CAPACITY BUILDING

Achieve more with what you already have

an ECCDC Thursday Morning Power Breakfast

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Presented by

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WHY CAPACITY BUILDING?

▲ **Increases in demand** for services and personal responsibility, along with shifting types of services and responsibilities

▲ Organizations and communities are **being asked to do more with less resources**

▲ **Increased accountabilities** in terms of demonstrating need and responsiveness, fundraising, and reporting

▲ Whether we are thinking in terms of leadership, departments or teams, or organizationally - **we can't do it all**, and certainly not alone

> We have budgets ... but we also have knowledge, skills, abilities, information, contacts, experience, expertise, materials, and physical assets that we must access - in addition to our limited funds - in order to meet current needs and challenges

AGENDA

❶ Introductions, Agenda, Intended Outcomes (9:00-9:15am)

❷ Overview of Capacity Building (9:15-9:35am)

❸ Steps, Activities and Tips for Building Capacity (9:35-10:05)

❹ Think Tank (10:05-10:50am)

❺ Closing/Evaluations (10:50-11:00am)

SESSION OUTCOMES

■ Understand capacity building and related terms

■ Identify key components and steps for achieving

■ Develop strategies and next steps

INTRODUCTORY EXERCISE

Share your name, organization, and the issue or reason that brought you to this session.

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WHAT IS CAPACITY BUILDING?

RESILIENCE
Nurturing an organizational culture that fosters leadership and creativity and embraces strategic thinking, financial vibrancy, continuous learning, asset/strength-based thinking, and change management.

EFFECTIVENESS
Practicing good board governance, management systems, and evaluation; implementing well-planned programs and services, communication strategies, resource management, and technology.

RELEVANCE
Aligning with and understanding community realities such as socio-economic mix, societal norms and values, diversity, history, physical environment, assets/capacities, and issues/needs.

RESPONSIVENESS
Developing and strengthening community relationships through ongoing consultation, collaboration, and systemic as well as specific involvement, to create a shared vision and promote inclusiveness.

Capacity building for organizations has often been defined as **activities or actions that increase and sustain effectiveness**. These can include good governance; solid leadership; a clear mission, vision and values; responsive program development; diversified revenue; and strong management support systems.

Organizational capacity building is a process that strengthens four interrelated pillars – **resilience**, **effectiveness**, **relevance**, and **responsiveness**.

Organizations that are resilient in the face of change incorporate value-based leadership, strategic thinking, continuous learning, and creativity into everyday behaviour. Effective organizations have strong management, solid board governance, and well-planned programs and services.

Similarly, organizations remain relevant to their clients/communities when they establish strong relationships and respond to realities, such as the current economic climate or demographic changes.

Organizational capacity building is inextricably linked with **community capacity building**. When organizations build their own capacity, they help build healthy and vibrant communities at the same time.

You can also think of capacity building – as applied to stakeholder groups or the local community – in the following ways:

1. **Local empowerment** through organized groups of people acting collectively to control decisions, projects, programs, and policies that affect them as a community.

   "One means for fostering community development or community change is to develop enabling systems" (Chavis et al., 1992 as cited in Duffy & Wong, 2003).

2. **"Helping people to help themselves"** by sharing the skills and resources that will assist them in identifying and responding to their needs and interests.

   "Enabling Systems are systems that evaluate their own programs by designing, conducting, and analyzing research which makes the organization independent and diminishing their need for "experts" or "professionals" (Chavis et al., 1992 as cited in Duffy & Wong, 2003).

3. **Cooperative problem-solving**.

   "When people and communities have confidence in themselves and in what they are doing, there is virtually no limit to what they can accomplish" (Community Capacity Building. HRDC, HRIC-512-07-99E).

4. **Improving social capital and maximizing utilization of community assets**.

   "Enabling systems and networks represent a form of social change because they build on existing resources and develop more productive and creative relationships between already existing services. In other words, such systems reweave the social fabric of what might otherwise would be a more tattered and frayed community and its services and thus ensure survival and continued growth of the services" (Duffy & Wong, 2003).

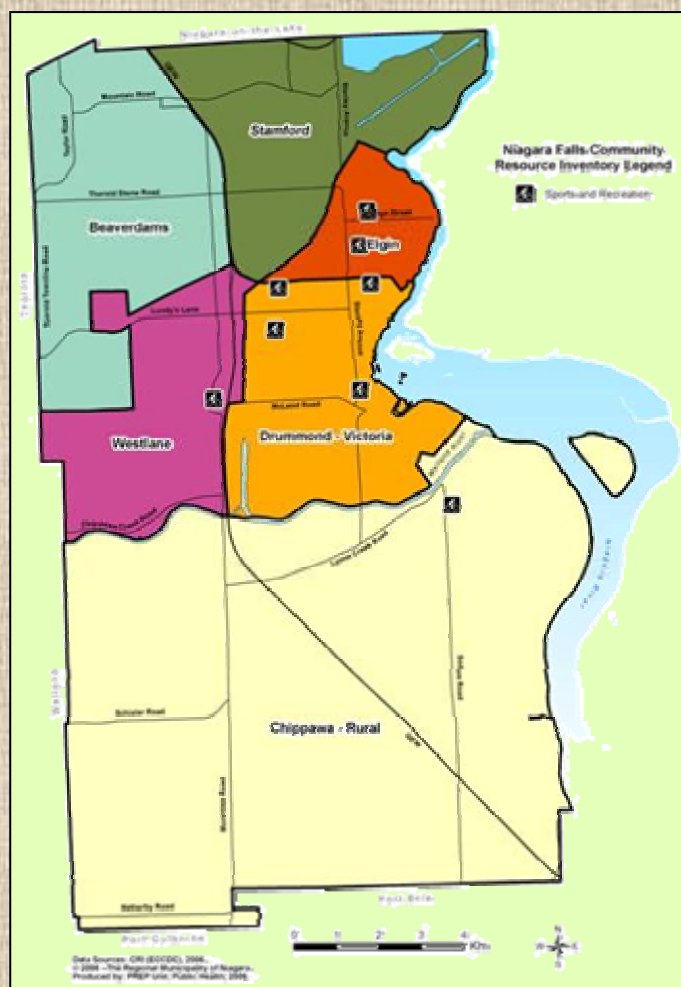## ACTIVITIES FOR CAPACITY BUILDING

Pre-Planning

1. The preparation of a **Profile** describing the organization's/community's assets, needs and issues.

Community realities provide opportunities for identifying what issues or needs a community is experiencing but they also provide information that can be utilized for growth, development, and innovative capacity building.

Using what you know is available in your community builds on existing strengths and fosters growth, expansion, and innovative directions – all of which are essential for capacity building. This can be likened to money in an investment savings account - it keeps growing and everyone in the community benefits from it.
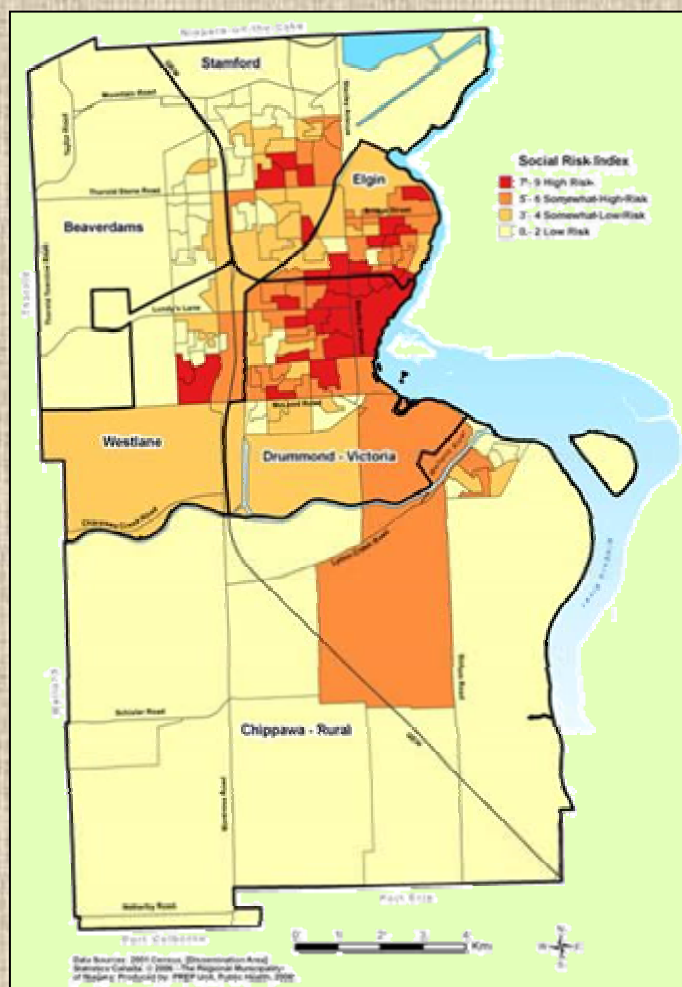
The map above provides an example of the social risk realities that the Niagara Falls community is experiencing, as identified by the ECCDC's Understanding the Early Years (UEY) research project.

The map above is from the ECCDC's Understanding the Early Years Niagara Falls Project.

ACTIVITIES FOR CAPACITY BUILDING (continued)

2. The preparation of a **Stakeholder Analysis** to describe who needs to be involved, the position they will take regarding the proposed planning process and the anticipated changes, as well as the level of influence they will have during the planning process.

Capacity Building Planning Process

▲ Reach agreement on a specific planning process

▲ Prepare an initial plan

▲ Establish a neighbourhood organization, stakeholder coalition, or staff team that will assume responsibility for implementing the plan

▲ Secure participation and support from regional resources, government, the private sector, and the voluntary sector

▲ Coordinate a learning and assessment process that results in continuous improvements to the plan and its implementation

The list above is adapted from: Theory of Change: A Practical Tool for Action, Results and Learning. Online. Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2004 (Page 14).

Action

Implement the goals and objectives within the capacity building plan for the community, stakeholder group, or organization. Action normally consists of a combination of initiatives that will bring about visible improvements in the short term (one year), and longer-term initiatives that require more in-depth planning and negotiations with resource providers. Short-term successes have proven to be important to building and maintaining support and motivation to continue with the work.

STEPS FOR CAPACITY BUILDING

1. **Identifying** the issue of concern

2. **Mapping the** capacities and assets of individuals, citizens' associations, and local institutions and conducting a stakeholder analysis

Maps such as this one from Niagara Falls (ECCDC's UEY Project) reveal where the assets of a community can be found and tapped into in order to assist those areas that are obviously in need.

"Change built on people helping people in their own communities is associated with sustainable benefits for all who reside in a community (Keating, 1999)."

3. **Building relationships** among local assets for mutually beneficial problem-solving.

4. **Convening** a broadly representative group to build a community vision and plan.
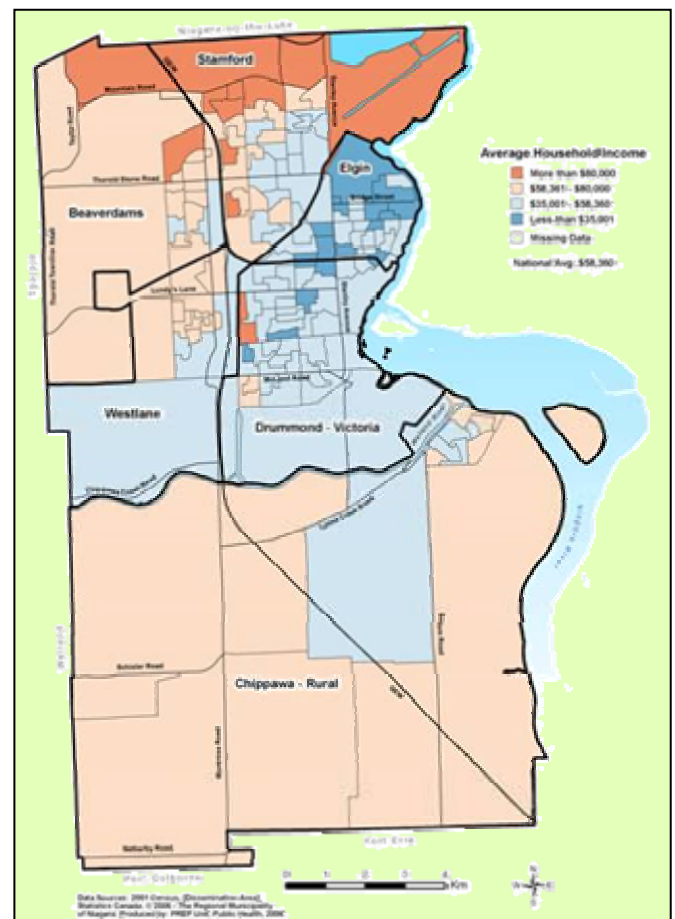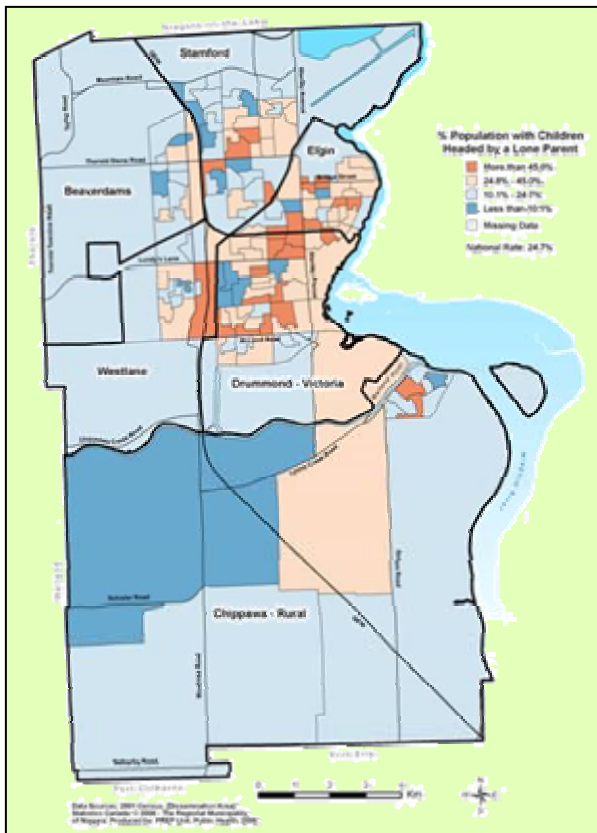
What seems like a challenge can translate into opportunities for engagement.

Did you know that feeling connected to the community was less common among people who were divorced or separated (57%) or never married (54%), compared with those who were married or living common-law (65%)? However, **people living with young children were slightly more likely than those who did not have young children in their household to have a strong sense of belonging** (Stats Can, 2005) and the average number of children in a lone parent family in Niagara Falls was reported to be 2.5 children (Census, 2001). This sense of belonging can be utilized to engage citizens.

5. **Mobilizing** the assets for development and information sharing.

6. **Leveraging** activities, investments, and resources outside the community/group/organization to support asset-based, locally-defined development.

Conscious awareness of specific issues that people face in communities can be a window for opportunities to form partnerships to work towards long-term sustainable change. For example, the ECCDC and Kiwanis Clubs have developed a partnership (*Young Children Priority First*) for addressing the need to provide resources to daycares and the children they serve. This is borne, in part, out of the awareness that early learning and development leads to a more capable workforce which, in turns, attracts employers to the Region. (map from the ECCDC's Understanding the Early Years Niagara Falls project)

TIPS FOR BUILDING CAPACITY

▲ Help the individual or group learn or grow

▲ Help others assume more responsibility, control, and ultimately more power within the group

▲ Stimulate individuals to think about and participate in their own development and that of their community

▲ Develop leadership capabilities

▲ Provide information about methods and procedures that an individual or group can use to bring about change

▲ Provide helping skills such as: planning, problem-solving, fundraising, conducting/facilitating meetings, and teaching the skills, knowledge, and attitudes required for staff/stakeholder groups/community members to be able to solve their own problems
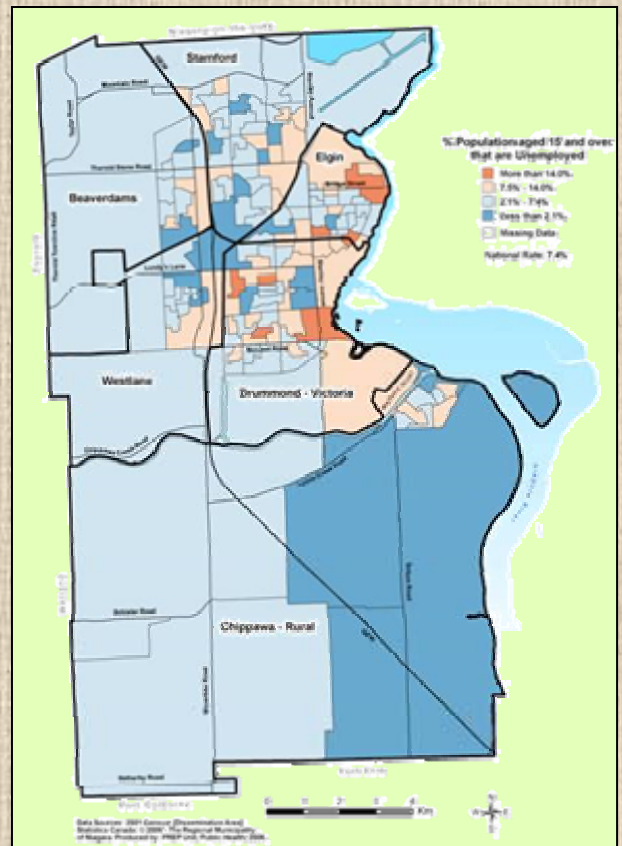
TIPS FOR BUILDING CAPACITY (continued)

The following tips are from What is Capacity Building? The Ontario Trillium Foundation, 2005. http://www.trilliumfoundation.org/CC/ExecSumFinal_E.pdf

▲ Organizational capacity building does not just happen.
▲ A strategic plan is not enough.
▲ Organizational growth is only one success factor.
▲ Organizational culture plays an important role.
▲ Capacity building takes time.
▲ Leadership breeds leadership.
▲ External accountabilities are a major issue.
▲ Organizations need resilience to know what is best.
▲ There is a need for flexible and organization-specific approaches.
▲ Community context is important.

THINK TANK

Issues Discussed

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Ideas for addressing

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Action Research: Action research is a dynamic process of development. Research is conducted in a manner that fosters ongoing learning within the community for the purpose of capacity building that results in some form of action and further research and learning. (Adapted from McKnight, The Careless Society, 1987; Friedman, Planning in the Public Domain, From Knowledge to Action, 1987; and Mintzberg, et al., Strategy Safari, A Guided Tour Through the Wilds of Strategic Management, 1998.)

Community: "A current definition focuses on group(s) of people sharing common interests and prepared to work collectively towards achieving their common interests." (Source: Morse, Five Building Blocks for Successful Communities, The Community of the Future, 1998.)

Community Assets: "Every community member has gifts, skills and capacities that communities need." Community assets include: a) community leaders, b) community associations and agencies, c) skills and knowledge within the community, and d) physical facilities and resources. (Adapted from McKnight, The Careless Society.)

Community Building: "The key to successful community building is to discover the community's capacities and assets, connect them to one another in ways that multiply their power and effectiveness, and begin to harness local institutions that are not yet available for local development purposes." (Source: Kretzman and McKnight in Morse, Smart Communities, 2004.)

Community Development: Community development historically has focused on a process of improving the quality of life in a defined place (e.g. neighbourhood). The process involves neighbourhood residents accepting the role of leaders with the implementation of a plan that residents have created, are committed to, and in which they are prepared to invest. (Adapted from Morse, Smart Communities, and McKnight, The Careless Society.)

Enabling Systems: Vehicles whereby multiple community initiatives can be simultaneously mobilized, supported, and sustained in an efficient and effective manner by developing specified links among the social actors. (Chavis et al., 1992 as cited in Duffy & Wong, 2003)

Networks: Networks are confederations or alliances of related community organizations or individuals. Members of networks regularly share funding sources, information, and ideas with one another. Thus, their futures are more secure by networking their information and sometimes their clients. Another advantage is that clients are less likely to fall through the cracks in the service system" (Chavis et al., 1992; Fischer, Jackson, Stueve, Gerson, & McAllister-Jones, 1977; Sarason, Carroll, Maton, Cohen & Lorentz, 1977 as cited in Duffy & Wong, 2003)

Social Capital: This term refers to the vitality, dynamism and robustness of society's groups, associations, networks, clubs, unions, and the like. It alludes to citizen action and social cooperation and it takes voluntarism and public cooperation. (Source: HRDC, Community Capacity Building. HRIC-512-07-99E)

Vision: This serves as both an inspiration and a sense of what needs to be done - a guiding idea, an image of what is desired. (Source: Mintzberg et al., Strategy Safari.)

> Additional information on these, and other terms, is available on Tamarack's website at
> **http://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/g3s118.html**

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