: TakingITGlobal Coordinator

Developmental Evaluation – How does it work?

- Remind you of things you said you wanted to do and point out signs along the way
- Establish processes and on-going conversations of reflection
- Provides a Formative type of evaluation: Ongoing feedback (will be present throughout the work)
- *Request a half time evaluator be designated within each community for the duration of the project –This person will be trained and supported to carry out this evaluation*

Taking it Global (TIG)– Who Are We?

- Youth-led organization that uses technology to connect young people around the world and providing a forum for them to discuss global issues
- Gets over 4 million hits each day
- Currently Creating Local Connections Canada (Liaisons Locales Canada) with local and national coordinators, including Francophone and Aboriginal coordinators to:
 - Raise awareness and increase accessibility to youth opportunities and resources
 - Connect and encourage collaboration between youth / youth initiatives
 - Strengthen the capacity of youth and youth initiatives in Canada
- Will support this initiative through
 - Online Learning Centre
 - Training and Mentoring
 - Local Youth Involvement
 - Building Networks
 - Evaluation

Community Presentations

Halifax – Partners

- Community, Culture and Economic Development
- Public Libraries
- YWCA
- Laing House
- Boys and Girls Clubs
- Youth Health Centre
- Newcomer Centre
- Heartwood



Keisha, Loreena and John

Youth Engagement in Halifax

- Traditional youth services are evolving
- Youth development work
- Recent large and small initiatives breaking new ground
 - Youth action teams
 - Systems change – professional and organizations development
 - Governance
 - Civic engagement
 - Collaborative learning between groups, orgs, and gov't agencies

Highlights of our approach:

- Taking on appreciative approach
- Being relationship focused
- Living System
- Values driven
- Having fun

Boscoville –

Project Béluga

Vision

- Sharing ideas and expertise that will facilitate the development and social integration of children and young adults
- Devoted to support, research, and innovation when it comes to optimal growth
- Practitioners, citizens and researchers all work together to improve strategies



Lloyddee, Loreens, Keisha, Meghan and Tobi

Foundations

Two tested and documented approaches

1. Community mobilization

Building Resilient Communities by Engaging Youth First Community Gathering
September 27-29th 2006 in Victoria BC

- a. Multisectoral partnership approach
 - b. Ecological model (1, 2, 3)
 - c. Common goals and actions approach
2. Youth participation approaches: youth input
 - a. Youth Speak Out! – facilitation process on creating a genuine dialogue
 - b. Youth Mapping – participation of youth in mapping their community
 - c. 40 assets – positive framework for mapping a community

First steps

- Create a youth committee
- Engage teens and young adults to raise consciousness regarding their community and also allow their input in the mapping of services available in their neighbourhood
- Think together
- Sharing of the same vision and mission
- Extricate priorities regarding all parents, kids, teens, and young adults
- Take concrete action
- Evaluate and readjust (participative evaluation)

We need to work together, have the curiosity to discover, input of everybody's assets (shared leadership) and steer together with positive feedback to build....

- The reflex of doing things together (inclusive perspective) for the love of all children

Hamilton –

How we are supporting youth

- Youth Serving Agencies Network: 12 community groups who meet
- Street-involved and Homeless Youth Managers: aims for systems-level service planning
- Hamilton Round Table for Poverty Reduction
- Youth Advisory Council (YAC) – youth-led
- Native Youth advancement with Education Hamilton: help aboriginal youth stay in school
- Hamilton Crew for Action Against Tobacco – youth driven; critical thinking about how youth are targeted by tobacco co's
- Anti-bullying network



Nikki, Renee, Jen, Josh and Josee

Successes

- Enabling youth to have a meaningful voice in decision-making
- Supporting youth in implementing their ideas and in connecting resources
- Opportunities for all youth to be engaged in interest-based initiatives

Challenges

- Too often our efforts take place in silos

- Literacy levels are low and high school drop out rates high
- Meaningful youth engagement to drive the process
- Making links to disengaged youth
- Meaningful participation from the private sector
- Develop a consensus vision to drive a three year plan

Thunder Bay – (see working notes)

Our History

A visit by group from the States opened eyes to the possibility of youth participating in this community

Initial Mapping of Community

- Preliminary consultations saw need for coordination of youth activity – no information sharing with in community
- Many young people participating in high risk activities

Challenges

- Need to prioritize space for youth
- Need to secure matching funds
- Want to ensure that there is youth to youth work at different levels



Alice, Michelle, Sue and Tobi

Saskatoon – (see packet)

Issues of the area

- Racism - immigrant youth, etc.
- Sexual orientation discrimination
- Struggles for aboriginal youth

Must remember that young people are experts on their own lives – no top down approach – facilitation instead

Community for Children - Who Are We?

- Diverse group of governmental, non-governmental, youth, children, aboriginal and non-aboriginal organizations with a broader issue focused –providing a continuum of services for children and youth (i.e. child care, sexual exploitation of children, gangs, crystal meth, kids not in school, kids with disabilities)
- We link research with practicality and
- Ensure that all initiative have a youth presence

Challenge: Giving voice around the table but now working to fulfill their requests

- Change policy
- Change legislation
- Allowing a platform for voice
- Reacting to what youth really want and need

Calgary – (see handouts)

Child Friendly Calgary - Who Are We?

- Only do youth engagement – everything pro-active
- Volunteer work by 2000 youth at 130 non-profits in Calgary
- Lead and provide opportunities for youth to be involved in their communities
- Total community involvement – including the mayor
- Project and Programs (run by coordinators under 25)
- Youth Volunteer Corp
- Clubs in school
- Youth for future
- Calgary Urban Vibe website

United Way funding their involvement in this initiative but want to be part of the larger learning community

Victoria –

LifeCycles - Who Are We?

Originally youth capacity building and empowerment

→ more thematic programs now (community program and mapping, community enterprise)

Most programs led by youth – young staff

- Victoria – many orgs working very sectorial with youth, but not working together as a community – this initiative has brought out over 30 orgs from the community who want to work together (City of Victoria, VIHA, YMCA, employment agencies, NEED, Intercultural Assoc, Immigrant and Refugee Center, etc.)



Linda, Meghan, Lloydie, Josee,
Penny, Tobi and Sue

- Want to take what youth has already said – not going back to square one
- Certain youth communities not being tapped into

What Next?

- Address what programs are working for them and what things would they really like
- Hire 2 coordinators (older and younger youth) and youth teams to talk to young people about these questions
- Share information with Victoria youth (multimedia), business community and decision makers

Who is Involved in this Initiative?

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • National Advisory | - Convening Agency |
| • McConnell Foundation | - Steering Committee |
| • IICRD | - Developmental Evaluator |
| • Developmental Evaluator | - Members of the community incl youth |
| • TakingITGlobal | • Outside agencies (gov'ts, etc.) |
| • Selected Communities | • Youth |

What do we mean by youth engagement in the context of community resilience? (Round table discussion)

What is youth engagement?

- Having your voice heard
- Meaningful
- Safe
- Respect
- Positive
- Welcoming
- Lasting
- Spirit
- Status quo
- Active
- Contributing
- Dynamic

What is a resilient community?

- Youth with potential
- Equilibrium
- Participation
- Ability to change
- Wisdom and trust
- Standing strong
- Idealism
- Adaptable/flexible
- Vision
- Intergenerational
- Sharing

What are the components of youth engagement that contribute to building resilient communities? (Small group discussions)

Nuggets

- Meaningful **relationships**
- Space for
- Living safe **environment**
- Making people feel valued
- Looking out for each other
- **Ownership** and responsibility
- Having fun
- Community readiness
- **Lace maker**
- **Holistic** approach
- Intergenerational community
- Freedom within **structure**
- **Comprehensive**
- **Meaningful**
- **Engagement**
- **Resilience**



Natasha, Philip and Marc

same

**** Red words discussed in small groups to clarify and define - are we speaking the language?**

How do we Enliven these Nuggets? Where are the Opportunities? (Group discussion)

- Stepping outside of the box
- Creating venues for different cultures and generations to spend time together

- Different ways of service → at risk
- Creating space (place where people collectively share an energy) where people can connect → an energy in the community
- Listening
- Connections (esp. between groups that do not normally interact) → relationships (intergenerational, initiators, change agents)
- Changing behaviors through new networks, infrastructures
- Meaningful relationships at all levels of the system
- Challenge labels and its concept
- Holistic approach (removal of client concept, honoring/valuing all youth in the concept of community)
- Opportunity for “failure”
- Honor the process
- Stability in programming
- Honor variable participation
- Sense of family
- Lead by example



Summary of Days Discussion

Connection

IICRD's Child Rights Ecology Model (Philip)

- Create stronger connections; strengthen linkages between groups
- Connecting non-traditional groupings and creating new policies; people, orgs, systems → need to be aware of all these things
- Looking for passion, not representation on board but remember to include those who can make a difference
- Remember the Child Rights Ecology Model – environment: space; community: were a common theme but **family** – did not come up much in strategies; **community; civil society** came up once – these are huge players for long term change; social-spiritual, politics, and economics also have a role to play – has to be top down and bottom up

Be Strategic

- REMEMBER- Not just a youth engagement initiative; about creating resilient communities by including young people!
- Must be strategic to ensure you make sustainable change
- Need to be comprehensive -Push those people who need to be at the table; have the people at the table who are really going to make the difference - if they are not the passionate ones find ways to engage them and get them excited
- Not much talk about the private sector today – need to be sure to include – youth get older and need to work and make money. Private sector is key player
- Balance – young people most important at the table, but industry big connection to those young people

Tools

- Think about tools or attitudes one needs to have to change the culture
- New infrastructure

- New policy
- Convening role is difficult – need to start with yourself and your organization and lead by example
- Physical spaces where people can interact identified as important

Spaces

- Physical spaces where people can interact identified as important

Learning Community

- There is an interesting variety of communities present – need to learn from each other – communities at different places at having multi-sector at the table, programs in place, etc.

Key Points Covered in Day 2

All present gather to appreciate the strength and support of the circle. The group creates the inner circle or base support for this initiative and our learning community.

Current Proposal Preparation Concerns

Financial Support Clarification

- Cash vs. in-kind donations: In-kind donations ideally less than 30%. If paying for staff time for person to work on project – may be counted as cash though important to ensure this is not excessive
- If have written promise of intention with approximate figures from prospective funder – this will suffice in the first year
- Foundation monies will match monies raised independent of the previous year and monies can be matched over the year as donations are received
- Always a possibility of bringing in another community if the existing communities do not use the funds

Funding (Round table discussion)

All levels of society need to be invested in the process of creating sustainable communities.

Corporations

(e.g. Telus and Shell): the importance of having corporate support when dealing on a national level

- How can their staff help?
- Do they require training support?
- Ethical funds can be an issue but the impact that accepting and working with these corporations can have great learning opportunity on both sides

Private Sector

Discussed the importance of having private business invested in their community and country.

Publicity

- McConnell does not want credit or exposure
- Publicize the work of the individual facility
- Individually decide what and when to publicize
- Focus on the individual project being supported by an organization
- Can state funds from McConnell, but any formal press release or documentation that used the Foundation or IICRD's name –must first be approved by the Foundation and IICRD

Key Factors in Moving Forward - How do we...

1. Honour the process
2. Lead by example
3. Enable space/environment
4. Use a spectrum youth engagement
5. Build strategic relationships
6. Affect or include policy and legislation



Having fun! An important part of building strong communities

What Can We Do?

- Develop Strategies
- Expand thinking on how to make change
- Connect people
- Consider systems that effect people including youth

What is a Convening Organization? What do we need to do?

- Be a bridge builder
- Plan for long-term change
- Connect people
- Pull pieces together

Group Discussion Synopsis

Honouring the Process

What are the faults in your organization?

- People are following expectations instead of freethinking
- They are there because they should be not because they desire to be

How do you inspire the process?

- New life
- Inspiration from peers
- Success stories
- Crisis

How to change?

- Start the meeting by celebrating success
- Breaking down the main goal into smaller more accomplishable goals
- Recognizing many peoples input
- Creating an environment that celebrates mistakes
- Encouraging experimentation
- If you could experiment, how would you operate?

Spaces and Places

- Creating spaces virtual and real
- The importance of connection
- 24 hour schools
- Spiritual places
- Knocking down invisible boarders
- Maintaining open doors
- Open homes
- Outdoor spaces
- Existing spaces that are comforting for all ages

Youth Engagement

- Excitement of youth led programs
- Youth engaging community
- Respecting youth's power to make decisions
- Go beyond youth vision to incorporate young peoples ideas into community vision
- Go to them; don't ask them to come to you



John and Natasha

Strategic Relationship Building

- Start with what you know
- Then find agencies that serve children and youth and affect them.
- Map it out - Identify which relationships are strong and where the gaps are
- Identify key players - Do you have the right people at the table? If not, get them, network and find them
- Research key people before approaching
- Open a dialogue with the players
- Support the relationship equally both ways
- Be a good bridge builder - Link groups that would not normally meet
- Consider presenting the vision vs. co-creation
- All social change follows an idea
- Share the integrity and encompassing nature of the initiative - If your values are in place - people will want to be involved – be sure to give them a job
- Document personal relationship building so relationships can exist outside of the individuals

Policy and Legislation

“Youth engagement is not a program; it’s a way of life” - Cindy Blackstock,

Engaging Youth Ethically

- Must have policy on some level
- Who is going to lead you through the process of creating policy?
- How do you develop relationships outside of crisis?
- Common territory for cross section of society that creates a report between all life
- It must respecting difference of opinion, class and race
- It’s about relationships not programs
- Supporting youth to think differently in turn creating new policies-youth driven policies

The Learning Community - The Ripple Effect (Roundtable Discussion)

How to create learning community across the different sectors that will engage youth.

Learning

- | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------|
| • Skills | • Discovery | • Reflection |
| • Mistakes | • Expertise | • Pause |
| • Experiences | • Experimentation | • Risk |
| • Sharing | • Co-create | • Challenge |
| • Listening | • Awareness | |

Community

- | | | |
|---------------|-------------|----------------|
| • Belonging | • Exchange | • Geographical |
| • Connections | • Location | • Cultural |
| • People | • Interest | • Spiritual |
| • Family | • Diversity | • Network |

How to Create a Learning Community

- | | |
|---|--|
| • In your own community | • Forums |
| • In relation (linked) to other communities | • Exchanges with other communities |
| • Stories | • How to connect and work with resources |
| • Internet | |
| • Newsletters | |

Community Supports

Youth and Community Liaison -Jocelyn Helland

- Facilitate connections-builds bridges
- Facilitates learning

- Celebrate and document stories
- Generate and share ideas

Developmental Evaluation - Marc Langlois

- Evaluator immersed in your team; Marc will coach the person chosen by the community
- Position paid for from community's funds
- Facilitator-comfort in group process
- User focused-community/organization sets the evaluation based on where they want to go
- Capture the story
- Action/reflection
- Checking in/pause
- Ongoing feedback

Research - Natasha Blanchet-Cohen and Philip Cook

- Policy change
- Creating greater knowledge
- Evaluation
- Network
- To benefit community
- Document success and downfalls
- Using research to understand success and downfalls
- Leverage/change

E-Community through TakingITGlobal - Kimia Ghomeshi and Regional Coordinators

- Networking and building networks
- Live chat
- Newsletters
- Knowledge management-search engines
- Project management-link to your organization on line



Learning how to use the project site

To Conclude

Remember the heart shaped rock and the one thing you would carry in your heart back to your community.

- Patience
- Reach out-individual resources
- Friendship-back up
- Seed born out of a dream
- Not alone
- Understanding diversity
- Breath
- Relationships
- Pause
- Reaching out
- Headwaters-going back to communities and starting something huge.
- Networking communities
- Investment of time
- Going somewhere new
- Building bridges
- Ripple, ripple, ripple
- Building a stronger Canada
- Critical thinking
- Challenge
- Not just hearing but listening
- Trust and belief

Event closed with a traditional thank you and journey song out of the meeting space. Thank you to Josh Fisher for sharing this tradition with us and wishing us all well on our journeys ahead.