

Implementation Guide
for
the *No Community Left Behind*
Strategy Development Process



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Introduction

This implementation Guide explains different phases of the NCLB strategy development process and gives basic framework for implementing the *No Community Left Behind* strategy. This guide is not intended to provide set criteria to be met by every NCLB site. Rather, it offers a process to be followed and contextualized according to the unique character, strengths, and needs of each neighbourhood, using appropriate tools to reach the milestones according to the specific circumstances in each neighbourhood.

Overview

No Community Left Behind is a strategy development process for neighbourhood level planning. It is a community-based, multi-agency approach to collaboration and integration of services for neighbourhood restoration and revitalization.

The *No Community Left Behind* strategy stresses collaboration, coordination, resources leveraging and community participation as key principles. This approach gives communities a comprehensive structure, critical planning tools and access to organizations and agencies focused on community development and neighbourhood revitalization. This initiative is unique in that communities use the *No Community Left Behind* strategy to develop and undertake efforts tailored to the issues, needs and concerns of their individual neighbourhood.

The *No Community Left Behind* strategy recognizes the importance of coordinating all stakeholders and partners' initiatives with social service providers and private-sector efforts to maximize the impact of existing programs and resources, and to identify and fill in gaps in services.

Vision

This vision is achieved through:

- Developing a comprehensive community-based strategy and neighbourhood plan for addressing social determinants of health;
- Assisting concerned service agencies to identify and respond to social, physical, service and economic needs;
- Engaging and supporting community members to participate more fully in neighbourhood planning and decision-making processes; and
- Addressing major risk factors that lead to fear, isolation and crime where these stand out as priority issues.

Most importantly, the process realizes the importance of community participation. Community members are centrally involved to assist in solving problems in their neighbourhoods. In addition, the private sector is a pivotal partner in the *No Community Left Behind* strategy.

Overview of the *No Community Left Behind* Process

Goals and Objectives

The purpose of the *No Community Left Behind* approach is to put a strategy development process in place to improve quality of life in designated neighbourhoods.

The primary objectives at each *No Community Left Behind* process site are to:

Develop a comprehensive community-based strategy for consistent community engagement;
Coordinate existing and new government and private-sector initiatives for local development;
Mobilize community members and service providers to collaborate in identifying and prioritizing the key issues of concern in their neighbourhoods, and assist service agencies in responding to social/community/health service needs, and participate more fully in neighbourhood planning and decision making processes.

Four Components

The *No Community Left Behind* strategy is a multilevel strategic plan that includes four basic components:

1. Social,
2. Physical,
3. Service, and
4. Economic.



Since **social mobilization** and community engagement is the key to effecting changes to any of the four identified areas, it is recognized as the encompassing component of the NCLB approach.

Social: The well-known concept of “social capital” is key to understanding how the social environment can affect a community’s health. Weak social and political networks make it difficult for communities to organize and work for the collective good. A community with strong social networks is better able to advocate for itself with residents better able to control their individual and collective futures.

Following are the key **factors of the social environment** for thorough assessment in the phase 1 of the NCLB implementation. A close look at the following protective and risk factor make it easy for the NCLB coordinators to frame their social mobilization approach.

Cultural characteristics: In most of the multi-cultural communities in Ottawa it is easy to note the dominant values, attitudes, and standards of behavior connected to race, ethnicity, gender, religion, or nationality, as well as from other types of social and cultural groupings.

Protective factors: Cohesion, a sense of community, and access to key cultural institutions. Focus on these factors facilitates the social mobilization process.

Risk factors: Racism, language barriers, acceptance of unhealthy behaviors, and absence of expectations that promote healthy behavior and community safety are the factors which indicate the challenges to social mobilization in any community.

Social support and networks: There are two types of social capital: *bonding capital*, which deepens social relationships within an immediate community, and *bridging capital*, which

strengthens the links between one group and the people and institutions in the larger neighbourhood.

Social support networks include friends, family, colleagues, and neighbourhood acquaintances. These networks exist within the community and beyond it, such as churches and clubs. Yet in some communities with mostly new immigrants, these networks are lacking and become a hurdle to effective social mobilization.

Protective factors: Social capital that can provide access to social supports and economic opportunities, as well as to certain health services and resources. Pro-social adult role models and peer networks for young people.

Risk factors: Lack of social supports and positive role models. Residents do not have access to networks outside the neighbourhood that can link them to employment and other key opportunities (sometimes referred to as an absence of “bridging” social capital).

Community leadership and organization: Level of capacity for mobilization, civic engagement, and political power.

Protective factors: Community leaders and organizations provide needed supports and services. Political power allows needed resources to be leveraged into the neighbourhood.

Risk factors: Lack of leadership, organization, and political power impedes the flow of resources needed for neighbourhood problem-solving and hampers community leadership development.

Physical: The physical features, infrastructure, facilities, and housing conditions of a community influence the health of residents in many ways. The link between health and the “built environment”—streets, housing, businesses, schools, parks, and patterns of regional growth and change—has become a new focus for public health and planning officials. Hence it is one of the core components of the NCLB strategy.

The key factors for neighbourhood assessment from the physical environment perspective are:

Built Environment and Infrastructure: Housing, parks, recreation facilities, utilities, housing under or near power lines.

Protective factors:

Access to affordable, high-quality housing,
local parks, community and recreation centres, libraries, etc.
practical opportunities to walk, run, and bicycle,
Community design that supports physical activity as well as community safety
from the perspective of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design
(CPTED).

Risk factors:

Poor maintenance,
inadequate garbage collection,
improper garbage management,
problems with inadequate sanitation and pest infestation,
absence of recreational and leisure space for kids, and
urban design that inhibits physical activity.

Geographic Access to services/facilities: Access to roads or transit connecting to resources within the neighbourhood as well as the broader area.

Protective factors:

OC Transpo facilitates access to services, employment, and cultural and recreational resources in the city.

Risk factors:

Isolation from job centres,
particularly areas without OC Transpo access,
Distance from recreational facilities or safe parks.

Environmental Quality:

Protective factors:

Policies and practices related to air, water and land that maintain a clean, healthy environment in the neighbourhood and in the surrounding areas.

Risk factors:

Excessive or mismanaged garbage,
presence of and exposure to toxics, and
pollution in the neighbourhood.

Service: The inequitable distribution of health, education, law enforcement, sanitation and recreation opportunities and services in some neighbourhoods can negatively affect the health of a community. The community assessment phase of the NCLB process focuses on identifying risk and protective factors regarding service provision in the designated communities. Lack of access to necessary healthcare services, culturally inappropriate and of poor quality services, prevalence of violence, isolation, and a reluctance to seek needed services, and unavailability of some basic services are all different types of risk factors the NCLB planning process takes into account.

Public Safety: Police and other emergency services.

Protective factors:

Desired and necessary amount of police presence,
Mutual trust between the community and OPS,
Little crime, fear of crime and
Lots of community ownership activity and social interaction.

Risk factors:

Prevalence of criminal activities breeds fear, isolation, and a reluctance to benefit even from the available and needed services, as residents avoid leaving their homes and spending time outside or to visit community houses in the vicinity.

Housing and Health Services: Accessibility, affordability, and quality of care for individuals and families. Responsive Social Housing service for the low income communities.

Protective factors:

Housing authorities responsive and provide timely and inclusive services,
Necessary, accessible care delivered in a culturally sensitive manner in satisfactory health facilities with well-trained and culturally appropriate practitioners.

Risk factors:

Lack of access to necessary healthcare services,
Poor response to maintenance calls,
Culturally inappropriate or poor quality services.

Community and Public Support Services: Neighbourhood-level public services, including schools, parks and recreation, transit, sanitation, and community and childcare centres. Community institutions include faith-based institutions, social clubs, and Tenants' Associations.

Protective factors:

Quality support services act as important neighbourhood institutions providing needed services as well as venues for neighbourhood meetings and leadership development.

Risk factors:

No meeting place,
Needed services are not available while those located in the
neighbourhood are undependable and of poor quality.

Economic: The economic environment and economic status of residents - employment opportunities and working conditions of a community - have a critical impact on health. Independent of the impact of each individual's income on his or her health, the economic environment of a neighbourhood has its own physical and psychological impact.

Community economic development is the key to neighbourhood revitalization. That's why the NCLB approach considers working on this aspect of the community life as one of the core areas of the overall strategy. For additional details, see the neighbourhood restoration component in the following section that addresses the economic health of the community.

Employment, income, wealth, and assets: Looking at the community from the health determinants perspective tells us that the quality and quantity of employment opportunities available to residents and the amount of collective wealth and assets in the community can influence residents' health.

Protective factors:

Community economic development opportunities;
Access to micro-credit;
Living-wage jobs with health benefits;
Safe workplaces;
Savings, retirement, and homeownership provide economic stability.

Risk factors:

Large numbers of community residents with low-wage jobs with no benefits and unsafe working conditions.
Racial and economic segregation and concentrated poverty lead to higher stress, youth engagement in negative activities, and less focus on child development.

In some communities where fear of crime is the uppermost concern, the above four factors can be creatively addressed in classifying the approach to community development in two broad categories: crime prevention and social development. This covers the service, as well as the social, physical and economic aspects of the NCLB strategy.

Correction and prevention become the two vital components in such circumstances. Law enforcement and community policing represent the **correctional** aspect of the strategy. Intervention, and empowerment and neighbourhood restoration represent the **preventive** phase. Community policing is involved in both corrective and preventive activities and serves as a bridge between the two components.

Law Enforcement (Service)

This aspect of the NCLB approach focuses on both collaborative problem-solving processes and enforcement tactics to reduce and suppress crime at the neighbourhood level. The law enforcement component is designed to remove crime and violence. Efforts are directed mainly at identifying, apprehending and prosecuting the most serious and visible criminal activities and the perpetrators in the neighbourhood.

Reducing both crime and citizen fear give back hope to community members living in distressed neighbourhoods and set the stage for effective implementation of other social development projects and community revitalization.

Community Policing (Service and social)

Community policing supports intensive law enforcement operations and serves as a bridge to the correctional component. Community policing embraces two key concepts — community engagement and problem solving. Under this model of policing, officers establish an ongoing dialog with community members to solve crime problems through a systematic process to address the underlying causes of crime.

This continued interaction (as opposed to situational/issues meetings) fosters a sense of responsibility within the community to contribute to solutions, focus on increasing police visibility and develop cooperative relationships between the police and community members. Some community-policing activities could include informal meetings with the community members, foot patrols, victim referrals to support services, presentation of crime stoppers, and interaction with youth in the neighbourhood and community support in gathering evidence about criminal activities.

Community mobilization is also crucial to community policing for crime prevention purposes. Programs that encourage community participation and help prevent crime include neighbourhood watches, citizen marches and rallies, initiatives led by various faith communities and graffiti removal.

Prevention and Empowerment (Social)

Studies show that risk factors such as economic deprivation, lack of meaningful support to families at risk, and early academic failure increase the likelihood that a child will develop health and behavior problems in adolescence. Similarly, protective factors such as positive individual characteristics, bonding, healthy beliefs and clear standards set by parents and society reduce the impact of risk factors on children.

The prevention, intervention and empowerment component, therefore, concentrate on an array of human services in the designated neighbourhood to create an environment in which crime and violence cannot thrive. Links among law enforcement, Ottawa Community Housing, social service organizations, other agencies, the private sector and the community are strengthened to improve the overall quality of services to community members.

Neighbourhood Restoration (Economic)

This component focuses on improving and revitalizing the economic and social conditions of distressed neighbourhoods through neighbourhood restoration strategies. This component addresses and seeks to expand the economic vitality of the community so that crime and disorder will not thrive. As with the other components, neighbourhood restoration is achieved through the coordinated use of provincial, local and private-sector resources. Strategies focus on economic development, employment opportunities for community members and improvements to the housing stock and physical environment of the neighbourhood. Restoration activities include renovating and refurbishing housing, improving public spaces such as parks and recreational facilities, and creating opportunities for job readiness and employment training, including entrepreneurship and job creation.

Developing the neighbourhood-level Strategic Plans

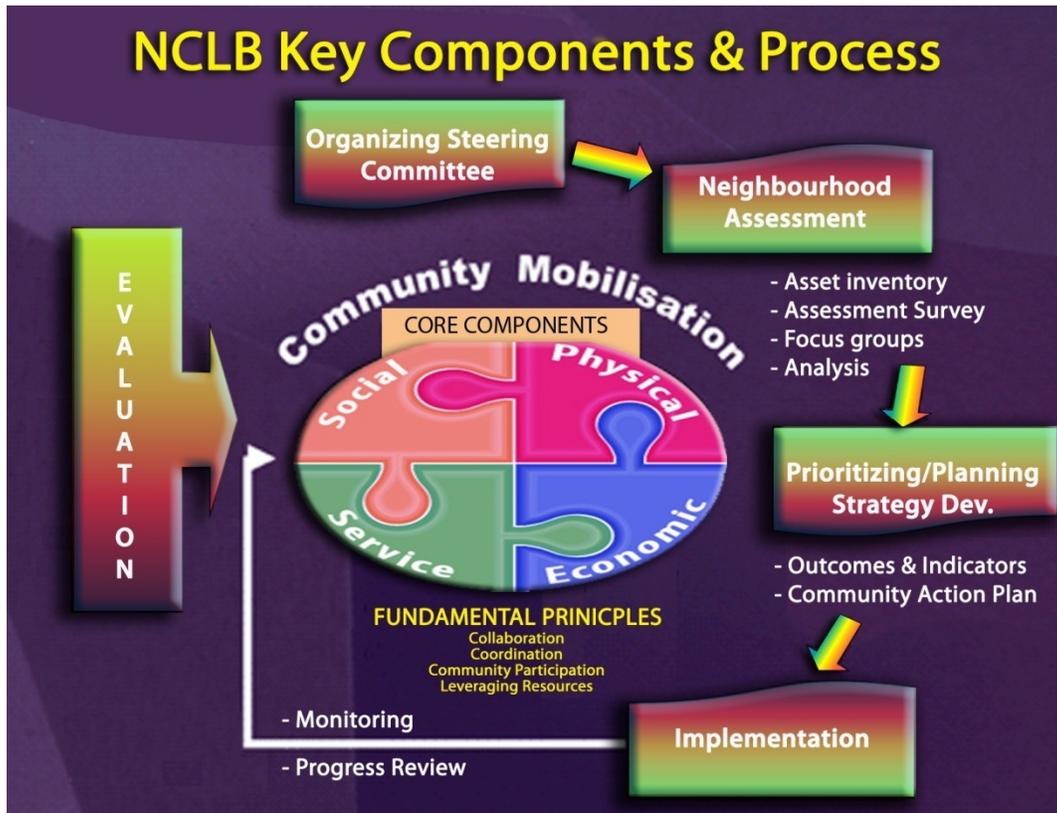
The process for developing a *No Community Left Behind* process strategy requires a significant commitment from the community to engage in strategic planning process, collaborate with key service providers and coordinate programs and services. Strategic planning involves a specific process that assists the community with identifying a future vision, managing change and creating the best possible future for community members. The end result of the strategic planning process is a detailed Community Action Plan for implementation and change. The basic characteristics of the strategic planning process are:

- A focused process of community assessment for concentrating on selected, priority issues;
- An inventory of resources and explicit consideration of resource availability;
- An action orientation, with a strong emphasis on practical results;
- An emphasis on innovative and collaborative approaches to problem solving.

There are eight basic planning stages involved in putting the *No Community Left Behind* process in place in any neighbourhood. Although the strategic plans vary from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, the planning stages are common across all NCLB sites:

- Phase 1:** Organizing and convening a local, site-specific **Steering Committee**;
- Phase 2:** Selecting or confirming the designated neighbourhood;
- Phase 3:** Conducting a participatory community needs assessment of the designated neighbourhood;
- Phase 4:** Developing neighbourhood level plans;
- Phase 5:** Implementation process;
- Phase 6:** Evaluation.

Working through these phases and planning steps is *not* a neat, consecutive process with some pre-defined length of time. Work on more than one phase and steps usually occur simultaneously. For example, selection of the Steering Committee may be in process while a community survey is administered in the designated neighbourhood to assess the situation in black and white for clarity and planning. The implementation plan explained here is viewed in terms of each community's context, character and environment.



Organizing the Steering Committee

Overview

The Steering Committee is required to maximize the chance of *No Community Left Behind* strategy's success. A step-by-step process for organizing the Steering Committee starts with an overall vision for a well-functioning and successful Steering Committee. The extent to which the given steps could be followed depends on the environment. Circumstances vary from one CHRC's area (NCLB site) to another, and the stakeholders need to take the most suitable path according to the situation they face.

Vision

The NCLB is a collaborative effort among organizations, agencies and community members that care about the designated neighbourhood. This collaboration is reflected in the Steering Committee, which provides a structure for building a commitment to the *No Community Left Behind* process, identifying areas of greatest community need, coordinating programs and services for local community members and ensuring everyone's involvement in working toward the same goals.

The most basic objective is to avoid duplication of resources in undertaking isolated projects which, despite good intentions, are not sustainable because they are not integrated with other initiatives for maximum impact and return on long-term investment.

The membership of the Steering Committee is large and diverse. Individuals from the following key stakeholder groups should ideally be part of the committee.

- 1) Local CHRC (coordinating the NCLB program in different neighbourhoods the area);
- 2) Ottawa Community Housing or other corporate housing owners;
- 3) Local City councillor/s;
- 4) Ottawa Police Service;
- 5) Boys and Girls Club;
- 6) Youth Service Bureau;
- 7) Children's Aid Society;
- 8) Grassroots representative: community members of the designated neighbourhood;
- 9) City services representatives;
- 10) Additional committee members may include representatives of the legal aid office, social/community/health service agencies, recreation and employment agencies, schools, nonprofit and community organizations and businesses;
- 11) Potential donors to the community development projects (such as the United Way).

The list is not exhaustive indeed because membership will mostly depend on agencies and organizations catering to the identified community needs and prioritized issues.

Ideally, the Chair is selected from amongst the partners for his/her skills and experience in facilitation, consensus building, and demonstrated support for community development. A **co-chair**, such as a resident or a private-sector representative, may be appointed. The Steering Committee members bring several qualities and skills to the NCLB effort, including leadership, guidance, vision, direction, funding and management. Members possess decision-making ability within the organizations they represent (e.g., managers in government agencies, community leaders, nonprofit directors), enabling them to commit and deliver resources required to effect real change in the designated area.¹

¹ These resources may be in the form of funding, staff, volunteers or in-kind services.

The Steering Committee is the governing body for *No Community Left Behind*. It serves as the highest authority within a structure including subcommittees for the various component areas of *No Community Left Behind*, a **NCLB Coordinator** and/or other staff and links to local programs or initiatives that complement a site's goals and objectives.

Initially, the Steering Committee meets frequently to establish the organizational structure, develop a vision for the neighbourhood and oversee development of the *No Community Left Behind* strategy. As the process moves to strategy implementation, the Steering Committee may meet less frequently only to focus on key areas of responsibility such as developing policies, coordinating subcommittee activities, approving changes to the strategic plan, monitoring progress on goals and objectives and providing leadership and advocacy for the *No Community Left Behind* strategy.

Implementation Process

Step 1: Meeting stakeholders to ensure commitment

While meetings between the concerned stakeholders predictably occur in the beginning stages, it is necessary to widen the participation level and confirm support up front from key local officials such as the Councilor, OPS senior management, and appropriate city staff. The results of these discussions establish the direction, character and framework for the entire initiative. The following important issues, however, need to be emphasized:

- The NCLB approach requires coordinated efforts to revitalize the designated neighbourhoods;

- The NCLB approach requires coordination among different levels of law enforcement efforts. An atmosphere of commitment, cooperation and trust must exist if the initiative is going to operate successfully. It must be presented as a long-term activity.

- Successful coordination and management of the *No Community Left Behind* strategy require continuing staff resources. There could be several ways for resource management and effective coordination.

Step 2: Creating a Core Group to provide leadership

To avoid slowing down the process in the initial phase, the focus needs to be on establishing a core group of frontline staff and community representatives to:

- Meet with local community members to get their support;

- Conduct an initial needs assessment of the designated neighbourhood;

- Select individuals to serve on the Steering Committee.

Selection of staff and other members need to be based on their skills and ability to complete a specific task rather than their organizational roles/affiliations. Each participant agrees to help develop and implement the *No Community Left Behind* strategy and is considered a member in the business of the Steering Committee.

The core group organizes public meetings and attends meetings of existing community organizations in the designated neighbourhood to fully explain the NCLB approach and obtain grassroots support. This is best accomplished by including key neighbourhood community members at the start of the planning process. Without their support, the *No Community Left Behind* process will not have the opportunity to succeed.

Step 3: Ensuring Stakeholders' Commitment

Many organizations and individuals from various disciplines are considered for Steering Committee membership as described in detail above.

Leadership, guidance, vision, direction and management are required of the Steering Committee members to create and implement an effective *No Community Left Behind* strategy. Consider these skills and other

issues when deciding who best represent the stakeholder organizations on the Steering Committee. First, it is good to have representatives with decision-making abilities so that decisions and commitments made at Steering Committee meetings are meaningful and timely. Second, representatives commit to attending Steering Committee meetings without relying too much on sending alternates (alternates can impede the ability to make decisions). And finally, representatives are knowledgeable about the designated neighbourhood.

Step 4: Determining the Roles and Responsibilities

The core group drafts the roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee. This information is important during the initial process of looking for suitable members and when asking the selected individuals to commit to serving on the Steering Committee.

Once the Steering Committee is formed, members revisit and finalize roles and responsibilities. It is clear from the outset that Steering Committee members are responsible for more than strategic planning, policy, and management — they ensure that the organization they represent makes a long term commitment to making the approach a success.

These commitments may take the form of a partner organization re-programming staff for service provision in the designated neighbourhood or a community organization providing resident volunteers for some activities. Whatever the commitments, they are made public so that each Steering Committee member and the organization he/she represents are aware of them and follow through can be monitored.

The **initial responsibilities** of the Steering Committee differ from their **permanent responsibilities** during implementation of strategies, programs and activities. The following are some general roles and responsibilities for consideration during refining and finalizing the strategy described in this document:

- Developing a future vision of the designated neighbourhood;
- Conducting an in-depth community needs assessment;
- Establishing subcommittee for strategy development;
- Overseeing development of the strategic plans and giving final approval;
- Approving selection of the NCLB Coordinator and other staff (if needed);
- Identifying resource commitments from each member.

Once the neighbourhood level community action plans are developed and implementation is under way, the roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee focus on policy, management and advocacy. More specifically, the roles and responsibilities include:

- Oversight and management of goals and objectives;
- Guidance on and resolution of implementation issues;
- Coordination of subcommittee activities;
- Development and integration of activities in all four core areas; social, physical, service and economic;
- Approval of changes to the strategic plan;
- Development/Approval of grant applications and adjustments;
- Monitoring of progress on evaluation and effectiveness of the *No Community Left Behind* strategy;
- Provision of leadership.

Step 5: Developing the Decision-making Processes

Steering Committee members also develop the decision-making processes that enable the committee to govern the NCLB process effectively. The decision-making processes could be defined through agendas, and policies and procedures, or suggesting bylaws.

The Steering Committee develops terms of reference with written policies and procedures to address questions such as: How often will the Steering Committee meet? How will meeting agendas be established? Will decisions be made through consensus or majority rule? How and when will vote taking occur?

Step 6: Creating an Organizational Structure for Implementation

It is the responsibility of the implementing CHRC to establish a blueprint for the *No Community Left Behind* process organization and how people will be grouped to accomplish its mission and work. The structure includes the Steering Committee as the governing body for the NCLB process. The Steering committee is responsible for proposing subcommittees, identifying potential membership, and providing direction/support to ad hoc and permanent sub-committees. Staff-related issues are the responsibility of the respective CHRC.

The subcommittees are task-oriented and include people who work on the front lines of service agencies. Primarily, subcommittee members are individuals who can contribute skills, knowledge, resources and time to developing and implementing the *No Community Left Behind* strategy. Managers and frontline staff from stakeholder organizations and community members are considered for the subcommittees and workgroups.

Neighbourhood Selection

Overview

Critical components of this selection process are the assessment of neighbourhood assets and needs, overall community involvement and identification and commitment of community resources essential to the implementation of the *No Community Left Behind* strategy.

Vision

After the Steering Committee has been determined,² the designated neighbourhood(s) are selected to implement the *No Community Left Behind* strategy. Although some communities may already have a predefined area to target for the NCLB initiative, a selection process is important to ensure the area meets the established criteria and can be supported through implementation of the NCLB strategy. The City and University of Ottawa's neighbourhood study will play a key role in the selection of neighbourhoods for initial intervention.

Selection is also one of the early steps in determining whether community members are interested in and supportive of the *No Community Left Behind* process. The NCLB process demands community involvement and ownership from its inception, in opposition to strategies that rely on external resources for one-time problem solving. Readiness of the community and the ability of organizations, such as the CHRCs, to mobilize community members to participate at different levels of the NCLB process can determine the success of this local strategy.

One way to think about the selection process is a participatory endeavor to uncover:

- a) Status of the potential neighbourhood compared to others on the basis of University of Ottawa's neighbourhood study;
- b) Elements in the neighbourhood that can be addressed;
- c) Challenges that might affect the success of the NCLB strategy, and
- d) The depth of community leadership needed to move the strategy forward.

This process involves looking at all possible elements. An area defined as neighbourhood from other projects' point of view may not be appropriately meeting the needs of the *No Community Left Behind* strategy. It might be necessary to look at the surroundings neighbourhoods and their mutual influence.

An **Initial Planning Committee** uncovers all resources that can be leveraged or stakeholders who have a particular expertise that are not widely known. The Planning Committee may be broadened to include additional resource professionals along with community members. However, a manageable size is advisable. The number of individuals is dependent on the amount of work and experience of the committee members.

The committee does not discuss budgets or funding at this point in the process. It concentrates on the tasks of assessing the need and evaluating the feasibility of the neighbourhood/s in question. On completion, the

² The **Steering Committee** is the primary work force in the *No Community Left Behind* strategy. The Steering Committee — consisting of representatives from social service agencies, Ottawa Housing, law enforcement agencies and key provincial, and local agencies and stakeholders (such as local councilors, OPS, faith-based representatives, businesses, residents, school administrators, non-profit leaders, and other concerned agencies) — is responsible for establishing NCLB goals and objectives, designing and developing programs, providing guidance on implementation, and assessing program achievement. Roles and responsibilities of each member (representing a stakeholder) are clearly defined.

committee has information to make informed and appropriate choices in the selection of a neighbourhood. Although the selection of a specific neighbourhood is probably not as dramatic, it helps determine how the overall strategy is implemented and whether it is successful.

Implementation Process

Step 1: Comparing Collected Data with Criteria for Neighbourhood Selection

The focus of the NCLB process is to assist neighbourhoods that are experiencing economic and social challenges, which are often coupled with crime problems. The ability to clearly identify social, economic, service, and challenges related to physical environment also contribute in the development of the overall strategies used to address these challenges. Therefore, the information collected and analyzed also plays an important role in the development of neighbourhood-specific strategies for implementation.

There are many signs that indicate a neighbourhood is experiencing stress. Most of the signs are visible on inspection of the neighbourhoods being considered for designation. Along with the University of Ottawa's study, the following criteria could be suggested for consideration. If a neighbourhood being considered meets more than half of the set criteria with at least 50 percent crime related criteria, it will meet the overall requirements for designation.

Additional criteria could be incorporated after consultation and deliberation among the Steering Committee members. To compare a site with these criteria, the Planning Committee gathers and analyzes information from public sources. Several general sources — local library, local university, Statistics Canada, city departments, House directors, and the community itself — can be helpful in gathering information to select the designated neighbourhood for the *No Community Left Behind* process.

Present potential sites such as Banff Avenue and Russell Heights in Ottawa South are well known for the aforementioned problems. In general, however, there is a need to set criteria on the basis of which to recognize an area fit for the NCLB initiative.

Even if the sites are well known, collecting the following type of data can help establish a benchmark against which progress of the process is evaluated over a period of time. Assistance in collection and analysis of data can be assigned to community volunteers or students. The following types of data are collected:

City's master plan

The City's *20/20 Human Services Plan Priority on People*, gives an idea about what city leaders have drafted. The plan helps identify the objectives to be accomplished over a period of time for the potential site area. It is important to know what these plans are and how community members and other stakeholders will be affected in the context of the Community Development Framework (CDF). Under the CDF, progress is evaluated according to the set evaluation framework and goals of the CDF.

Community's perspective

Data does not tell the full story. Information may be skewed depending on who is collecting the data and on their intended use. One source of information that cannot be skewed in a broad consultation is the voice of the community. Engaging community members, business owners and community leaders in discussions about the condition of the community is an excellent source of data. This could be done in a variety of ways including arranging meetings through community development organization and faith-based organizations, and discussing the problems for obtaining an accurate picture of the situation in the field.

Social service data

Information on social assistance, public housing and other forms of public assistance are a good source of information not only for designating a neighbourhood, but also sketching out future plans. Ontario Works and Ottawa Housing document most of this information, as do various other agencies within the city.

Economic development data

Various organizations, including universities and financial institutions may have economic development data about planned development projects, micro loan funds, technical assistance resources, and entrepreneurial

training programs designed to encourage increased business development. These programs and resources are key indicators of economic potential for an area.

Police calls and crime data

Police statistics and community members' complaints are sources of useful information. Additional data may be collected, including a breakdown of the types of crimes committed. The goal in reviewing this type of data is to see whether there is a trend or an increase or decrease in the types of crime reported and later on to find out what changes have occurred due to the NCLB process.

School data

Identifying schools with the highest dropout rate, absenteeism, the greatest violence, crime and drugs are a challenge. This information is obtained either from schools directly or at the school board level. Professional input is required to compare the data with census information for monitoring the increase or decrease in school-age children in the area – for instance to see if it is the increase in the number of children that has resulted in high dropout and crime rate, or if it is an increase in the crime rate.

Step 2: Analyzing the Data

Analysis is not difficult. It is best to separate the Planning Committee into smaller groups to handle different aspects of the data. These smaller groups look at the information and ask the following questions:

Has there been an increase in identified problems during the past few years?

Has there been a decrease in these problems during the past few years?

Does certain data stand out above the rest?

What might be happening to explain the increase or decrease in problems in the area?

Was there anything happening in the community which can be identified and might explain the changes in numbers (for example, of arrests, school dropouts, certain crimes, abuse/neglect cases, or unemployment)?

Do the numbers tell a story (for example, was youth turning to drugs due to a lack of recreational facility or is it the result of financial incentives given by the drug dealers)?

The answers to these questions constitute the analysis of the data. More extensive forms of data analysis exist, but the goal is to determine only whether a potential designated neighbourhood meets at least half of the set criteria. Furthermore, it gives a picture of the present status against which progress and impact of the process needs to be evaluated.

Step 3: Looking for Indicators of Neighbourhood Potential

Although numerous signs can indicate that a neighbourhood is experiencing undue stress, they also can show its potential for becoming stressed. Sometimes, the signs may not be so visible, so investigation to identify them is required. It is as important to select a neighbourhood that has signs of **potential**, as it is to identify a neighbourhood that has **challenges**. Again, the collected data can help in determining potential.

The following are examples of “neighbourhood potential”:

Community organizations. Community based organizations are the lifeblood of the NCLB process initiatives. Effective NCLB strategies require the involvement of and collaboration with community organizations. Even the best conceived programs will not function effectively in the long term without the benefit of resident and community organization involvement.

Community's capacity. Community members are the lifelines of neighbourhoods. Traditional economic development efforts have often limited the role and significance of community members; however, successful NCLB strategies require significant resident involvement. The fact that community members have already begun to organize themselves through Tenant Associations, or other organized bodies is an indication that they have a basic understanding of their role as stakeholders in the revitalization of their community. Many community members

have experience or expertise in one of the four components of the NCLB process (Social, Physical, Service and Economic)

Economic potential. If commercial opportunities (shops, stores, or businesses) do exist in the vicinity, the designated neighbourhood has a distinct potential for economic revitalization.

Identifiable area. The more the designated neighbourhood is sufficiently distinguishable from nearby neighbourhoods, the easier it is to constitute a defined focus for concentrated action. This element is important because the area designated is evaluated for measurable changes such as reduced crime and unemployment.

The more challenging the identification of potential areas, the more difficult is the implementation of the *No Community Left Behind* strategy.

Step 4: Making the Decision

After collecting the relevant information, the Planning Committee meets to make a final decision on the neighbourhood(s) to be selected. Although it is understood that sometimes a neighbourhood or neighbourhoods might be pre-selected as potential NCLB sites, this process is completed to measure progress against indicators which led the Committee to declare a site fit for the *No Community Left Behind* process.

Based on the decision, changes to the size of the potential site have to be made. Sometimes, sites are reduced or enlarged based on the information collected in the field. The goal is to identify a site that has the greatest chance of success and one that has a clearly identified need for the *No Community Left Behind* process.

Critical assumptions

Although this phase of the process is critical, a few implementation issues do exist. First, getting people who have the experience or expertise to assist with this process can be challenging. Some potential partners on the Executive Committee may have decided what the boundaries of the site are and may not want to proceed with the process. Encouraging them to complete the process is required even if it only confirms their recommendations.

The time needed to complete the process may also be a challenge. Taking the time to seek out free resources which can help collect the information needed for data analysis cuts down tremendously on the time needed. If the process takes too much time, people may get discouraged and lose their motivation to participate. The process is intended only to ensure that the right site is selected and enough information is available to use as benchmarks to measure progress and evaluate the process.

Overview

Once a neighbourhood has been designated for the *No Community Left Behind* process, the information gathered can be used for a more extensive assessment of the area. A neighbourhood assessment is at the heart of the planning process to develop a local *NCLB* strategy.

The steps involved in conducting an assessment not only enable you to examine the resources that exist within the community (e.g., buildings and programs), but also provide an ideal forum to broaden the engagement of community members by soliciting their ideas, concerns and priorities relative to their vision for the community.

Most importantly, the present information becomes a benchmark to measure future progress through regular assessments and reviews.

Vision

After selecting the neighbourhood for the *NCLB* process, the Steering Committee oversees the implementation of a comprehensive community assessment. A community assessment focuses on identifying both assets and needs. Examples of community assets range from strong resident-led organizations to quality housing and the overall physical and social environment.

Other assets include strong social service programs, an active small business community and service providers providing a variety of services. An asset can be any resource that is making or has the potential to make a positive impact on the community. A neighbourhood assessment that involves the community members and other area stakeholders who may not have worked together before provides a strong bridge-building tool.

If data were collected from the census or other sources on the problems affecting an area, the result may suggest that no viable resources exist within a community. In every community, there are community members who are knowledgeable about a range of issues, including the history of the neighbourhood, past programs or strategies that have been executed and concerns that have been expressed by community members.

These individuals are often viewed as community leaders, although they may not be the heads of formal organizations. All communities have some assets that need to be recognized and considered in developing a plan of action for change. Although the number of assets in a distressed area may be lower than in other areas, these assets exist. It is important to identify them before planning a local strategy. Only community members, not official lists or reports, are likely to recognize some of these functional assets.

A systematic community assessment involves gathering and analyzing information about a wide range of neighbourhood characteristics, problems and resources. It is not limited to a review of criminal activity; rather, it also considers some of the underlying causes of poor health, crime and the local resources that can be mobilized to combat them.

In addition, a community assessment focuses on all the resources that exist in a neighbourhood — some of which are often taken for granted. For example, most neighbourhoods have community members of all ages. Many of the senior community members may have lived in the neighbourhood for many years and are well known throughout the community; they know the neighbourhood history and can contribute valuable ideas and insight. They are an important asset that cannot be overlooked, particularly as the process moves toward developing goals for different core components of the *NCLB* process.

A comprehensive community assessment is also critical in evaluating the *NCLB* process. It provides baseline information — a description of the community and its social and economic, physical, service and

economic challenges before the *No Community Left Behind* process. Although it is not always possible to prove that changes are a direct result of the *No Community Left Behind* process, accurate documentation of neighbourhood conditions at the beginning is essential to measure the change later.

One of the challenges in forming a new NCLB site is the time required to conduct a thorough community assessment. The following suggested steps are required to conduct a proper neighbourhood assessment.

Implementation Process

Step 1: Assembling the Assessment Team

An assessment team is formed after gathering the University of Ottawa neighbourhood study data and determining whether any assessments have been previously conducted and to what extent.

An effective strategy in conducting this step is to study the available information and prepare to build on it by involving community members, both young and old, in the data collection process.

This mix of team members ensures diversity in the information collected. It is also the first time many community members have been engaged in a process that seeks their ideas and concerns in helping to build a safe, strong and viable community. This level of participation serves as a foundation for the NCLB process as the overall plan is developed in collaboration with the community.

A distinction between the assessment team and the Steering Committee is made for a reason. The purpose of the assessment team is to collect and analyze neighbourhood data. This information is submitted to the Steering Committee to develop the local strategy with the full assistance of the CHRC. After completing the assessment exercise, the assessment team is no longer needed.

A helpful strategy is to convene community meetings to formally introduce the NCLB concept and provide an overview of the importance of conducting the community assessment. During these sessions, surveys can be disseminated and inventory of resources can be prepared. For non-English-speaking individuals, the survey is disseminated in two or more languages to secure maximum participation. The inventory of resources can be developed in the two forms given below for clearer understanding.

It is important for community members to understand that the community assessment is an opportunity to offer their ideas, concerns and recommendations for the community. As community members recognize that the *No Community Left Behind* strategy is designed in a way to be all-inclusive, they are more open to sharing and contributing to the overall process.

Step 2: Sources and Type of Information

Data is gathered from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data typically involves information collected from one-on-one interviews, focus groups, surveys and forums. Secondary data includes information that has already been published in some form, such as reports, studies and census information. Most of the information used to select the site comes from secondary data. It is therefore necessary to balance that with as much local, first hand information as possible.

Step 3: Taking a Neighbourhood Inventory

Understanding the characteristics of the neighbourhood is necessary to provide a picture of the community, including the qualities and unique elements that distinguish the designated neighbourhood from others in the city.

The checklist provided in this step can be useful in identifying the unique characteristics of a neighbourhood. It serves as a springboard for asking questions and, most important, generating solid answers and information.

The checklist contains several overlapping categories and provides a basis for answering these questions. These characteristics need to be examined from a positive perspective.

Each of the following characteristics is considered as a possible asset that can be leveraged.

People

- _ Families (number, size),
- _ Children (age range),
- _ Senior citizens (number, ages, needs),
- _ Single people (number),
- _ Homeless people (if any),
- _ Ethnic groups,
- _ Gender makeup.

Housing

- _ Residences (breakdown),
- _ Single-family homes,
- _ Apartments,
- _ Public housing (number and condition of),
- _ Single-room occupancy.

Institutions and organizations

- _ Faith-based institutions,
- _ Financial institutions,
- _ Health care institutions,
- _ Hospitals,
- _ Medical centres,
- _ Specialty clinics,
- _ Professional organizations,
- _ Chambers of commerce,

- _ Trade associations.

Businesses

- _ Micro enterprises,
- _ Home based,
- _ Small,
- _ Large,
- _ Service,
- _ Retail,
- _ Wholesale,
- _ Light manufacturing,
- _ Heavy manufacturing,
- _ Industrial.

Public facilities

- _ Schools,
- _ Hospitals,
- _ Libraries,
- _ Parks,
- _ Recreation centres,
- _ Police stations,
- _ Social services,
- _ Other city offices.

In looking at the above characteristics, the gathered information answers the following questions:

1. What do we know about each population group?
2. How many exist in the neighbourhood?
3. What do the institutions, businesses, organizations and public facilities offer the community?
4. What is missing?
5. What are the gaps?
6. What activities, programs can be introduced to bridge the identified gaps?

Most of the information needed to address the above questions can be obtained through secondary data and direct discussion with the community and partnering agencies. After taking inventory of the various characteristics and resources, it is time to assess the facilities and “soft” resources that are often found in a community that can be used to facilitate implementation of the NCLB strategies.

These resources include both public and private-sector resources. The objective is to ascertain to what extent resources exist in the community and how effective these resources have been in serving the community members. Whereas the previous section can be supported by secondary data sources, this next series of questions is both quantitative and qualitative.

After collecting information on the number of facilities and resources that exist in the area (using the checklist as a guide), it is time to find out how useful community members perceive these resources to be. For example, although a building may be located in a community, if the community members do not feel the services offered in the building are useful or if the building is not accessible, then it is defined only as a potential resource. It exists, but it is not being fully used.

To gather this information, conducting focus groups may be a good idea provided they are arranged at times convenient to community members. It may require holding multiple sessions at varying times of the day and may include weekends.

The community survey needs to be short and simple. What appears to be a useful resource may not be perceived as such by community members. We may also find that other resources exist but that they are not captured through the scans already conducted. The following are the general categories of resources as well as questions to be asked from community members. These categories could be refined and updated as the process moves forward. The data gathering people have the discretion to determine what is appropriate for their neighbourhood assessment.

Public-sector resources and facilities

Public-sector resources serve all neighbourhoods in each city. The degree to which these services extend into a neighbourhood can have a significant impact on the lives of the community members. The following are key resources and questions that are considered relative to the impact of these resources on the selected neighbourhood.

Transportation. A critical question is what type(s) of public transportation exists in relation to the neighbourhood. Most stressed communities are in urban environments, and public transportation is accessible. Despite the accessibility, some limitations to or concerns about the safety of these systems may exist. Nonetheless, the following questions about public transportation are important:

- How do most community members get around?
- What modes of public transportation are available to community members?
- Are routes and daily schedules convenient for community members?
- Are the services considered safe?
- Is the selected neighbourhood easily accessible to other parts of the city?
- Can drug traffickers get into and out of the neighbourhood easily?
- Do the drug dealers live in the community?
- Does a freeway effectively cut off most forms of access into the neighbourhood?
- Are there plans for expansion or improvements to the current transportation system?
- Are there traffic safety problems?

Public safety, fire and social services

One of the key elements of the NCLB process is the involvement of public safety officials. Most communities have a police station or a Community Police Centre (CPC). In addition, other city social service offices can be located in communities to increase accessibility.

- What city services are directly offered from locations in the community?
- Do these facilities offer outreach services to the community?
- Are there plans for expansion or upgrades to the current facilities?
- Are buildings being used for activities other than the intended city services?

Employment skills and resources

The percentage of community members who are employed and unemployed and the skills both groups possess that can be used as untapped or under tapped resources are also considerations. Knowing the skills base of the designated community is critical to determining whether alternative neighbourhood restoration strategies are implemented. The following information is also helpful:

- What types of businesses currently operate in the community?
- Do these businesses typically employ people from the community?
- How involved are business owners in community activities?
- What percentage of the adult and youth population is unemployed?
- What resources exist to help increase the skills of community members?
- What are community members' educational and skill levels?
- What legitimate employment opportunities exist for teenagers?

Are major corporations in or near the community?
What types of skilled labor do these firms require?
Are employment programs operating in the community to assist community members in securing employment?

Community-serving institutions

Public and private institutions play vital roles in every community. While several institutions might be identified in the community through the secondary data scan, and these institutions may possess facilities that can be used by community members, it is important to understand how community members perceive these resources and whether they are considered accessible. Numerous questions can be asked:

What schools serve the selected neighbourhood?
What is their physical condition?
What percentage of students completes high school and goes on to college/university?
What special services and programs are available to students during school hours and after school?
To what extent are the schools involved in drug education and prevention and adult education?
Are schools accessible to community organizations after school hours?
How are local colleges and universities involved in the designated community?
Do religious institutions offer programs and services to community members in the community?

Health and recreation resources

Healthy communities begin with healthy community members. Where hospitals and other health-related services were once considered separate from the community, these institutions now realize they are critical anchors to communities. In addition, a correlation often exists between the level of recreational resources in a community and the level of youth-related criminal activity. Communities without health or recreational partners can exhibit signs of stress. The following information gives insight into the neighbourhood's situation:

Are health care services available in the neighbourhood?
If so, what types of facilities are available— hospital, clinic, and community health centre?
Is mental health care available?
Are screening services offered for HIV?
What types of after-school programs exist in the community?
Is the city's parks and recreation department involved in the neighbourhood?
Does the neighbourhood have parks and recreational facilities?
Are community-based organizations involved in drug- or gang-prevention activities?

Crime

Although the other types of data or information collected thus far needs to be viewed as assets or resources that can positively affect a community, documenting the types of crime occurring in the area is also important. This information is useful, as the CHRC prepares to develop a crime and asset map for further analysis and strategy development in close consultation with the Steering Committee. OPS maintain the bulk of the information relative to criminal activity. In fact, police calls for service generally provide a quick picture of order or disorder in the neighbourhood although fear of reporting can result in painting a false picture. The following are some of the things to keep in mind:

What appears to be the greatest type of crime being committed in the area?
Do the calls to police reflect a high frequency of violence or high rates of victimization of particular groups?
Are the police frequently called to resolve disputes?
If citizens do not call for police assistance, why?
Are citizens fearful or distrustful of police?
Has there been a rise in any particular type of crime?
Has there been any change in the age, race or gender of the individuals committing crimes?
Are community members of the neighbourhood afraid to walk the streets at night?

Who is out at night, and in what types of activities are they engaged?
To what extent are children and teenagers part of the drug and crime problem?
Are gangs present in the target area?
Are gangs involved in drugs and violent crimes?

Step 4: Developing an Asset Inventory Map

The collected information can be incorporated into an asset inventory on a map, which enables a community to locate the geographic boundaries of a neighbourhood and plot the resources and threats. Results include identifying current and potential trouble spots, opportunities for business development, potential meeting places, and important buildings such as schools, hospitals, social service agencies, and public housing developments. In addition, there is also information about the individuals who reside in the community. Collectively, this information helps answer the following questions from the perspective of a community member:

What do we know about ourselves as community members?
What do we know about the buildings in our community?
What do we know about the level of resources being directed into our community?
What do we know about the trouble spots in our community?
What do we know about the stakeholders/partners in our community?
What do we know is missing but needed in our community?
What do we know are our key strengths as a community?
What do we know are our key threats/weaknesses as a community?
What do we know about the organizations that serve our community?

When the answers to threats and asset are incorporated in the inventory map, all the stakeholders have a better sense of the key gaps and opportunities. Typically, these gaps or opportunities can be addressed with the additional resources identified as implementation of the *No Community Left Behind* NCLB strategy proceeds.

Step 5: Identifying Resources

When the extent of gaps in resources is identified, the assessment team finds out what existing resources can be brought into the community and what new ones are developed. To accomplish this, the Steering Committee and implementing CHRC:

Determine the type and extent of potential resources;
Integrate the desires of the community to develop new resources;
Define the resources in specific terms;
Determine when the resources are needed;
Determine what goals the resources are expected to achieve.

The first step in identifying existing resources is to develop an inventory of all resource providers and identify the type and extent of available resources. The list of providers begins with the agencies and organizations represented on the Steering Committee. Agencies are listed that already serve the community, including both law enforcement and social services.

Some of the organizations may not have been found during the initial inventory of the neighbourhood. Although they may not be in the neighbourhood physically, they may still serve the community members. The committee first identifies whether such resources exist in the city, and then determine whether they serve the designated neighbourhood. If so, they are categorized as an existing resource.

Once the Committee identifies current resources, it determines the providers' potential for additional resources. The additional resources could be delivered through reallocation, more efficient use or new resources. Members of the Steering Committee are encouraged to use their network of colleagues to find

out whether the organizations listed are interested, available and willing to provide additional services and additional resources to the neighbourhood.

For action, the objective is to help identify and bring new resources to the table. Creation of a Task Force helps. From the prevention perspective, citywide organizations might consider establishing an office in the neighbourhood.

At this stage in the process, there is not enough information available to determine how to use new resources. Instead, the Steering Committee and implementing organization are looking at the general level of additional resources needed. All potential resources are reconciled to determine which are most important from the neighbourhood perspective. Resources are most effective when they are used as leverage to enhance existing community plans. The Steering Committee could consider an organized session with community members so that they can set their own agenda for needed resources or empower police officers to work with community members to develop the list. These meetings may result in deviations from the CHRC and the proposed Steering Committee's assumptions about the use of resources.

Step 6: Resources Inventory

At this stage, a chart capturing all the resources that have been identified is developed. (See Appendix 1 and 2 at the end). Although all the identified public and private organizations may not have representatives on the Steering Committee, many organizations are willing to pledge certain resources to support a community strategy. This combination of organizations and pledged a certain level of resources can be leveraged to generate additional resources.

This inventory is helpful when seeking monetary support from area financial institutions, private business owners, or foundations, as they need to know what resources have already been leveraged and the gap they fill to complete the overall strategy requirements.

Based on the identified gaps, it is useful to develop a chart to show organizations what gaps in services or resources exist and how each respective organization is seen contributing to filling those gaps. It is easier to gain their support, when the identified organizations are shown their roles through a detailed resource allocation plan.

Critical assumptions

The concept of data collection and analysis may be intimidating, but it is a learning experience. What is needed is evaluation of the assessment team's capacity, determination of the point person for the team, and establishment of a realistic start and end date.

All the concerned stakeholders need to have a sense of how long the process would take. If it takes too long, they may lose interest. In attempting to complete this process, the team may not uncover all the resources. However, new resources may be found and included as the implementation moves forward.

The process continues to document new resources and disseminates the information to the appropriate committee. Community members can be used to distribute and collect the surveys. Progress of the assessment is shared with the community members to let them know the steps that have been completed and those that are in the process to help keep them engaged in this important process.

Developing Neighbourhood Level Plans

Overview

The local strategy mirrors the overall general strategy of the process that can be replicated in any neighbourhood. Following are the steps required to begin and carry out the planning process, the elements required for developing a local strategy in each of the designated neighbourhoods, and some techniques for assembling a plan to serve as a management tool for implementation.

Vision

Neighbourhoods selected for inclusion in the NCLB process generally have some common features. Poor social and economic conditions and fear of crime are three of the factors that make these communities challenging to restore.

Given the commitment to overcome these challenges, it becomes important to develop a plan of action that can be followed by everyone involved in the *No Community Left Behind* process. This plan serves as a blueprint for determining which actions are taken and by whom and how certain goals and objectives are achieved.

Once completed, the neighbourhood level plan provides a clear and concise vision of the community. It identifies the gaps and prioritized issues. It also shows activities and actions for bridging the gaps and addressing the problems. Some of these activities already may be in place and only need integration in the bigger picture; others may have to be developed. There are activities that have previously been contemplated or partially implemented, but players were missing who were needed to sustain them and make them a success. This process to integrate all these missing or ignored links is one of the unique features of the *No Community Left Behind* process. The neighbourhood-level plan brings stakeholders together to address issues affecting the community. For many, this is the first time they have worked with one another. The plan helps provide guidance to ensure that everyone is following his or her role.

Two types of plans are needed for the *neighbourhood level* strategy. The first is the strategic plan, which outlines the vision, mission, critical priorities, goals and objectives. The second planning document, Community Action Plan, is an operational or tactical plan - a continuation of the strategic plan that defines, in greater detail, the tasks and resources required and the timeline needed to achieve the goals and objectives.

Implementation Process

Several steps are required in planning the local *No Community Left Behind* strategy.

Step 1: Assembling the Planning Team

Before beginning implementation, the CHRC knows who is participating in the planning process and who can help guide the process so that the final product — **the neighbourhood plan** — is embraced by all community stakeholders.

Communities vary in the degree and level of participation of individuals during the early stages of the *No Community Left Behind* process. One community may quickly form a Local Steering Committee that is prepared to lead the planning process. In other communities, a core group of individuals may take responsibility for putting the planning process into action and keeping other community members informed of the progress.

The next question is: Who should be part of the planning team? Bringing together individuals from the community to serve as members of the Planning Committee is a strategic decision that helps move the

planning process forward. Individuals who agree to serve on the Planning Committee may ultimately serve on the Local Steering Committee. For this phase, emphasis is placed on identifying individuals who have the time, expertise, influence and commitment to work through the planning process to create a realistic neighbourhood-level strategy. Emphasis that this is temporary and created specifically for the purpose of planning eases anxiety around the composition of the sub-committee and its responsibility in leading the planning process.

Step 2: Identifying Resources for Planning

As the Planning Committee takes shape, the CHRC looks for a person to serve as a facilitator during the meetings. Another option is to have members of the local committee lead different components of the planning process, making it more of a group-led process. If needed, a professional facilitator from outside the community is found through a local university or consultant agency experienced in working with nonprofit organizations for strategic planning. However, this is not to underestimate the ability of the concerned community to lead the planning process.

Before starting, everyone included in the planning process clearly understands what is involved. Often, community members who have never been a part of this type of process feel reluctant to become fully engaged. For that reason additional information or “preplanning” activities are provided.

Before outlining the local context for developing a strategy, some of the primary tasks and sub-tasks associated with the development of a strategy are outlined. This list can be used as the CHRC and the designated communities initiate the planning process and includes the following:

- Identification of critical priorities,
- Confirmation of strategic thrusts,
- Development of goals,
- Development of objectives to support the goals,
- Development of the implementation plan to support the goals and objectives.

Step 3: Preparing to Plan

Based on the information collected during the community assessment, the Planning Committee has sufficient information to identify the neighbourhood’s priorities. These priorities are based on factors contributing to neighbourhood stress and resources that should but do not exist in the community and are desperately needed. In addition, community members provide information on what they perceive are requirements to revitalize the neighbourhood.

Collectively, the Planning Committee has several datasets to work with in developing the priorities. The challenge for the committee is to rank and allocate these priorities based on the four prongs of the overall *No Community Left Behind* strategy: social, physical, service and economic.

At the outset of planning, the Planning Committee needs to fully integrate the needs and views of the community. The sum of experiences and philosophies of Planning Committee or Local Steering Committee members and other stakeholder representatives responsible for implementing goals and objectives greatly affects the potential and ultimate success of the initiative.

The combined experiences include operational styles of agencies, traditional patterns of agency-community relations, and social experiences within the neighbourhood. Opinions on the causes and effects of crime and underdevelopment vary greatly. Consequently, these opinions influence how the parties involved evaluate the potential of strategic interventions.

Differences in perspective and context are evident in all important aspects of the planning process. Members of the community and other stakeholders may view the intentions and design of an initiative differently. While the Steering Committee might design an initiative to assist communities, neighbourhood community members may or may not view the goals and objectives as meeting their needs.

A primary objective in preparing a solid strategy and plan is the development of open communication, cooperation and trust among partners. This can only be achieved through a planning process that is inclusive and respectful of the community. A planning process that considers the neighbourhood perspective leads to creative approaches to achieve desired results.

Step 4: Moving From Community Needs to Critical Priorities

Understanding the local context, combined with the planning process, prepares the Steering Committee to begin formulating local goals and objectives. The Steering Committee now focuses on identifying the priorities of the neighbourhood in light of communities' identified needs and priorities. By this time, the Steering Committee has taken steps to ensure the planning process includes a balanced approach to developing community goals and objectives.

In the previous needs assessment process, both assets and gaps were identified. Part of the process in identifying gaps was to encourage community members and other stakeholders to help shape a vision of what the community could be if everyone contributed something to the "community-building pot."

Critical priorities are issues that could affect the ability of the community to achieve this vision. After identifying these priorities, the CHRC and partners assess the ability of the community to address them. Given the multitude of stakeholders who are involved in this process, certain questions are asked of the organization's representatives and the communities separately and collectively to determine what priorities are addressed by the designated neighbourhood. These local priorities are consistent with the goals and objectives of the overall *No Community Left Behind* strategy.

Benefits of completing this type of exercise is the critical thinking that emerges and the synergy created from having various groups come together to work on the *No Community Left Behind* strategy. After making what may be a long list of priorities, the committee asks the following questions about each priority:

- How does this issue relate to the overall *No Community Left Behind* strategy?
- What are the strengths of the process site in responding to this issue? Consider the contributions of each partner.
- What opportunities can the NCLB partners pursue in addressing this issue?
- What are some programs or services currently being offered by each partner?
- What threats is the community aware of in responding to this issue?
- What are the consequences relative to achieving the vision of the community if this issue is not addressed under the *No Community Left Behind* process?
- What would the goal be in addressing this issue? What do the community and the CHRC want to change or improve in the community?

After completing this exercise for each of the selected priorities, the CHRC finds that many of the issues can be condensed as it works to ensure they correspond to one or more of the four NCLB components. When the list is completed, the respective CHRC is ready to begin developing goals and objectives to respond to each issue in close collaboration with the rest of the partners.

For planners involved in this process, note that the following four components of the NCLB process would remain constant for all the *No Community Left Behind* sites: Social, Physical, Service and Economic.

Step 5: Linking Critical Priorities to Goals and Objectives

The goal statements reflect major desired changes in conditions as a result of the NCLB process.

Many agree that a goal is a broad target to be achieved through the implementation of tasks that connect to some measurable objectives.

Objectives are viewed as the tools needed to provide some specificity to the goal. Objectives can be either qualitative or quantitative. Although the initial goals are often easy to formulate, it is usually the measurement of these goals that presents a challenge.

Goal statements can be made by reversing problem statements so that they express the desired result. For example, if the problem were open-air drug trafficking in a neighbourhood, the goal statement reads: “Eliminate open-air drug trafficking.”

The use of goals and objectives enhances the potential success of the NCLB process and facilitates its effective implementation, management and evaluation activities. Goals and objectives focus on connecting to the critical priorities of the community. When completing the questions relative to each critical priority (see step 4, above), the last question begins the connection between the three. By answering the last question, the Planning Committee can begin to formulate the goals and objectives for the local *No Community Left Behind* strategy.

Although each of the four *No Community Left Behind* process components have goals and objectives, these components do not operate in isolation from one another.

The goals for social development and service provision work in conjunction with all the other goals. Service provision, such as community policing, can be a bridge between goals. As the police and other partners develop positive relationships with community members, they gain insights about some of the problems that plague the community.

As mentioned previously, law enforcement comes under service factors, but it can complement the other goals. For example, if an objective were to construct a small business “incubator,” the implementation task is to reduce and prevent crime by targeting that location and providing a secure area for the facility. But this also supports other economic development goals.

The data collected through the needs assessment and neighbourhood selection processes is an important source to help determine the critical priorities under each of the intertwined four components. These priorities drive the creation of the goals and objectives.

CHRC’s have the main coordinating role in the development of neighbourhood level strategies/plans in their program areas. How will the CHRC achieve these goals in partnership with other agencies? The CHRC needs to facilitate in identification of selected objectives and make a commitment to achieving them. Objectives connect the specific NCLB activities that will result in the achievement of the goal. The objectives are measurable so the CHRC can gauge whether it is taking the process towards the goal. In formulating the objectives that correspond to each goal, the question to ask is: “What do we need to do to achieve our goal?” For example:

Goal	Objective
Bring community out of isolation and effectively engage the residents.	Implement weekly community meetings around an activity that ensures participation for one year.

What is the measurable outcome associated with each objective? In other words, what would the CHRC be assessing to see whether it is working toward the goal? For the goal mentioned above, did the CHRC organize 12 meetings or only 2?

Although the community and the CHRC may be tempted to develop several goals for each of the four components, we must be careful to avoid doing so. In addition to addressing several — not all — of the critical priorities identified, the local strategy is made as realistic as possible. It is more advantageous to refine the list of critical priorities for the NCLB process to ensure that those selected can be dispersed across the four components. Each component need not have more than four goals. Each goal may have several objectives; however, the CHRC and partners at the Steering Committee limit the objectives to four. Below is a review of the planning process:

1. Identifying critical priorities based on the community assessment. The top 10 issues are the priorities for the local strategy.
2. Separating these priorities into one or more of the four NCLB components;
3. Attempting to formulate goal statements for each of the priorities by asking, “What do we want?”
4. For each goal, developing measurable objectives.

The respective CHRC measures the progress of the collaborative work of all partners. Completing the goals, objectives and tasks correctly with every stakeholder’s participation simplifies the process of developing the implementation plan. The following sections cover the implementation and management plan for the designated neighbourhoods.

Step 6: Developing the Implementation Plan

Developing a *No Community Left Behind* strategy is a challenging task. Unlike independent organizations involved in strategic planning, the overall planning process of the NCLB involves several important actors who may never have worked together. In such situations, not only is there pressure to develop close working relationships quickly, these relationships create a marriage of different perspectives, beliefs, and, often, biases. Developing common goals and objectives are the first of the major hurdles to overcome; designing an implementation plan the second.

The implementation plan for the *No Community Left Behind* process involves several organizations undertaking a sequence of activities. Some of these activities are performed concurrently; others sequentially. Similarly, addressing factors related to social capital precedes community economic development. No one wants to live or invest in a crime-ridden, drug-infested neighbourhood. The NCLB process uses a holistic approach; therefore, service provision efforts (law enforcement, for example) are reinforced with social (prevention, intervention and capacity development) and physical development (CPTED studies) to make it difficult for the neighbourhood to slide back to its pre-restoration condition.

Developing an implementation plan requires linking goals and objectives with tasks, assigning responsibility for these tasks, creating a timeline for action and identifying resources necessary to implement the tasks.

The tasks developed in the implementation plan correspond to the informal commitments made by all partner agencies. Everything in an effective *No Community Left Behind* strategy is connected — neighbourhood selection, needs assessment, identification of goals and objectives, implementation plan, and evaluation. A sequence of activities reinforces each Steering Committee member’s or other stakeholder’s commitment to the NCLB process by helping them to see where they fit in the total plan. The implementation plan is where “the rubber meets the road.”

To determine what tasks are initiated to address each objective, the Steering Committee tries to come up with answers to questions like these:

- What practical solutions might be pursued to address this issue and achieve our goal?
- Is an organization currently offering a solution that could be leveraged?
- What are some barriers to realizing these practical solutions?
- Is there no community organization responding to the issue?
- Is there a lack of financial resources?
- Is there no expertise represented on the Steering Committee?
- What major initiatives or actions might we pursue to achieve these practical solutions directly or indirectly to overcome these barriers?
- How much time is required to implement this strategy?
- Who will be the lead for this strategy, and what partners are involved in its implementation?
- How will we measure the success of the strategy?

Activities relating to the four NCLB components begin at the same time to avoid the experience of communities complaining that nothing can begin in a community until the correctional activities have been executed, which mean the criminals and their influence removed.

In developing the implementation plan, it is important to determine which organization takes the lead for each of the proposed tasks. Other organizations will also be needed to work in close collaboration with the CHRC.

During the process, the time required to complete a task may exceed the total time allotted for the implementation plan, which happens because certain tasks may take several years to complete. Most important, the tasks are cited in the plan and progress toward achieving the objective(s) is reported to the Steering Committee on a consistent basis.

For the CHRC the following steps are necessary to develop an implementation plan in partnership with other agencies:

1. Thinking about all the tasks that are completed to achieve *each* objective. Considering them one at a time and not trying to group all objectives and tasks under one heading;
2. Determining which agency or organization is responsible for implementing the tasks. The CHRC indicates which agency serves as the lead and which others are involved in carrying out the task;
3. Establishing a realistic timeline for achieving the objectives. This timeframe can be presented in terms of months or years. The CHRC uses this to monitor the activities.
4. Thinking about barriers that might hinder the work.

Step 7: Designing a Planning Format for the Local Strategy

The beauty of the *No Community Left Behind* process is that it is designed to be flexible, proactive and interactive. Continuous realization of all partners and commitment of multiple resources is a key requirement for overall success.

Furthermore, it is unrealistic to assume that local officials can confirm the availability of all the necessary resources during the initial planning phase. As the strategy develops, local agencies discover new ideas and resources to assist the community. The neighbourhood, the City, law enforcement agencies, resource agencies and others continually recommend adjustments to the plan.

The Steering Committee encourages all participants and other interested groups to make recommendations for changes. Managers do not assume that the original goals and objectives are cast in stone. The purpose of well-defined goals, objectives and tasks is to ensure that the proper mix of activities results in a successful *No Community Left Behind* initiative. Even if complete goals and objectives exist, efficient or systematic implementation cannot be guaranteed. Management is responsible for converting these processes into a format that advances the functional operation of the strategy.

Organizing an implementation plan for the NCLB process helps to identify:

- Additional essential tasks that are missing from the initial goal and objective statements;
- Dependent relationships among tasks;
- Responsibility for execution of tasks and any overlap of authority that might affect the outcome;
- The implementation sequence.

Managing the ongoing relationships among the tasks and their timely implementation is the backbone of the management process. Successful management of the NCLB process involves assigning specific responsibility to execute each task.

A task timeline organizes the tasks by each objective and enables managers to arrange the tasks in sequence. A timeline shows when additional tasks are needed, responsibilities identified and the link between tasks organized.

Site coordinators require some kind of very basic, simple online data input which helps identify changes and generate reports by task, agency, milestone and other criteria. Site Coordinators use this data feeding mechanism in coordination with the Community Development section at the CHRC. This type of management system does not only improve process oversight but also assists with process reporting.

The *No Community Left Behind* strategy design is sufficiently flexible to quickly accommodate any program enhancements and approaches not identified during the planning phase. When the Steering Committee accepts a new activity recommended by community members, the new task energizes and supports all the community efforts designed to create a healthier neighbourhood.

Critical assumptions

Many changes in the original strategy may occur during the implementation phase. These changes can easily be accommodated if the Steering Committee does not view the original goals and objectives as rigid guidelines subject to strict compliance audits. Being the lead coordinating partner, the CHRC documents each change and ensures that administrative and funding guidelines are followed.

Implementation Process

Overview

This Phase focuses on how the process manages the Steering Committee, as it oversees the implementation and operation of the site's strategy. Each NCLB site has unique characteristics that reflect local needs and resources; however, each site is called on to address similar issues at some point in its development. There is no single answer that fits every situation; consequently, the ideas in this Phase are suggested options to be used and adapted as needed.

This phase discusses policy-level decision-making responsibilities, day-to-day operational issues, and oversight and monitoring of activities. Although no proven model exists for managing a Steering Committee, many successful initiatives and isolated interventions offer solutions from which to draw on. The NCLB process emphasizes the importance of local control; therefore, management level activities are developed to maximize resources and meet local needs.

Vision

The NCLB Steering Committee makes decisions, develops policies and guides the implementation of the site's strategy to establish healthy, stable neighbourhoods. The Steering Committee — by collaborating with other agencies and local businesses — builds capacity of the community members to effect positive changes in the neighbourhood and, more importantly, to sustain those changes.

The inclusive nature of the NCLB process results in a Steering Committee that represents all segments of the community. All committee members share a vision for the community, despite differing approaches to solving problems. They realize that they can achieve more by working together than by working independently. The Steering Committee is the driving force in reaching the goals identified in the sites' strategy.

Implementation Process

Step 1: Establishing an Organizational Structure

Using subcommittees in NCLB sites is an effective means of distributing the workload. The subcommittees are formed as and when the need arises to facilitate the planning process.

Each subcommittee includes community stakeholders, community members and representatives from the main Steering Committee. Steering Committee involvement helps ensure effective communication among the subcommittees. The use of subcommittees also provides the opportunity to broaden participation and introduce others to the NCLB process.

The subcommittee is a comfortable format in which to discuss critical, and sometimes contentious, issues. The subcommittees help ensure that different voices are heard and various points of view are discussed. Smaller committees are not only less intimidating but also encourage better discussion.

Reports from subcommittee meetings are presented to the Steering Committee with recommended action, when appropriate. This procedure helps to keep Steering Committee meetings more focused and productive. However, this is not to be used to restrict discussion at Steering Committee meetings. It is still important that Steering Committee members understand the issues.

Step 2: Developing Subcommittees' Action Plan

Identifying specific tasks for each priority

A subcommittee is most effective when it concentrates its efforts on specific goals. With this approach, the subcommittee also accomplishes interim tasks while working toward a major goal. For example if **the priority** is to remove a negative stigma associated with the community's name, **the task** is making the neighbourhood more attractive, and **the activity** is a series of positive activities, establishing tenants' association and a neighbourhood watch, which contribute to reaching the goal with positive coverage.

Identifying available resources for accomplishing the goals

As part of the neighbourhood assessment, resources identified in the previous phases are used for various activities related to each subcommittee's goals. For example, if **the task** were to develop neighbourhood support for goals, **the activities** could include bringing youth and adult community members together to work on a cleanup day. This accomplishes the immediate task, build stronger ties in the neighbourhood, and encourages assistance from other stakeholder agencies to assist with the cleanup.

Step 3: Developing Open Communication among All Parties

Open communication is important to the successful operation of the *No Community Left Behind* strategy. People like to feel they are on the "inside"; they do not like to be the last to know what is going on. The CHRC adopts a simple way to communicate not only with Steering Committee members but also with other stakeholders, community members and interested parties.

The CHRC identifies how and when people want to receive information from the NCLB site. This not only gives it ideas about what methods to use but also ensures some involvement from members in developing a communication network.

The NCLB Coordinator at the concerned CHRC devises a communication strategy and provides a schedule describing what information is needed and when it is submitted. It identifies ways to get the information to the media, the local elected officials and their representatives, MPs and community members. Some of the ways could be:

1. Telling the NCLB story highlighting things for the community to be proud of;
2. Notifying media of all events;
3. Taking pictures, and submitting them along with a short story to the newspaper;
4. Inviting the local elected officials to events;
5. Sending information (story and pictures) to the office of elected officials;
6. Developing a short presentation about the NCLB which can be presented at meetings.

Step 4: Establishing a Consistent Procedure for Securing Staff

Although most of the work at a local NCLB site is accomplished by volunteers serving on the central Steering Committee or subcommittees, paid staff also play an important part in the operation. The process for filling staff positions varies from one site to another and according to the initiatives pursued.

A full time NCLB coordinator is needed at the CHRC. Regardless of the hiring need and arrangement, being the main coordinating and implementing organization, the CHRC is responsible for approving the staff who works with the *No Community Left Behind* process.

Step 5: Developing a Process for Steering Committee and Subcommittee Meetings

Much of the work of the NCLB committees is done during meetings: policy decisions are made, oversight of the operation is reviewed and stakeholders are informed of the issues. Good attendance at these meetings is essential to the continued success of the NCLB process; therefore, careful attention is given to the structure of the meetings. The following are some proven components of a good meeting in the context of the *No Community Left Behind* process:

- Meetings are scheduled at a convenient time and location in the neighbourhood.
- Meetings begin on time. If people have to wait each time they meet, more of them arrive late or stop coming altogether.
- A quorum for the meeting is established in the bylaws and enforced evenhandedly.
- A prepared agenda, developed with input from members, is sent before the meeting.
- Reports — programmatic, financial, and from the subcommittees — are presented to the Steering Committee regularly.

Regardless of the format of these meetings, the meetings need to be productive. If members feel they are wasting their time, they will stop attending. Once attendance falls, it is difficult to reenergize the group.

Step 6: Developing a Process for Team Building

Success of the *No Community Left Behind* process depends partly on bringing the Steering Committee together to work as a team with a shared vision for the community. Being a team does not mean there will be no differences but that the CHRC and all stakeholders can work through them to everyone's satisfaction. The following are ways the Steering Committee can promote team building:

1. A shared vision,
2. Strong bonds,
3. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities,
4. Effective meetings,
5. Decision-making strategies,
6. Effective communication,
7. Appreciation for the synergy created by diversity,
8. Allowing time for networking and relationship building.

Step 7: Providing Training and Technical Assistance

Training and technical assistance are delivered primarily to staff who are responsible for day-to-day site operations. Whereas staff training is important, providing assistance to Steering Committee members, stakeholders and community members is also important. These key decision makers are the most essential component in the NCLB site. The following training and technical assistance improves effectiveness of the process:

1. Providing training on local resources, including encouraging partner social service agencies to make presentations about their services;
2. Asking law enforcement officials to make a presentation about their role in the *No Community Left Behind* process.

The CHRC requests assistance tailored to the particular needs as the process unfolds.

Critical assumptions

Diversity, which is the strength of the Steering Committee, may present challenges to a smooth working relationship on the committee. The different roles and responsibilities of volunteers and staff thus need to be clearly defined. A good working relationship between the funder and the Steering Committee is also a key component.

Sustaining Positive and Permanent Changes

Operational issues, day-to-day management, and individual responsibilities are necessary not only for a NCLB site to operate initially but also to sustain its success and expand its reach. The overall goal of sustaining positive and permanent changes in the neighbourhood is best accomplished through strong collaborative arrangements, teamwork and good management.

Community Mobilization

Overview

Social mobilization is one of the core components the NCLB uses for community engagement towards positive change. Staff from the CHRC mobilizes the community towards achieving the objectives of the proposed process. Community mobilization is the CHRC's main area of expertise and is an ongoing process of building stakeholder commitment to the revitalization of the neighbourhood.

Vision

Apart from bringing the community together to work on and implement the *No Community Left Behind* process, community mobilization is most effective in situations in which community complaints are ignored by certain departments or agencies regarding some issue, thinking why bother when there are others to address it? Such situations warrant a community mobilization strategy. The solution in such situations is to bring out community members to voice their concerns and demand changes that positively affect their community.

The success of the NCLB process depends in part on the ability to successfully mobilize stakeholders to support the local strategy as well as its goals and objectives. Mobilizing community members is an empowering process that often results in an increase in the number of community leaders, a clear vision of what the community would look like and an increase in community members' responsibility for the positive community changes.

As previously mentioned, NCLB is not a one-time project; rather, it is a comprehensive strategy that brings all stakeholders in a community together to effect change. There could be many issues, which are defined as a problem, that can be solved through the collective persistence and responsibility of community stakeholders. Community mobilization brings together interested stakeholders who develop viable solutions to problems — in itself, it is not the solution to problems.

The process of community mobilization can have many positive outcomes. When executed correctly, community mobilization can help build a community in ways that building new structures or refurbishing old ones never can. Healthy communities begin with the community members who live in them. Empowering these individuals to engage in the rebuilding of their neighbourhoods is a critical step in promoting healthy communities. In addition to empowering community members, community mobilization processes helps create a vision for the community that serves to focus community members' energies. Again, one of the challenges of distressed communities is that they often have no vision. As a result, resources may be redirected to other communities that are mobilized and articulate their requirements for further development/redevelopment.

In addition to empowering community members and helping create a vision for the community, community mobilization has another positive impact: increased capacity for sound decision-making by community members as well as community-based organizations. Community mobilization has some profound effects not only on the community members but also on the other stakeholders (public and private) who are serving the community.

Implementation Process

Community mobilization actually starts when someone in the community expresses concerns over social problems and makes others think that conditions might warrant some remedial action. These concerns are conveyed to various stakeholders and meetings are held to discuss how the issue could be addressed.

This is how the community mobilization process begins. Community mobilization is an important element of community organizing. It focuses on bringing together community members and other stakeholders to take collective and strategic action for change in the community. Community organizing generally is

viewed as the broader process that is focused on a particular issue to promote change. Community mobilization may be one of the tactics used to help facilitate action. Both community organizing and community mobilization are ongoing, long-term processes.

The ability to mobilize community members and other stakeholders at the onset of the NCLB process is critical; however, the work does not end when the communities are designated as a NCLB site. In fact, the work is only beginning. Many community members of distressed communities have become disenfranchised after many years of watching programs start and stop, with no permanent change resulting from them. Feelings of hopelessness are common in these communities, so the community representatives will have some major challenges to overcome before the strategy can be implemented.

In developing an implementation plan for community mobilization, there are several critical steps to follow.

Step 1: Securing Resident Commitment and Involvement

Community mobilization is about enlisting community members to become engaged and involved in and accountable for the planned changes that result from the *No Community Left Behind* strategy. A good indication of resident commitment to the NCLB process is the extent to which community members participate on the Steering Committee and subcommittees and their awareness of and interest in their neighbourhood.

The crucial questions are: How many community members turned out for the initial meeting to introduce the NCLB process? Do community members attend other functions that focus on conditions in the community? Are community members involved in discussions about the changes they are prepared to make for their community? Are community members volunteering their time to help to the extent they can? Who are these community members? Seniors? Working adults? Youth? Before a community can begin to create a new vision, it needs to recognize itself as a community.

The CHRC may not receive an overwhelming level of support at the beginning. Many community members take a wait-and-see approach to new initiatives; the NCLB process is not any different. What is important is to determine if there is some level of commitment and involvement.

The most important hurdle to overcome is the number of naysayers in the community. Generating resident commitment and involvement is key. Respective CHRCs begin by looking toward the community leaders on the Steering Committee. The community leaders often have a level of respect in their communities and some type of community following. These leaders help in recruiting community members to attend community meetings to:

- Provide information on *No Community Left Behind* strategy;
- Discuss how community members can become involved in the *No Community Left Behind* strategy;
- Explore what community members perceive are the critical problems affecting their neighbourhoods (this information is vital to the community assessment part of the process);
- Engage community members in discussions about how problems can be solved and how they can be involved in implementing the solutions.

Positioning resident leaders to help facilitate these types of meetings helps to build trust in the community relative to implementing the *No Community Left Behind* strategy.

Step 2: Encouraging Community Members to Help Provide Community Focus

One of the important steps that must be completed is a community assessment. Historically, needs assessments focused primarily on the needs or problems of the community with the expectation that the resources to solve those problems would come from the outside. As a result, community members were

viewed not as contributors to the growth of their community but as recipients of the various programs and services offered to solve the problems. Unfortunately, this proved to be a flawed way to examine a community. Through a neighbourhood assessment, the current focus is to identify all the assets of the community, including the skills of the community members and their interest in the neighbourhood. The steps involved in conducting a community assessment are identified in Phase 4; however, it is important to stress that the focal point of the process is to identify public issues and challenges and the available resources.

One of the advantages to the community assessment is that it serves as an important tool to help community members learn more about their community. The goal is to get community members to articulate their needs as well as contribute their skills toward changing the community. By getting community members to help decide on the changes required, the community mobilization process helps expand the base of informed resident leaders.

The CHRC uses several ways to mobilize community members for this task, including the following:

- Encouraging participation in existing events such as school fairs, community festivals and block parties, by providing literature on the NCLB process and by disseminating surveys;
- Coordinating with area faith-based institutions to include information in their weekly bulletins, and providing brief presentations during services.

When community members see that the NCLB focus is consistent with their own perceptions of their neighbourhood, they are more likely to participate in its activities.

Step 3: Building Community Networks

In every community, there are both informal and formal networks that connect community members and other stakeholders. Formal networks include tenants or other neighbourhood associations. Informal networks include families who have lived in the same community for years and have been appointed as the neighbourhood spokespersons. Other networks include social clubs and business associations.

These networks are important to community mobilization because they represent a significant source to target to gain support for the *No Community Left Behind* process. In fact, in some communities, new efforts die quickly if they do not go through at least one of these networks. Taking stock of these networks helps determine what issues they may have about the NCLB process.

Participating organizations and agencies examine the composition of their Steering Committee to determine whether these networks are adequately represented. One of the advantages these networks have is that the individuals involved feel connected to the network's cause. Whether or not the networks are associated with community change is irrelevant. People support initiatives in which their friends and colleagues are involved; therefore, recognizing these networks as an important resource is a significant step in moving forward with the community mobilization efforts.

Step 4: Creating Resident-Led Leadership Structures

Resident-led entities, a subset of community networks, serve as ideal resources to help identify key leaders with critical leadership skills in the community. Individuals who are leading or have led organizations such as Tenants' associations or resident councils are strong candidates to help lead community mobilization efforts behind the *No Community Left Behind* process. This is the point where the CHRC and other partners link up their existing programs for leadership development in the community to the *No Community Left Behind* process.

Typically, these leaders are concerned citizens who have the ability to bring community members together for a common cause, such as public housing improvements, affordable housing or public safety. If the cause is related to promoting some type of positive change in the community, these leaders must be a part of the community mobilization efforts.

Step 5: Leveraging Internal and External Resources

Community transformation requires that resources both internal and external to a community be identified and incorporated into a strategy for change. This is the fundamental principle behind the *No Community Left Behind* process. Community mobilization is not only about mobilizing people, it is about mobilizing all types of resources, of which people are key.

Step 6: Creating Additional Communication Vehicles

Community mobilization cannot succeed without strong communications. How the vision, issues and opportunities are communicated to people influences the success of the mobilization effort. All forms of communication from the CHRC should consider the local languages and dialects. Not every pamphlet needs to be written in street language and translated in three or four languages, but documents (newsletters, fliers) should be developed in languages and at a reading level that communicate the NCLB effort to most of the community.

More Community Mobilization Tactics

Community mobilization is one of the hardest tasks associated with *No Community Left Behind* process. As a new initiative in the community, the *No Community Left Behind* process has to win the confidence of community members before the CHRC secures their support. This takes time, but it can be done.

Examples of these tactics include

- Door-to-door campaigns,
- In-house (community centre, etc.) coffees,
- Street fairs and festivals,
- Community rallies,
- Promotional materials that highlight the NCLB process.
- Dissemination of fliers in public facilities,
- Dissemination of fliers at other events in or near the designated community,
- Church-based functions such as revivals, church meetings and concerts.

Community mobilization is an important tool for successfully implementing the local *No Community Left Behind* strategy. As the Steering Committee develops the goals and objectives, the CHRC makes sure it considers how community mobilization tactics continue to identify and generate additional resident support. Specifying separate action steps designed to build community support goes a long way toward ensuring the acceptance and integration of the *No Community Left Behind* process into the neighbourhood.

To assess the success of the mobilization process, the CHRC focuses on the following questions:

- How is it communicating what the NCLB process is about to community members?
- Did it get feedback from community members regarding the effectiveness of the message?
- Has it leveraged the relationships of key leaders in the community to help promote the process?
- Has it asked around to find out why people are not interested in the *No Community Left Behind* process?
- Are there other issues confronting the community that it is not addressing?
- Are the events it is hosting offered at convenient days, times and locations for community members?
- Is it expecting too much community participation too soon?

Although these are tough questions, the answers provide a clearer sense of what needs to be modified to generate the level of desired support. Although the CHRC and its partners may get some level of resident involvement, community members' top priority often is to support their households. Therefore, encouraging people to stay connected even if they can devote only a few hours to the NCLB process effort is key. Every bit of resident involvement helps.

Critical assumptions

As the CHRC implements a community mobilization plan, participation by community members may remain low. Community mobilization requires community trust, which takes time and patience. The following are major implementation issues that are addressed over time:

Issue: No one shows up for meetings.

Possible solutions: Review the days, times and locations for meetings. Are they convenient for community members?

Poll some of the community members who attended past meetings. Have people expressed concerns about the meetings and their structure or content?

Issue: One representative attempts to speak for the entire community.

Possible solutions: Seeking out other leaders from faith-based institutions, schools and local neighbourhood associations. Talking with senior community members to learn more about the history of the community to help identify community members who have longstanding credibility but may not be active at this time. These individuals may be a guide to the engagement of additional community leaders.

Evaluation

Overview

This Part discusses the design, development and use of an evaluation component for the *No Community Left Behind* strategy. It reviews how a well-designed evaluation provides a thorough description of the structure and operation of the NCLB activities and whether those activities were successful or need adjustment.

This part also examines the elements necessary to conduct an effective evaluation, looking not only at the desired outcomes but also at the resources used and the effectiveness of the program design.

Vision

Evaluation is the best way for the Steering Committee to determine whether the selected activities and programs are effective. Evaluation reports of the process influences decisions about funding allocations and program selection. These policy decisions are central to whether the long-term goals of reducing crime and promoting a safe and secure environment are achieved.

Implementation Process

Step 1: Identifying a Coordinator and the Other Members of the Evaluation Team

An evaluation coordinator is selected during the organizational phase of the NCLB process. To ensure the objectivity and credibility of the evaluation, the coordinator is ideally selected from an organization not participating directly in the *No Community Left Behind* process.

Many organizations can help with the evaluation process at little or no cost. Organizations that may be able to assist include the following:

- Colleges and universities have students who can work on an evaluation process. The department to approach varies from one institution to another; among the possibilities are political science, sociology, business and urban affairs.
- The planning section of local government ministries/departments can help develop an evaluation component. The city's economic development agency may also be able to assist.
- Some nonprofit organizations can help nonprofit groups develop an evaluation process.

Step 2: Reviewing the Priorities to Be Measured

A close relationship between site development and evaluation exists. Clearly defined goals are the key to both a successful site operation and an informative and useful evaluation. Each strategy component has measurable goals from which the evaluation framework is constructed.

When operational plans are developed, a desired outcome is identified and tied to the goals. The following support pieces were also developed in the earlier phases of the process.

- The tasks to be performed in moving toward the goal;
- The organization or individual responsible for the tasks;
- The timeframe for accomplishing these tasks.

These measures are quantifiable. These are the program outputs. Important as they are, the quantitative measures are not to be used in isolation. When assessing program performance, schedule checkpoints at regular intervals to ensure that the course is leading towards the desired objectives. If all measures are being achieved, there is no need to make any changes. If some measures, however, fall short of the expectations, some of the following questions are considered to determine if midcourse corrections are needed:

- Were the numbers/goals realistic?
- Was outreach adequate?
- Were the schedule and program adequate to the task?
- Were interim adjustments made as needed?
- Were resources adequate for program needs?
- Was cooperation from other community resources sufficient for program needs?

Assess qualitative measures using evaluation process results. Talk with the students, evaluator, stakeholders, community members, etc. about their perception of the success of the program. What suggestions do they have to improve future programs?

Step 3: Collecting and Analyzing Information

Evaluation reports are not confined to only numbers and percentages. The Steering Committee has access to both quantitative and qualitative information to help assess progress. Numbers relating to crime statistics show a precise picture of the results of activities in the target neighbourhood and can be used to allocate resources for law enforcement and community policing activities. Statistics can also reveal the number of people served by programs related to preventive activities; however, do not overlook the qualitative aspect of evaluation.

Community members' perceptions are an important part of evaluating progress. For instance answers to question: "Do community members feel safer and more comfortable in their neighbourhood?" help a lot.

The following is an example illustrating how the program design and evaluation plan would relate to each other. It is necessary to identify steps necessary to operate and evaluate the program:

Objective: Decrease the high school dropout rate.

Goal: Decrease dropout rate by a certain percentage.

Activities:

Enroll targeted number of students.

- Track attendance in classes.
- Compile class completion rate.
- Measure the reduction rate of school dropouts.

Analyzing evaluation reports yields valuable information about what was successful and what needs to be adjusted. If the evaluation is properly designed, it is not used to place blame on agencies or individuals. Success is always the desired outcome; however, much can be learned from mistakes. An important role of an evaluation process is to know where improvement is needed.

Critical assumptions

Deciding what to evaluate as the first issue

Priorities are the most important elements to evaluate. It is not easy to get everyone to agree on priorities, however, using the strategy as the guide addresses this problem.

Methodology can be an issue

As discussed earlier, some people believe statistics are the most important measure of program success. Quantitative measures can be an accurate method, but efforts are made not to ignore qualitative results. Both qualitative and quantitative measures are important.

Appendix 1

INVENTORY OF PROGRAMS by POPULATION

Community: _____

Date: _____

2-5 Years

Program	Duration	No. of participants	Funder/Agency	Staff member responsible

6-7 years

Program	Duration	No. of participants	Funder	Staff member responsible

9-12 years

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Pre-teen 10-15 years

Program	Duration	No. of participants	Funder	Staff member responsible

8-12 years

Program	Duration	No. of participants	Funder	Staff member responsible

12-16 years

Program	Duration	No. of participants	Funder	Staff member responsible

12-up

Program	Duration	No. of participants	Funder	Staff member responsible

13-17 years

Program	Duration	No. of participants	Funder	Staff member responsible

Adults

Program	Duration	No. of participants	Funder	Staff member responsible

Appendix 2

INVENTORY OF PARTNERS, PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

Community: _____

Date: _____

Lead agency:					
	Program	Duration/Timing	No. of participants	Funder	Staff member responsible
1					
2					
Lead agency:					
1					
2					
Lead agency:					
1					
2					
Lead agency:					
1					
2					
Lead agency:					
1					
2					
3					
Lead agency:					
1					
2					
3					
4					
Lead agency:					
1					
Lead agency:					
1					
2					
3					
Lead agency:					