

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a small, light-colored seed over a hole in dark soil. The background is blurred, showing more soil and other seeds. The overall tone is earthy and focused on the act of planting.

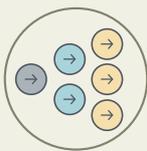
VIBRANT COMMUNITIES APPROACH

EXAMPLES of Integrated Community Care (ICC) can be found all over the world. This document belongs to a series that highlights a number of emblematic approaches utilized by a wide range of existing ICC practices.

INTEGRATED COMMUNITY CARE is both a set of principles, and a movement towards better health and care systems. ICC implies a shift in traditional thinking from problem-based, disease-oriented care towards a goal-oriented, person-centred care that aims to enhance the quality of life of vulnerable individuals and improve population health among communities. It is a whole-of-society approach to health and well-being that is determined by the needs and preferences of individuals and the communities in which they live.

TRANSFORM, the Transnational Partnership on Integrated Community Care, is a joint initiative of foundations in Europe and Canada that aims to put the community at the centre of integrated primary care. Learn more about ICC and TransForm: www.transform-integratedcommunitycare.com

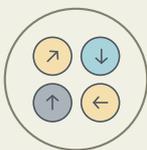
“think the way we have always thought, we will get what we always got.”



Vibrant Communities – Cities Reducing Poverty (VC-CRP) emerged in Canada (and later in US) out of a need to address poverty differently. The network is the result of an **iterative process of close monitoring, evaluation, and redesign**, beginning as a research and learning experiment almost 20 years ago, which has now evolved into a working network, methodology and framework that can be applied to many different social change fields. As it has proven its efficiency in **strengthening the ability to fight systemic poverty**, it is now being applied in different fields, such as deepening community and reducing isolation and helping youth succeed.



The VC-CRP approach is a very **valuable framework and a source of many learnings** for any organization community dealing with complex social problems and **wanting to make an impact**.



Many elements of the VC-CRP approach look similar to other approaches and are rather logical (such as working together, strengthening assets etc). As it is a broad, **universal approach**, it contains many layers and keeps a certain level of **ambiguity as a key ingredient**. This strengthens its applicability to a variety of social and systemic problems and allows us to approach the complexity of such problems in a structured and consistent way. Yet the universality of this approach makes it more difficult to grasp the practicality of it.



The practical implementation of the VC-CRP approach is presented by the Living SJ example. It is worth noting that putting the VC-CRP approach to work requires nothing special or sophisticated, but rather an emphasis on a concerted effort and letting go of the idea of a silver bullet to ending poverty. Nonetheless, **following a framework, receiving a support and having access to continuous learning and development makes an ultimate difference in outcomes, resulting in a reduction of poverty**.

VIBRANT COMMUNITIES APPROACH

1. A recognized problem of poverty:

Despite the undeniable prosperity over the years in Canada, efforts to reduce poverty have stalled. Data on low-income households show a fluctuation in the rates of poverty, rising during the recessions of the early 1980s, 1990s, and late 2000s, and falling during periods of economic recovery. While the rate of poverty largely follows the state of the economy, there has been no significant decrease in poverty in more than 30 years. The **Vibrant Communities approach was launched to address this problem and reduce poverty starting at the community-level.**¹

In large measure, previous initiatives were intended to focus on individual issues in isolation from one another. While effective at directing resources to specific concerns such as health, crime, education, housing or employment, these programs were ill suited to tackle the intersectional drivers of poverty.

The guiding principle when starting Vibrant Communities – Cities Reducing Poverty was the recognition that building a common agenda² involves exploration and curiosity: *“think the way we have always thought, we will get what we always got.”* To achieve this, sufficient time is needed to let go of old patterns and explore and accept new approaches and ideas.

2. The key solution to the problem – Vibrant Communities:³

Vibrant Communities – Cities Reducing Poverty was initially an experiment that later evolved into an approach to deepen our understanding and strengthen the practice of working within a comprehensive community-based framework⁴ for poverty reduction. Together, the Vibrant Communities – Cities Reducing Poverty network aims to **explore, mine, and disseminate a new practice to reduce poverty.**

Founded by Paul Born in 2002 from Tamarack Institute, Vibrant Communities was originally a ten-year action **research initiative** through which 13 Canadian communities experimented with ways to make a deeper impact in reducing poverty by applying the lessons of comprehensive community initiatives. The objectives were to reduce poverty, increase engagement, change public policy and unleash community innovation. VC-CRP was established through the partnership of three national sponsors – Tamarack⁵ – An Institute for Community Engagement, the Caledon Institute⁶ of Social Policy and The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation⁷ – and a series of local communities across the country.

1 Inspired Learning. An Evaluation of Vibrant Communities’ National Supports 2002 – 2012

2 Paul Born, How to develop a common agenda for a collective impact, Tamarack Institute 2017

3 Inspired Learning. An Evaluation of Vibrant Communities’ National Supports 2002 – 2012

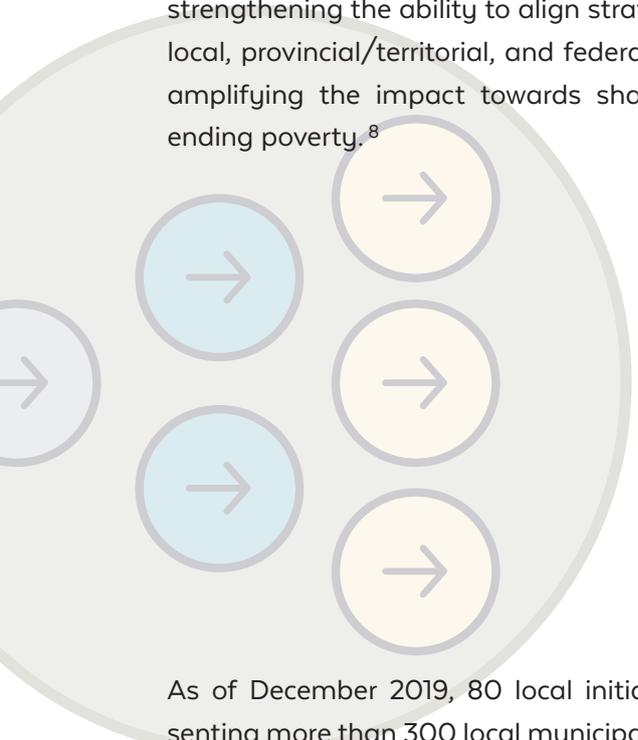
4 Ibidem. *The aim of comprehensive community initiatives is to engage a wide array of partners in a concerted effort to tackle the diverse factors that contribute to poverty.*

5 <https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/>

6 <http://www.caledoninst.org/>

7 <https://mcconnellfoundation.ca/>

Over the years Vibrant Communities has evolved into a **collective impact movement and network** aimed at reducing poverty across Canada and the USA. Members are multi-sector roundtable that engage in a collective learning community to **build capacity, connect and learn from each other, in order to drive their work forward**. Every year, more cities and communities join the network, thereby strengthening the ability to align strategies at the local, provincial/territorial, and federal levels, and amplifying the impact towards shared goal of ending poverty.⁸



As of December 2019, 80 local initiatives representing more than 300 local municipalities belong to the network, and have **committed to the following core principles**:

1. **POVERTY REDUCTION** — a focus on reducing poverty as opposed to alleviating the hardships of living in poverty
2. **COMPREHENSIVE THINKING AND ACTION** — addressing the interrelated root causes of poverty rather than its various symptoms
3. **MULTISECTORAL COLLABORATION** — engaging individuals and organizations from at least four key sectors — business, government, non-profit organizations, and low-income residents — in a joint effort to counter poverty
4. **COMMUNITY ASSET BUILDING** — building on community strengths rather than focusing on deficits
5. **COMMUNITY LEARNING AND CHANGE** — embracing a long-term process of learning and change rather than simply undertaking a series of specific interventions

VC-CRP also provides guidance on **how to implement** the core principles in practice:

- Dispel the sense that little could be done to address poverty except soften its blows
- Shift the focus from the various parts of the problem to the relationships among them
- Create the mechanisms needed for diverse partners to work together to tackle a wide range of interconnected issues
- Engage the “unusual suspects,” including people in poverty (whose insights into solutions are too often overlooked) and business (which may not perceive poverty reduction as an issue for which it shares responsibility)
- Replenish the stock of ideas about what can be done to reduce poverty

8 Vibrant Communities Cities Reducing Poverty Report 2020

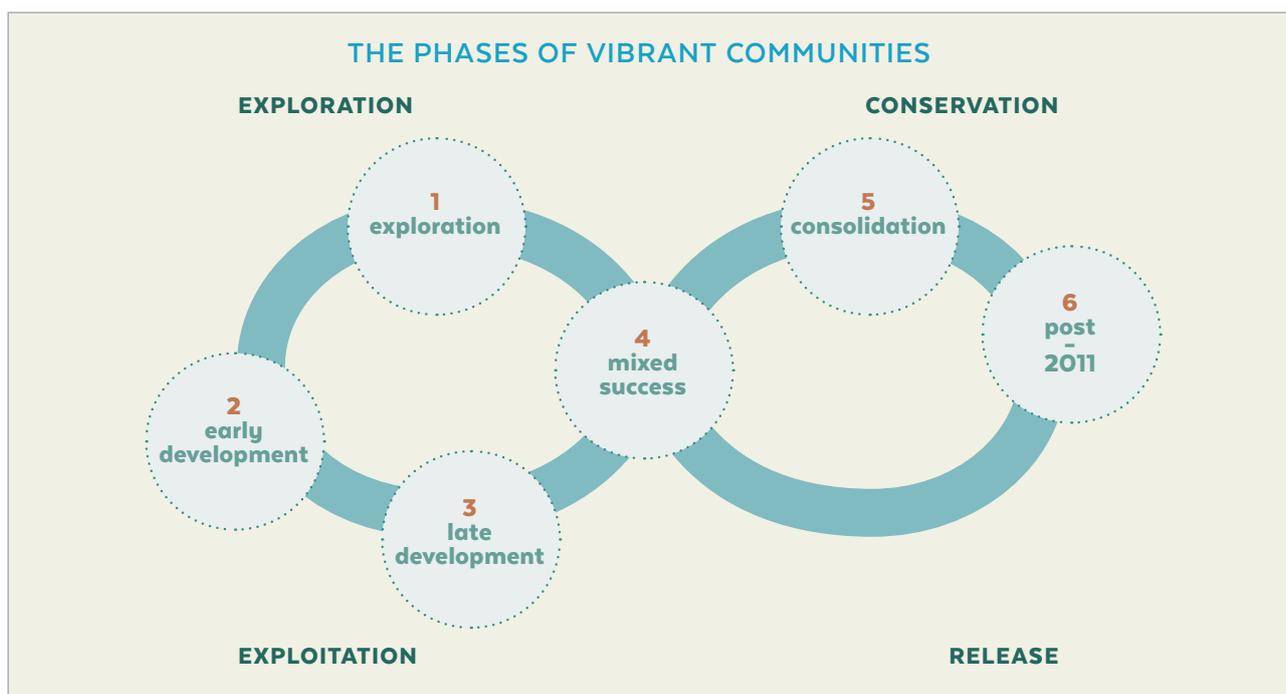
3. Key components of the Vibrant Communities approach⁹

As it was mentioned before, VC-CRP was initially an experiment designed to test a specific way of addressing the complex realities of poverty through local action. Through evaluation and learning in the first 10 years and scaling up to 80 cities and communities across Canada, Vibrant Communities has found four key elements that are important factors for successful community-based poverty reduction strategies, and focuses on providing support to local roundtables in these areas. They are:

- **DEVELOPING A POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY** — This entails all four sectors (government, private, non-profit and citizens at-large) coming together to develop a common agenda. A shared definition of the issue, vision for the

future, and mutually reinforcing activities that when enacted together, will help them achieve their vision.

- **REPORTING IMPACT** — This entails creating a shared measurement system which includes a common set of indicators across all participating organizations that helps to keep partners accountable and aligned; and sharing the results of their collective efforts with stakeholders
- **SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP** — This entails developing a governance structure that includes a higher-level of leadership from all sectors, and creating backbone support to coordinate the many different parts of the initiative and support continuous communication amongst partners and the community.
- **SUSTAINABLE FUNDING** — This entails having or raising sufficient cash and/or in-kind resources in the community to work on the initiative



9 Vibrant Communities Cities Reducing Poverty Report 2020

The above diagram shows the Network’s lifecycle in stages.

The Vibrant Communities — Cities Reducing Poverty national network developed using the structure:

- **TRAIL BUILDERS** — a series of urban collaboratives unfolding poverty reduction initiatives in their local settings
- **NATIONAL SPONSORS** — three national sponsors providing resources and guidance for the overall initiative
- **PAN-CANADIAN LEARNING COMMUNITY** — a platform which local and national partners could learn together about the challenges and opportunities of the approach being explored, building their knowledge and know-how in the process.

Each **Trail Builder** community was expected to meet a set of basic requirements:

- Set a numerical poverty reduction target for its work and contribute to achieving the national targets set for assisting households with reduced poverty and engaging multi-sector partners;
- Develop a community plan for poverty reduction reflecting a comprehensive approach;
- Establish a multi-sector leadership table including participation from business, government, non-profit organizations and people with lived experience of poverty;
- Design a learning plan and participate in the pan-Canadian learning community;
- Secure the necessary financial and in-kind resources to support the convening, facilitation, research and other work required to pursue a comprehensive, collaborative initiative;
- Provide narrative and statistical reports on the progress of its work as described in the Vibrant

Communities learning and evaluation process for Trail Builder initiatives;

National sponsors would concurrently mine, distill and evaluate the experiences and learnings of the participating communities. The insights and ideas that emerged were disseminated through various mechanisms to a variety of audiences beyond the project partners.

The **Pan-Canadian Learning Community** supports cities and local leaders to share research, resources, and share insights with others in similar situations to prevent communities from re-inventing the wheel over and over. The Pan-Canadian Learning Community was piloted with poverty reduction collaboratives and now supports three social change movements. They are:

- **CITIES REDUCING POVERTY:** a network of more than 330 municipalities represented by 80 regional partners who are working collaboratively to end poverty in their communities.
- **CITIES DEEPENING COMMUNITY:** a learning community dedicated to strengthening communities, neighbourhoods and citizen connections. 300 people representing over 50 cities take part in their communities of practice.
- **COMMUNITIES BUILDING YOUTH FUTURES:** a learning community supporting a five-year Collective Impact strategy with Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) to help increase high school graduation rates for youth facing barriers across 13 communities.

These communities support change-makers to regularly interact with and learn from their peers in other communities and strengthen their understanding of what approaches and policies are resulting in success.

4. Example of the Vibrant Communities approach – Living SJ from Canada¹⁰

Living SJ was formed in 2014 to bring an end to generational poverty in Saint John, New Brunswick. The city of Saint John is the poorest city located in the poorest region of Canada¹¹. Living SJ is currently led by a diverse and growing network of over 100 partners working together to improve social outcomes and inform policies and practices that will help us build a brighter future, both socially and economically.

Living SJ is a network of stakeholders from business, government, non-profit and neighbourhoods, committed to a collective impact approach to sustainable long-term solutions that demonstrate a measurable improvement in local conditions.

Four priorities with measurable targets have been established through the network:

1. **EDUCATION.** Close the education achievement gap;
2. **EMPLOYMENT.** Connect low-income residents to employment through education and training;
3. **HEALTH.** Improve the health of residents through neighbourhood-based models of care;
4. **NEIGHBOURHOODS.** Transform low-income neighbourhoods into vibrant mixed income communities.

Living SJ focuses on applying an approach to mobilize action around community priorities. This includes:

- developing a common agenda – agreeing on what we can do together differently;
- measurements – knowing the difference we are making with our actions
- communication – sharing information;;
- broad stakeholder involvement – contributing differently to the solutions; and
- a centralized structure to keep the momentum going – supporting our work, the sharing of information and our results.

It has been done so by following 4 steps:

Step #1 Research

Living SJ started off by collecting local, provincial, national and global reports and strategies relevant to community issues and solutions. These were synthesized into 12 issue areas that serve as important quality of life components for Greater Saint John.

Step #2 Community Engagement

Living SJ held 27 focus group sessions around twelve issue areas between March and May of 2014 and heard from 111 people in the community, including service providers, community leaders, businesses and government. The Lean 6 Sigma approach¹² was used in the focus groups with a number of tools and strategies for weighting and prioritizing needs. This helped ensure that our approach to prioritizing key social issues in Greater Saint John was objective and comprehensive.

¹⁰ <https://www.livingsj.ca/>

¹¹ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/saint-john-poverty-federal-assistance-1.3683402>

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lean_Six_Sigma

Each focus group area met between two and four times to complete this work. Almost 500 critical needs were identified. 62 priorities were identified that would have the most impact on the community. They were narrowed down to 4 Priorities, which led to the development of a road map: Living SJ social renewal strategy.

Step #3 Action

Four Collective Impact Teams, led by co-chairs have devised action plans to meet the Living SJ targets and measure its success. Improving the quality of life of Saint John's residents depends on genuine ownership by the larger community and continues to be a principle of the work of each Collective Impact Team.

Step #4 Learning & Adaptation

A number of quantitative and qualitative methods are being deployed to monitor Living SJ progress. A growing network of partners is offering data collection/analysis support to track progress.

--> INSIGHTS FROM LIVING SJ

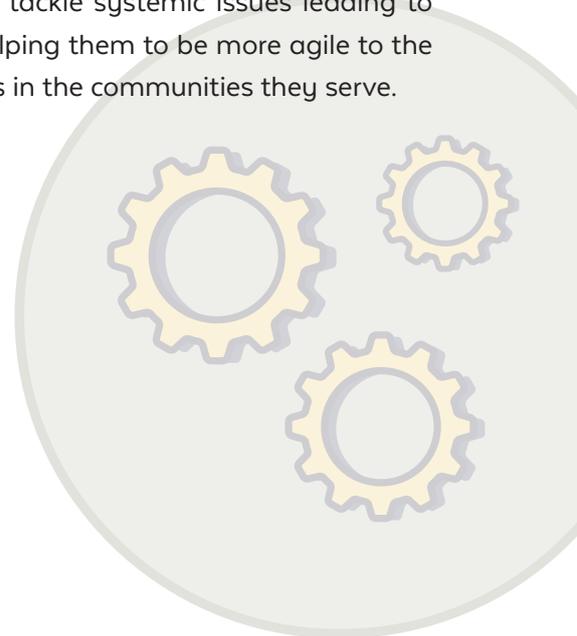
The more challenges being faced by a community, the more diverse the tensions, political agendas and relational issues to be dealt with.

Putting the Vibrant Communities approach in action means building trust and establishing relations. This requires patience, time and continuous outreach to local partners, communities, and most importantly, people experiencing poverty. Engaging them as key actors requires continuous effort, understanding, compassion and generous listening. It is treating them as key stakeholders rather than merely beneficiaries.

To achieve sustainable change there is a need to influence policies. It becomes a challenge when many representatives of partnering organizations are activists and campaigners, as advocacy requires diplomacy and cooperation with decision makers as well as quantitative and numerical data. By working as a network, both advocacy and activism can exist among the diversity of participating partners and can maintain the vision of long-standing change. They also help to provide reliable data (including aggregation of data on different regional levels) and proven solutions coming from different partners which minimizes the need to "reinvent the wheel".

COVID-19 has deepened the distress of those living in poverty, including community members in Living SJ, and made it more difficult for the work of already established organisations to successfully address the underlying causes of poverty in the new circumstances caused by the pandemic.

At the same time, the COVID-19 crisis has served to underline the crucial importance of Living SJ's work to develop a coalition of organisations working together to tackle systemic issues leading to poverty and helping them to be more agile to the changing needs in the communities they serve.



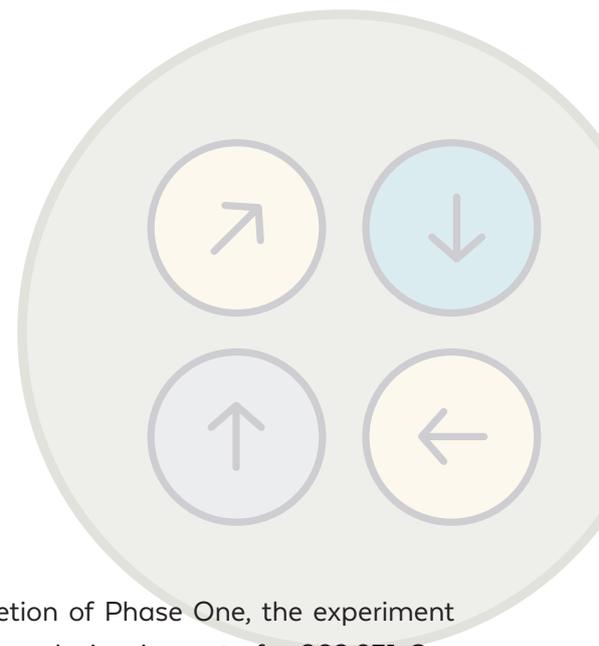
5. Resourcing Vibrant Communities

In the first phase of Vibrant Communities, communities were able to access matched funds through the Trail Builder program. The additional available funding for communities was a critical catalyst for partners coming together using a Vibrant Communities approach. Grants included:

- one-time exploration grants of \$5,000 to explore local interest in participating in VC;
- one-time matched \$20,000 grants to develop a multi-sector leadership group and a comprehensive plan;
- a four year action-learning process supported with annual grants of \$100,000 (matched one-to-one by local partners);
- sustainability grants for up to three years of \$50,000/year (matched two-to-one by local partners).

The range of supports that were part of Phase One required a substantial investment. In the initial years of 2002 and 2003, an annual investment of \$180,000 (2002) and \$165,000 (2003) was made. This grew as VC expanded, peaking in 2010 when the budget for providing supports¹³ rose to \$680,000.¹⁴

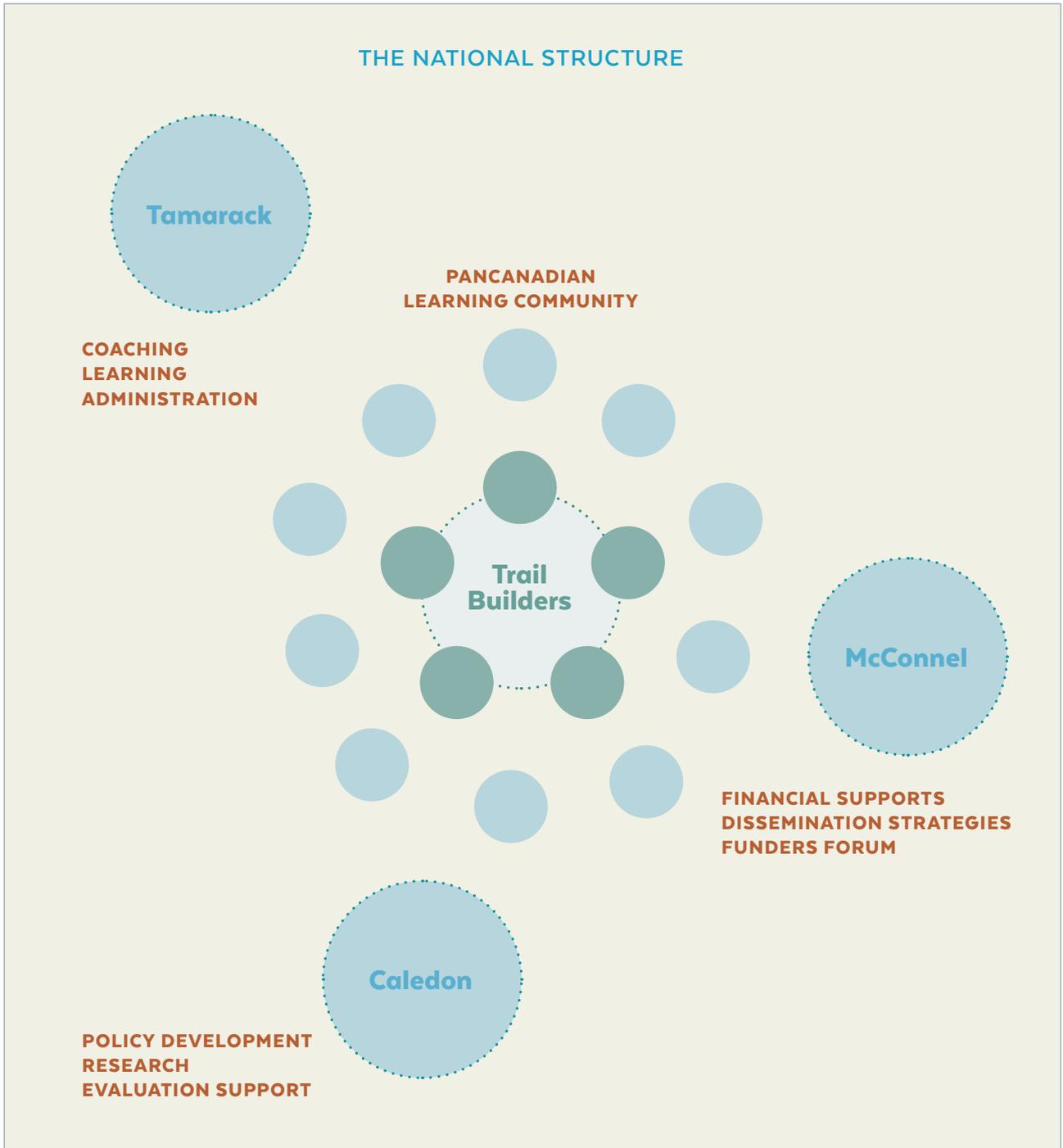
At the completion of Phase One, the experiment found poverty reducing impacts for 202,931 Canadians amongst just these 13 Trail Builders. Seeing the success of the approach, in 2021 Vibrant Communities created a new ambitious target of reducing poverty for one million Canadians. Phase Two entails growing the learning community and the number of communities using a Vibrant Communities approach to poverty reduction to 100 cities and communities across the country. Members adopt, adapt, and test best practices learned from the first phase and continue to build the collective body of knowledge on what works, what doesn't, and what the new challenges and opportunities are for reducing poverty. Now a national movement, Cities Reducing Poverty also aims to align municipal, provincial/territorial and federal level-strategies to shift policies and systems that can have wide-reaching impact for families and individuals. Simply put, the support of the network helps make local poverty reduction efforts easier and more effective.



¹³ Beyond the financial resources needed for the supports lay the combined capabilities of Tamarack, Caledon and McConnell.

¹⁴ Inspired Learning. An Evaluation of Vibrant Communities' National Supports 2002 - 2012, p.23

6. Governance and Management of the Vibrant Communities



7. Lesson learned & Insights

Outcomes

The following outcomes reflect the collective value of the supports:

- VC-CRP’s programmatic/systems level outcomes indicate new political channels have been created that otherwise might not have existed
- Collaborative and community-based learning translated into valuable strategies (e.g., Living Wage, Affordability Index) across multiple communities
- Learning supports supplied a shared language that afforded local participants a common base for communication; when coupled with financial incentives, this common base provided the foundation for a new learning orientation
- VC-CRP supports invigorated local processes by injecting energy and inspiration; the combination of shared communication, learning orientation and sense of renewal nourished a new community dialogue
- Being part of a national network is more than shared learning. The supports provide an ongoing reinforcement of VC-CRP principles and contribute to a shared identity that creates a broader recognition/legitimacy to the overall approach

- Supports equip local conveners with tools for evaluation and provide their roundtables with a new type of knowledge and evidence with which to work

Trail Builders verified the following benefits of supports. The strongest agreement was with the following:

- Access to another community’s learning about a specific challenge or issue
- Learning about new program or policy ideas that had been implemented in another community
- Providing a theoretical basis for some of the work
- Learning about a tool or method that was directly applicable to the work

Almost as strong was the identification with the following:

- Personal motivation to sustain the poverty reduction effort
- The ability to attract and convene additional partners locally
- Increased local legitimacy

Trail Builders also identified positively with the community benefit of “Resolution of a local issue or concern,” but in a more moderate way when compared to the benefits noted above.

When asked how they would recommend allocating resources towards supports, Trail Builders identified funding as the most desirable. The remaining responses were roughly balanced among coaching, cross-community connection and supports, and online learning resources, tools and publications.

By fostering a new learning orientation, VC equipped what had been a poorly understood sector with an important new asset.

The learning community built a **common presence** – socially and intellectually – across communities. A new group of people were meeting through different forums, reading similar materials and engaging in the exploration of similar concepts. The supports helped surface community champions – such people are critical to advancing poverty reduction work and the Vibrant Communities effort locally.

Recommendations to Intermediaries:

- An initiative of this nature is fundamentally about the overall package, and not the discrete elements. It is risky to link any one support to the benefits derived from the whole. Intermediaries supporting this kind of work should think comprehensively when developing supports and consider how elements might be mutually reinforcing.
- Because of the interplay between the complexities of poverty and the particularities of each community, different kinds of supports are needed at different times. Intermediaries should support a diverse range of options, offered over time.

- There is a high level of skills required to effectively deliver comprehensive supports: facilitation, writing, supporting networks and building relationships require sophisticated expertise. The mining, distilling, and dissemination of learning also have distinct requirements. Intermediaries should take stock of their capacity and expertise to do this work and build partnerships and/or internal capacity if this is not an area where there is existing capacity.
- Relationships breathe life into an initiative such as this – they require time, effort and nurturing. The people involved leave an imprint on the work as it unfolds. This involvement can create momentum when individuals join an initiative or stall it when they move on. Intermediaries should make relationship development and stewardship a core part of their activity.
- Tangible support like helping with problem solving, sharing of program or policy initiatives and providing evaluation assistance works in combination with more intangible support elements: theories of change, shared language and options for governance. Intermediaries should provide both practical support as well as a theoretical basis for the work.

Recommendations to Funders:

When a high level of engagement in exploring and learning is desired, funding is a critical incentive and mechanism for enabling robust participation. Part of the strength of Vibrant Communities was the consistency of funding over time. Funders should enter into long-term engagements when supporting initiatives with a learning and exploring agenda.



- There are clear benefits to establishing an interconnected architecture of supports in situations where the burden of learning is high. Funders should be prepared to direct resources to supports in situations where there are similar conditions and objectives to Vibrant Communities — i.e., an action learning agenda for a comprehensive community initiative working on a complex issue.
- Funders should be involved as fully-engaged players, rather than distant observers, so that they can learn, develop trust with partners and understand (and champion) mid-course adjustment.

Recommendations to Local Groups/ Communities

- Participating in a community of practice has clear benefits for the organizations involved. Communities should commit to doing this part of the work well and investing the requisite time, energy and skills.

- Peers from other communities can help organizations to innovate and to move more quickly in implementing new approaches and initiatives. Communities should engage in peer learning as a vital source of ideas and perspective.
- The combination of supports, external investment and local resources is generative. Communities should position external resources to leverage their overall scope of work and to assist in accelerating the pace of their efforts.

It is difficult to determine what would have happened without the Vibrant Communities initiative. Many (though not all) cities involved would likely have been working on poverty reduction even without VC’s national support. It is safe to say, however, that without Vibrant Communities, the shape of local strategies would have been fundamentally different; they would not have progressed as quickly, or in some cases, as well.

Among many new ways of working, there was one thing that Vibrant Communities has introduced and sustained: it was an active involvement of all actors, including the beneficiaries — people experiencing poverty, providing space for them and amplifying their voice. Their participation evolved over time and now it is more widely done than when Vibrant Communities first started, but still it is something many groups struggle to do meaningfully. Key challenges include power differentials between people with lived/living experience and other “professionals” at the table; structural barriers to participation (ex. the time of the meeting), as well as tokenizing one or two voices or including them peripherally. Vibrant Communities continue to explore how to engage people with lived experience.

rience and it's one of members' biggest learning asks.¹⁵

One of the most important lessons from almost 20 years of Vibrant Communities existence is that **social innovations introduced at multiple levels of scale often involve different and considerable 'lag times' as actors in a system get to know one another and adopt new ways of working.** All the more reason for funders to temper their insistence on results with patience, and to invest for the long term. A second conclusion is that complex systems involve solutions that evolve over time. Vibrant Communities' evolution over the past decade coincided with the rapid spread of the internet. Webinars and downloadable resources have – many times over – multiplied the program's reach and impact. Finally, Vibrant Communities' architecture highlights the close relationship between social innovation and societal learning. It shows that it is possible to transform complex problems such as poverty into evolutionary processes of continual adaptation.

The bottom line is that in the realm of complex issues and comprehensive efforts to mobilize learning and new approaches, the full suite of supports offered through VC was an essential ingredient in its ultimate success.

Collective impact of Vibrant Communities over ten years was significant with a number of cities reporting a 10% reduction in poverty and an overall impact for 202,931 low-income Canadians. More detailed information on the impact of VC can be found in 2020 Impact report¹⁶.

¹⁵ See <https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/library/ten-2019>

¹⁶ <https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/library/crp-2020-impact-report>

8. Covid-19 impact¹⁷

Through the COVID-19 crisis, Vibrant Communities – Cities Reducing Poverty (VC-CRP) members, representing 300+ communities, have demonstrated creativity, commitment, and compassion as they support their communities' most vulnerable.

The crisis has shown that traditional hurdles in poverty reduction can be overcome, and importantly, that meaningful cross-sectoral collaboration can be achieved. Collective Impact¹⁸ is a way for poverty reduction roundtables to enhance their resilience and ability to respond in times of crisis. If sustained, this can lead to meaningful progress in poverty reduction.

Many VC members have found their work and roles shifting due to shift in the needs of the community. Some have had to put a pause on long-term poverty reduction work as they pivot to emergency response efforts. Some included more capacity building responses and advocacy work towards systems change, which was welcomed by the Government.

COVID-19 has revealed the strength and resilience that exists among communities and what can happen when different sectors and all of society are working together. It is worth noting that the notion of being 'in it together' is misleading, as people are being disproportionately affected and inequalities are being exacerbated due to the crisis. CRP members, cities and communities within the Vibrant Communities network, have shown that efforts must be targeted to minimize the growing disparities.



¹⁷ <https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/library/cities-reducing-poverty-responding-to-covid-19>

¹⁸ <https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/collectiveimpact>

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9. How does Vibrant Communities exemplify Integrated Community Care?¹⁹

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Integrated Community Care (ICC) points towards a paradigm shift at the citizen, community and system level. Lived experience, a shared vision on the common goals of a local community, distributed power and collective learning are its cornerstones.²⁰

Vibrant Communities share the similar approach in combating systemic inequalities, emphasizing common agenda, participation and shared learning. Both movements focus on addressing the core issue instead of alleviating symptoms and see the problem through a systems lens. They also both

emphasize the importance of participation and collaboration, and are focusing on strengthening communities and creating sustainable changes. Among the commonalities is also the recognition of the complexity of the problem and understating of a variety of different local conditions. Hence both movements are focusing on a set of core principles adapted to various local settings rather than a “model” that can be replicated.

ICC 7 Effectiveness principles are very much aligned with the 5 Vibrant Communities principles. They are both sourcing from Developmental Evaluation²¹ approach — a specific approach to evaluation that is ideally suited for innovative situations. Initiatives that are innovative are often in a state of continuous development and adaptation, and furthermore, they are frequently unfolding in changing and unpredictable environments.

19 <https://transform-integratedcommunitycare.com/integrated-community-care/> and 7 principles of effectiveness

20 <https://transform-integratedcommunitycare.com/integrated-community-care/>

21 <https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/library/a-developmental-evaluation-primer>

What are the effectiveness principles?²²

Effectiveness principles provide direction, but not prescription, so they can be adapted to different contexts, changing understandings, and varied challenges.

- Effectiveness principles point to consequences, outcomes, and impacts.
- They informing choices at forks in the road, grounded in values about what matters to those who develop, adopt, and attempt to follow them.

5 Vibrant Communities principles

1. **POVERTY REDUCTION** – a focus on reducing poverty as opposed to alleviating the hardships of living in poverty
2. Comprehensive Thinking and Action – addressing the interrelated root causes of poverty rather than its various symptoms
3. **MULTISECTORAL COLLABORATION** – engaging individuals and organizations from at least four key sectors – business, government, non-profit organizations, and low-income residents – in a **JOINT EFFORT** to counter poverty
4. **COMMUNITY ASSET BUILDING** – building on community strengths rather than focusing on deficits
5. Community Learning and Change – embracing a long-term process of **LEARNING AND CHANGE** rather than simply undertaking a series of specific interventions

ICC 7 Effectiveness principles

CO-DEVELOP HEALTH AND WELLBEING, ENABLE PARTICIPATION

1. Value and foster the capacities of **ALL ACTORS**, including citizens, in the community to become change agents and to coproduce health and wellbeing. This requires the active involvement of all actors, with an extra sensitivity to the most vulnerable ones.
2. Foster the creation **OF LOCAL ALLIANCES** among all actors which are involved in the production of health and wellbeing in the community. Develop a **SHARED VISION AND COMMON GOALS**. Actively strive for balanced power relations and mutual trust within these alliances.
3. Strengthen community-oriented primary care that **STIMULATES PEOPLE'S CAPABILITIES** to maintain health and/or to live in the community with complex chronic conditions. Take people's life goals as the starting point to define the desired outcomes of care and support.

BUILD RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

4. Improve the health of the population and **REDUCE HEALTH DISPARITIES** by addressing the social, economic and environmental determinants of health in the community and investing in prevention and health promotion.
5. Support healthy and inclusive communities by providing opportunities to bring people together and by investing in both social care and social infrastructure.
6. Develop the legal and financial conditions to enable the co-creation of care and support at community level.

MONITOR, EVALUATE AND ADAPT

7. **EVALUATE CONTINUOUSLY** the quality of care and support and the status of health and wellbeing in the community by using methods and indicators which are grounded within the foregoing principles and documented by participatory 'community diagnosis' involving all stakeholders. Provide opportunities for joint learning. Adapt policies, services and activities in accordance with the evaluation outcomes.

²² After Amy Salmon, adapted from Patton, MQ (2018) Principles Focused Evaluation: The GUIDE.

Both approaches stress the importance of learning and sharing findings, best practices, outcomes and challenges. Even though the language may differ and the focus on the problem is different (poverty and integrated community care), there

are many more commonalities. Most importantly, there seem to be a similar mindset behind both movements, emphasizing the importance of making a joined, long lasting systemic change in the society.

FURTHER RESOURCES AND CONTACT

<http://vibrantcommunities.ca/>

Contact person:

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<https://www.livingsj.ca/>

Contact person:

Dr. Dominic Moran, Executive Director, Living SJ, dmoran@livingsj.com

Cities Reducing Poverty Website: <https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/citiesreducingpoverty>

Evaluation of Vibrant Communities National Supports 2002-2012

(the success of this 10-year pilot is the foundation of what CRP is built on today)

<https://maytree.com/wp-content/uploads/992ENG.pdf>

Developing a common agenda for collective impact (approach):

<https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/library/common-agenda-for-collective-impact>

Case study: Alberta reduces poverty (example of theory in practice):

<https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/library/case-study-alberta-proves-that-yes-we-can-reduce-poverty>

Cities Reducing Poverty Impact report 2020 (sample results of local & collective impact):

<https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/library/crp-2020-impact-report>

Tamarack Institute BOOK | 10 – Engaging People with Lived/Living Experience

<https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/library/ten-2019>

Developmental Evaluation

<https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/library/a-developmental-evaluation-primer>