

Community Training, Learning and Leadership Roundtable Report

June 24th, 2005



*Community Training, Learning and Leadership for
Healthy and Sustainable Communities*

Rural Communities Impacting Policy (RCIP) Project

The mission of the Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre is to conduct and facilitate health promotion research that influences policy and contributes to the health and well-being of Atlantic Canadians.

The Coastal Communities Network (CCN) of Nova Scotia provides a forum to encourage dialogue and share information that promotes the survival and enhancement of our rural coastal communities.

The goal of the Rural Communities Impacting Policy (RCIP) Project is to increase the ability of rural communities and organizations in Nova Scotia to access and use social science research in order to influence and develop policy that contributes to the health and sustainability of communities. RCIP is a 5-year research project, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and co-sponsored by the Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre at Dalhousie University and the Coastal Communities Network of Nova Scotia.

**This report is also available in French.
Ce rapport est aussi disponible en Français.**

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Aspects of who was there and what was talked about - created by Todd Barr

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***To conserve resources, this document is designed in a double-sided printing format.*

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	4
Table of Contents	6
1. Introduction	7
2. Descriptions	8
3. Discussion	16
3.1 What training do communities need?	16
3.2 How can training be made more accessible?	18
3.3 How can training opportunities be integrated or linked?	19
3.4 Are there opportunities for collaboration?	20
4. Highlights	21

1. Introduction

On April 19th 2005, the Community Training Work Group of the Rural Communities Impacting Policy (RCIP) Project met to talk about that future of the RCIP Community Training Program - *An Introduction to Using Social Science Research for Influencing Policy*. With current RCIP funding finishing up in January 2006 and the RCIP partnership in transition, the Work Group decided it would be a good idea for groups and individuals that offer training to community groups in Nova Scotia to get together in a Roundtable to discuss efforts for coordination and sustainability.

In the first part of the Roundtable, participants were asked to:

1. Describe their interests in community training;
2. Explain the types of training provided;
3. Tell how groups access the training.

In the second part of the Roundtable, discussion focused on four main areas of concern:

1. What training do communities need?
2. How can training be made more accessible?
3. How can training opportunities be integrated or linked?
4. Are there opportunities for collaboration?

2. Descriptions

Each Roundtable participant was given approximately 5 minutes to present their work. Some participant training descriptions were included in a pre-circulated six-page “fact-sheet.” The fact sheet has been incorporated into the report. For copies of the original fact sheet, please contact the RCIP Project.

1) Jim Campbell - Director, Regional Services - Office of Health Promotion - Physical Activity/Sport/Recreation Program Area (Formerly Sport & Recreation Commission)

Interests in Community Training

We have 6 Regional Offices. One staff member (regional representative) is in contact with Municipal and community organizations on a regular basis. We have some financial assistance programs and we also provide advice and consultation. Regardless of the purpose for the initial contact, the need for some type of development activity is often identified through initial discussions. Our staff often supports those development initiatives in a variety of different roles. This office has worked with a community development approach for over 30 years.

Types of Training Provided

Our staff is often involved in development initiatives on a range of topics including organizational development/effectiveness/governance, planning, needs assessment/asset mapping, community development, coordination/collaboration, etc. Staff may provide the “training” directly or, preferably, they would work and consult with others to develop the ongoing leadership capacity locally.

How Groups Access the Training

Groups and individuals can contact our regional offices.

2) Nathalie Poirier, Canadian Volunteerism Initiative - Nova Scotia

Interests in Community Training

Canadian Volunteerism Initiative (CVI) was started in 2001, the “Year of the Volunteer.” CVI has three main objectives: 1. Encourage Canadians to participate in voluntary organizations, 2. Improve the capacity of organizations to benefit from the contribution of volunteers, and 3. Enhance the experience of volunteering. At CVI, we think of ourselves more as a network. For example...our website is a great “collecting place.” In terms of training, there not as many opportunities for Francophone communities as there are for Anglophone communities. CVI is here to look for connections between Anglophone and Francophone training opportunities.

3) Wilf Bean, Tatamagouche Centre

Interests in Community Training

Tatamagouche Centre has been training leaders in Maritime communities for close to 50 years. We use a “grass-roots, popular education” approach which emphasizes the whole person and recognizes that people are more than just “brains on a stick.” For us, knowledge is created from critical reflection on people’s own experience, along with new inputs, ideas and technical understandings. Thus, we train leaders in a democratic, participatory process to value the involvement and wisdom of group members as whole persons.

Tatamagouche Centre is a residential education centre located just west of the village of Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia. Our facilities include meeting rooms, accommodation, and food services as well as over 15 acres of rolling parkland by the water.

Types of Training Provided

We offer a variety of training programs including a 5-day residential program in the “Tatamagouche Model of Education, Design and Leadership” This program forms the foundation of our transformational approach and is particularly designed for those seeking to build or enhance their basic trainer/facilitator skills. The program emphasizes a clear structure for the design of community training which includes the stages of team building; capacity and needs assessment; setting goals and objectives; implementation; reflection and evaluation. In 2005, this program will be offered August 14 – 19.

We also offer training in youth leadership, organization development, open-space technology, advanced facilitation skills, and other areas. As well, we are available as consultants to various organizations and offer custom-designed training and facilitation. We are interested in day-to-day training and skills development, but also in the broader social contexts that we live in.

We offer over 80 programs of our own within five main categories: 1. Body, mind and heart, 2. Christianity and church, 3. Education, 4. Retreat practices, and 5. Youth and social justice.

How Groups Access the Training

Groups can access our training by contacting:

The Registrar, Tatamagouche Centre, Tatamagouche, NS

1-800-218-2220, tatacent@tatacentre.ca or www.tatacentre.ca

4) Marie-France Prayal, Université Ste. Anne

Interests in Community Training

The training we provide is for people working in the non-profit sector.

Types of Training Provided

In September 2005 we will be launching an extensive online training program with seven main courses. E.g. board administration and proposal writing for funding. Before designing the courses, we conducted a survey to determine training needs. The reaction to our survey was strong - there is a great need for this kind of service. The Université Ste. Anne decided to design online courses to have a broader reach. Many partners have been involved in this work - first in the Maritimes, then Canada-wide. We expect translation into the English language sometime in the near future.

How Groups Access the Training

Visit the Université Ste. Anne website at: <http://www.usainteanne.ca/1024/default.php>

5) Marie-Claude Rioux, L'Association des juristes d'expression française de la Nouvelle-Écosse

Interests in Community Training

L'Association des juristes d'expression française de la Nouvelle-Écosse is a French-speaking jurist's society. It is funded by students, professors and lawyers and provides services related to anything that has an impact on legal issues. We are here to provide services to the community. We are a non-profit organization, not a union.

Types of Training Provided

We provide workshops legal issues. We have also developed an extensive brochure series on legal subjects. The brochure format is a very popular way of communicating – especially for students. We are open to requests from the community to develop more materials and we are looking to partner with English-speaking community.

6) Jennifer Weisner, Kings Community Economic Development Agency

Jennifer attended the Roundtable as an observer on behalf of Byron MacDonald of the Kings Community Economic Development Agency.

7) Wanda MacDonald, Guysborough County Community Business Development Corporation

Interests in Community Training

As a Community Business Development Corporation (CBDC), our focus is on training for the business community but we often have members of the community and other non-profit

organizations attend our training sessions. We deliver programs on behalf of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) through the Career and Job Counselling Centre and we work closely with the Regional Development Authorities (RDAs). We also have a youth program that provides training. We are here to learn what others are up to and also to understand what we can share.

Types of Training Provided

Some of the training over the past year included:

- General Entrepreneurship
- Steps in Starting a Business
- Marketing
- General Bookkeeping
- Simply Accounting
- Time and Stress Management
- Customer Service
- Income Tax

We just completed a four-month training program for youth at risk. The curriculum included social skill development, entrepreneurship and business training with a work term. Nine out of 12 participants got employment upon graduation.

How Groups Access the Training

Some of our training is for specific projects and is not advertised. Public programs are advertised in the newspaper, through postering and in newsletters. When we offer training programs that are specific to a project and we have additional seats available, we usually get interested community members to fill those seats.

8) Susan Hachey, Sustainable Communities Initiative

Our goal is to support community training efforts by addressing any identified gaps related to accessing government programs, services and funding.

Interests in Community Training

We support two field teams in different regions of Nova Scotia (Annapolis-Fundy and Cape Breton Island) that are composed of representatives of four levels of government. With a “one-stop,” we can provide advice and services for community groups. One of the teams’ roles is to **undertake research and/or specific activities** to enhance community groups’ capacity to successfully tackle issues by providing coordinated access to government information, services and programs and by building the relationships that connect community groups with each other and with the government representatives. Community training has been identified as one such activity. The Sustainable Communities Initiative is looking to partner with other groups.

Types of Training Provided

Types of training will be dependant upon needs identified by community in the area of accessing government programs, services and funding. There is some money available for “train-the-trainer” in evaluation.

How Groups Access the Training

Not yet established, but possibly through identifying community needs to members of the two field teams (Annapolis-Fundy and Cape Breton Island).

9) Julie Stover, Nova Scotia Office of Economic Development

Interests in Community Training

At the Nova Scotia Office of Economic Development (OED), we are looking for ideas and networking possibilities related to the new Provincial Community Development Policy (CD Policy). The Initial CD Policy Action plan calls for the preparation and delivery of capacity building for civil servants and citizen leaders. We are also hoping to collaborate with others for an upcoming conference on November 17th and 18th that will be showcasing innovative community development in Nova Scotia. This conference and the CD Policy build on a balanced approach that integrates economic, social, environmental and cultural considerations. For more information about the Policy and the upcoming conference, visit the OED website at:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/econ/cdpolicy/default.asp>

10) Sandra Murphy, Nova Scotia Community Links

Interests in Community Training

Training and learning for healthy and sustainable communities is ongoing and essential. Community Links is interested in providing these kinds of opportunities to seniors in Nova Scotia. It is important to have mentorship and follow-up capacity to go with any training. We have a survey currently underway to assess community needs.

Types of Training Provided

Most recently, Community Links has developed the Preventing Falls Together program. This program includes a toolkit for coalition-building (for members of Community Links coalitions in Nova Scotia). The toolkit also includes information on planning processes and policy development. We have also produced a toolkit that provides skills for influencing policy. Groups use this generic toolkit to work on any issue and it has a built in mentorship process so leaders can go back to their communities to help facilitate. Recently, a group has been using this toolkit to look at community-based transportation.

11) Sandy MacIntosh, Pictou Regional Development Commission

Interests in Community Training

We work mainly with entrepreneurs and have facilitated two e-commerce training programs. We do one-on-one training with community groups and small businesses as part of our business counseling. Beyond that, we do not offer training programs directly to the community of Pictou County. We do work in partnership with the NSCC to identify and support the training needs of our community. We do a fair bit of community capacity building within the county and have provided support with Board development of not-for-profit organizations.

12) Kevin Quinlan, Nova Scotia Community College

Interests in Community Training

The mission statement for Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) is: Building Nova Scotia's economy and quality of life through education and innovation. The vision is: Our approach to education will be one that engages Nova Scotians in new ways to apply knowledge and skill. We will integrate our education with community building and economic development. The College experience will inspire confidence, reflection, and self-reliance, challenging people to make use of what they learn, for their own benefit and for the benefit of us all.

13) Linda Gregory, Municipality of Digby

Interests in Community Training

Listening to community groups in our area, the training needs are:

1. How to run a meeting properly;
2. How does one levy funds;
3. How to get their message out;
4. How to find volunteers to help with the various groups;
5. Lack of knowledge on what is happening in the community.

Despite these needs, when I approach people for help, I often hear the answer “It’s not my department.”

Types of Training Provided

I do training for St John Ambulance on First Aid CPR and WHMIS.

I do Women's Heart health & CPR for Heart & Stroke Foundation of Nova Scotia.

I do talks on 911 from the 911 speakers Bureau.

I do talks on Asthma for Lung Association of Nova Scotia.

Our Recreation Dept works with various groups to offer training.

I find getting the message out can be a hard task.

14) Ishbel Munro, Coastal Communities Network

Interests in Community Training

The Coastal Communities Network (CCN) has always been an adult education organization, although we didn't always recognize that. CCN has been bringing people together from different sectors since 1992. Our monthly meetings are called learning circles. At these learning circles, there are a lot of chances for cross-group pollination through our monthly speakers and community update sessions. CCN has a very diverse membership of over 270 organizations that range from the Union of NS Municipalities, to fishing unions, agricultural associations, churches, local community development groups, First Nations, African Nova Scotians, Acadians, tourism, women's groups, historical societies and environmental organizations.

We have just completed a research project investigating Harbour Authority burn-out. One of the research questions was: Does training and networking have an effect on burn-out? An outcome of this research will be a guide for Harbour Authorities on how to avoid burn-out.

As time goes by, training needs seem to remain the same. For example, people are always asking for workshops on conflict resolution skills. In general, leadership and training are important for communities to remain healthy. Finally, CCN wants to connect more with the Francophone community.

Types of Training Provided

CCN conducted a skills development day this past October. Some of the topics included: Getting funding and board development. This was followed up six months later with an evaluation asking "Did you use it?" CCN also hosts an annual AGM/Conference in April that is based on skills development and issues facing rural communities.

How Groups Access the Training

Contact the CCN office for more details at: Coastal Communities Network, P.O. Box 402, New Glasgow, NS B2H 5E5 Phone: 902-485-4754; Fax: 752-9844

15) Todd Barr, Rural Communities Impacting Policy (RCIP) Project

Interests in Community Training

Health care, rural infrastructure, the environment...no matter what the issue, public policies affect every aspect of our lives. The Rural Communities Impacting Policy (RCIP) Project offers free workshops throughout Nova Scotia for community groups interested in using social science research to help influence and develop public policy that contributes to the health and sustainability of communities. Since the start of the RCIP Community Training Program, we have received additional requests from groups for training on: Needs Assessment, Strategic Planning & Forming a Steering Committee.

Having the capacity to continue working with groups is an important aspect of ongoing training and learning. This past winter, RCIP and CCN did this by combining a “Community Trainer” position (up-front information delivery) with a “Policy Entrepreneur” position (follow-up action and support).

Types of Training Provided

Workshop 1:

Introduction to Policy and Policy Change

This session looks at what public policy is, how it affects our everyday lives and how we as citizens can affect policy change.

Workshop 2:

Research and Policy Change

This session looks at the role of social science research in a community organization’s policy change work.

Workshop 3:

Using Tools for Doing Social Science Research

This session is about how to access some useful tools in doing social science research as part of policy change work, including how to make best use of the RCIP website.

Workshop 4:

Creating a Policy Change Strategy

This session works on actual policy issues that community groups identify for development of a policy change strategy.

These workshops can be done in two one-day sessions, four (2) two-hour sessions or in a series of evenings. The workshops are customized to suit the particular needs of a group and can also be delivered to a number of groups that are working together on a common issue. A brief promotional presentation can also be made to outline the workshops to a community group.

How Groups Access the Training

RCIP has two community trainers available to work with community groups. Groups can access the workshops via the Internet at www.ruralnovascotia.ca or by contacting Ishbel Munro at: Coastal Communities Network, P.O. Box 402, New Glasgow, NS B2H 5E5 Phone: 902-485-4754; Fax: 752-9844 coastalnet@sympatico.com

3. Discussion

3.1 What training do communities need?

- The word training needs to be considered in context. What do we mean by “training?” Sometimes it is expressed in an end-point kind of way. At our organization, we don’t use the word training and there is no end point. What is the better way to express what we do? Civic learning. This kind of conversation wouldn’t have happened a long time ago because civic learning and engagement were part of everyday life. Now, we have to “put it back.” This idea is a more development-oriented perspective.
- There are broader issues and broader needs besides everyday training needs like: running an effective meeting. Training alone cannot address community need. For example, how do we address the issue of key people leaving communities?
- An “ongoing” philosophy for training, leadership and learning needs to exist in all programs.
- Beware the “pat on the back” from a good training session - this is only a first step.
- From a catholic perspective: In the past, clergy were working towards community development. Leaders and the community were following. Now, trainers can’t give the same long term commitment. We have lost these leaders.
- We need to create leaders in communities now and the future. A more long-term approach to training and community development is needed. Community willingness is there but tools and support are not.
- Sustainable leadership and capacity-building efforts will help to avoid citizen burnout.
- We need to define what communities we are talking about. For example, communities of culture, communities of geography? What are the communities within the communities?
- There are two levels to training and learning: Level one is a maintenance level– how to run meetings, etc. Level two is having an educational capacity to help leaders to think very broadly - about the bigger picture. To be able to ask questions like: “Where are we all going together?”
- How do we train for vocation or work with meaning rather than “just a job?”
- Agricultural Leadership Program at University of Guelph: Jarring people to think more broadly. E.g. Strip joint marketing to farmers & fishermen. Research shows that this type of diverse training helps socially and economically.

- Youth entrepreneur program in Guysborough County – once they did it, they started to get involved all over the place.
- There seems to be agreement on the lifelong learning aspect of leadership.
- Question is: “Who are the community leaders?” In our area, we are suffering from a “drought” of leaders. The role of Regional Development Authorities is changing – towards facilitating community development and supporting the leaders. Rarely are leaders the elected officials. They could be anybody. They are the people who connect “on the ground.” People know who the true leaders are - they are the ones who get things done.
- Beware end product thinking – to get something done. A different way of thinking is that *everyone* is a leader. If civic engagement is the goal, then we are looking at everyone.
- In the past, people in the community “did what needed to be done.” For example, building a wharf: Each person would contribute their own skills in a leadership kind of way.
- Story: A group of elderly ladies in a community hall. Winter day – furnace started. No janitors – they did it themselves. No booking system. Informality and leadership needs to be built-in and touch everyone.
- We have a history of community leadership-building and adult education in Nova Scotia - Moses Coady and the Antigonish Movement.
- Communities are systems - working together and knowing other perspectives. We must capitalize on this way of being.
- Leadership is about empowerment of all. Leadership also means different skills and gifts for different people. We all have unique but complementary contributions to make towards a sustainable civil society.
- Training is something we do “with” people, not “to” people. Use it as a noun, not a verb.
- Story: Long-term aspect of CCN meetings has build capacity: Regular participants are slowly becoming Chairs and speaking up – for some it has been a five-year process. This goes against the “we trained 100 people in six months” mentality of some project funding.
- Municipal Counsellors need community training. A lot do community work – but many sit in their “ivory towers.”
- When communities develop vision – they have something to work towards. If there is such a thing, then many of these training and leadership strategies fall into place. In turn, this makes it easier for government to support.

- Having pathfinder functions for navigating government and academia is important.
- For many of the practical training needs expressed today, check out the Recreation Nova Scotia Skills Training Program – it is a module-based program. Resources are also available in French.
- Having the capacity to go beyond training is essential for ongoing success and stability.
- Volunteers often don't know what they need to know. CCN calls this the "Mystification Factor." Office of Health Promotion has a self-assessment tool/process called the *Regional Office Committee Assessment Tool* - for determining organizational needs. It consists of a databank of statements - each one designed to challenge groups to think and come to conclusions. Jim Campbell will share if requested.

3.2 How can training be made more accessible?

- When RCIP first started – thought it would be a train-the-trainer. It fell flat. We realized that we needed people to go into the community.
- Training with mentoring is an excellent way to maintain and sustain community capacity (and make training more accessible).
- How do we get to the people who have less voice? The people on the margins?
- There are two ways to approach the lack of sustainable funding
 - Bureaucrat approach – mission drift and short-term funding – keep playing the game. People are willing to go ahead, but "red tape" stops them.
 - Do it our own way – Stop doing work until we get it the way it needs to be. Maybe long-term training opportunities will never happen unless we take drastic measures.
- Cheticamp got money to do "visioning" but got no money to implement - this is a problem.
- The new provincial Community Development Policy and the Sustainable Communities Initiative are both hoping to address these types of problems.
- It is important for communities to hold government "feet to the fire" on their commitments.
- The Welsh government & McConnell Foundation are looking into longer term funding scenarios.
- It is important to work with people where they are at.

- It is important to give voice to those that don't have a voice. RCIP Policy Forums have happened that way to a certain extent. This is rare.
- We need more of these types of meetings (Roundtable) – building on the power of networking.
- It is important to listen to the “voices that are vying for privilege.”
- There are collaborative and community-based education models out there. Nova Scotia Community College? Antigonish movement? “Making sure that accessible and useful learning opportunities are available in communities.”
- Usually leadership only occurs during a crisis - because it affects groups directly and tangibly. E.g. sidewalks in Cheticamp - took 2004 Acadian Congress to get them fixed.
- The more specific you are with programs and initiatives, the better success you can have. For example, addressing volunteer burn-out of harbour authorities.
- Working across groups is an important part of getting things done - this is cross-cultural type work.
- There are funding requirement differences for community-based groups and academic groups. For projects: Community has to be specific and stick to its activities, academic can be broader and often switch direction mid-way through.

3.3 How can training opportunities be integrated or linked?

- Learning and sharing from networking function alone is huge.
- This question has been raised in community economic development (CED) before. In the past, a meeting was coordinated for sponsoring agencies. Jim Campbell facilitated this meeting. Because of that meeting – there were suggestions that some agency needed to step up to the plate. Maybe Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC)? Is this discussion still going on at the College?
 - Story: Connecting the past with the present: *The Past*: Moses Coady was a graduate from the Normal School on 1901 (in Truro). This is the white school house beside NSCC. There is a link there to Coady and the principles of community leadership. When Kevin arrived at NSCC Truro, the College discontinued the Truro campus CED Centre and decided to distribute CED within the mandate of each NSCC campus (each principal has mandate to work with communities). *The Present*: There are five individuals that keep meeting to keep community development on the NSCC agenda. There is potential for coordination to occur within NSCC.

- It would be helpful if there was something to bring focus to this idea of linking and integration. Not a program, but keeping it together. Years ago, St. FX Extension served that purpose.
- It is important to link up with the current United Way Training and Learning Inventory Project in Nova Scotia.

3.4 Are there opportunities for collaboration?

- Community Leadership Program – based in the United States: Ten month cycle of training – self-directed. Issues-based, not skills based. Training but also a network of people across sectors to deal with problems as they come up. One in Halifax starting this fall.
- There are major opportunities for Anglophone groups to partner with Francophone groups – much funding is available that wouldn't be individually. Warning: Some groups have “used” the Francophone community but the partnership was not equal. For it to work, all the cards need to be on the table - all partners equal.
 - RCIP Project: The community & university alliance is a different version of this. To lessen this tension, we developed a partnership agreement.
 - CCN has been “used” in the past as well.
 - Justice Canada is now checking Anglophone partner legitimacy with Francophone groups.
- Check the NSCVI website for funding opportunities. <http://www.novascotianetwork.org/>
- Check the Health Promotion Clearinghouse website for funding opportunities. <http://www.hpclearinghouse.ca/index.asp?section=home&page=home>
- We are still at an analytical level. We need to move to a more practical level. This Roundtable has been offering what needs are there vs. “what to do.” The next meeting should address this second question more in-depth.

4. Highlights

The following points (in no particular order) were agreed upon as highlights from the Roundtable:

- There is much interest and potential for partnerships and collaborations between Anglophone and Francophone groups.
- It is important to consider the broader aspects of leadership and lifelong learning in the context of specific training activities.
- There needs to be regular opportunities to come together face-to-face for networking and collaboration.
- Navigation of government and academic environments needs to be easier for learning about, and applying, community-based research and influencing policy.
- There needs to be a commitment to long-term learning and development for community groups. Possible vehicles described today: the establishment of mentoring programs; establishment of “policy entrepreneurs” as part of training programs;
- There is great potential for linking with the Nova Scotia Community College in terms of training, leadership and learning. E.g. acting as an organizing body for connecting people and on-line resources.
- It is important to link up with the current United Way Training and Learning Inventory Project in Nova Scotia.
- The more we hear from communities, the better.
- We need to meet again in the fall of 2005 to go “deeper” (i.e. proposals and action plans). With this in mind, more people need to be encouraged to attend (This Roundtable Report will help - to be published by the end of July, hopefully in French and English).

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