EVERYBODY'S WELCOME

**A Social Inclusion Approach to
Program Planning and
Development for Recreation and
Parks Services**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information please visit <www.sparc.bc.ca/everybodys_welcome>. The website includes an audio file and PowerPoint presentation from the March 2006 web conference that introduced the workbook to recreation and parks programmers in BC.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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March 2006

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§0 CONTENTS

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK!

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§1 INTRODUCTION

Many program and service planners face the challenge of creating a welcoming environment for all community members. Because there are many aspects to identity and because exclusion can relate to a wide range of barriers, developing effective strategies to support full participation can be difficult and complex.

The concept of "social inclusion" provides a useful framework that can help guide the development of comprehensive strategies to support the open and welcome participation of all people in community life.

This booklet is intended to outline how this concept can be used as a framework to guide program planning and service development. It is meant to:

- Introduce the concept of social inclusion as a framework to support program and service planning and decision making processes.

- Assist program and service planners by providing tools to support discussion, planning, and action.

- Suggest sources of further information and support.

The *Everybody's Welcome* booklet has been developed for use by people planning recreation and parks services and programs in BC. The publication is intended to support program and service planners who want to understand more about the concept of social inclusion so they can work to create community facilities, programs, and services that are open and responsive to the needs of all members of the community.

This booklet can be used in a number of ways:

1 Program and service planners can use it as a source of inspiration and ideas.

2 The exercises and activities included in the appendix can be used to guide discussion and policy development by staff members, committee members, volunteers, and decision makers

3 The booklet can accompany a workshop or facilitated discussion on the topic of social inclusion.

ABOUT SOCIAL INCLUSION

Social inclusion has been talked about in many different ways around the world. The concept has been used in a variety of settings to support a range of population groups. This workbook is primarily based on the concept of social inclusion as it was developed by the Inclusive Cities Canada (ICC) project, a pan-Canadian partnership that works to support the creation and sustainability of inclusive communities.

The ICC project defines social inclusion as a means to strengthen the capacity of municipal governments "to create and sustain inclusive communities for the mutual benefit of all people, and to ensure that community voices of diversity are recognized as core Canadian ones." Working with community partners in five Canadian locations (Burlington, Ontario; Edmonton, Alberta; Greater Saint John, New Brunswick; Toronto, Ontario; and Vancouver/North Vancouver, BC), as well as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the project has included a number of activities such as the creation of civic panels, community focus group sessions with members of vulnerable population groups, and the publication of research and discussion papers.

The road to full inclusion in services and programs can be long, difficult, and sometimes painful, but those who have walked this path report that the rewards of the journey more than compensate for the challenges encountered.

We invite you to take the next steps of this exciting journey.

§2 A SENSE OF BELONGING

*Why Social Inclusion Is Important for Organizations
Delivering Programs and Services*

> *"Inclusion is messy. It is about constant vigilance, constant
> negotiation, learning to deal with diversity, questioning things
> we take for granted… It is not about bringing outsiders into
> the existing mainstream culture—it is about creating a new and
> negotiated culture together."*
>
> Shakir, 2004

WHAT IS SOCIAL INCLUSION?

The concept of social inclusion provides a framework for understanding
individual issues that are encountered on a day to day basis within
facilities and programs. Adopting a social inclusion framework can have
many short and long-term benefits. At the same time, we do not want
to diminish the very real challenges that may be associated with building
inclusive facilities, programs and services.

One definition summarizes many of the complex issues in building inclusive environments:

> *"Social inclusion is described as a feeling of belonging, acceptance and recognition and is intertwined with issues of diversity, equality, opportunity, and democratic participation. Inclusiveness is linked with social health and quality of life, and this in turn is closely linked with economic prosperity."*
>
> Edmonton Social Planning Council, 2004

There are many different approaches to the issue of social inclusion (see the Resources section for a listing of resources based on a variety of approaches). The approach used in this workbook is based on concepts developed out of the Inclusive Cities Project (described in more detail in the introduction). The ideas that provide a foundation for this approach are:

- Social inclusion is both a process and an outcome

- Identity takes many forms

- There are multiple dimensions of social inclusion

A PROCESS AND AN OUTCOME

We can view social inclusion as both a process (i.e. something that is undergoing constant development and is never quite finished) and an outcome (i.e. something that has clearly defined results).

When we speak about social inclusion as a process we recognize that the effort to create inclusive environments must become integrated into our organizational and decision making structures and that we must continually work to build and maintain understanding at all levels of the organization. As soon as one challenge is met, other opportunities and challenges will present themselves.

A social inclusion approach is not a panacea that will instantly solve all the problems you might encounter. Rather, it provides a useful framework that can support organizational assessment and planning, ongoing resolution of important issues as they arise, and evaluation processes.

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At the same time, organizations that wish to successfully incorporate a social inclusion perspective need to link their commitments to clearly defined outcomes. For example, an organization recognizes that members of a particular ethnic group have a particular need (e.g. exercise, access to information and referral, ESL training) that is not being addressed. The organization establishes clearly defined goals (e.g. participants, recruitment of staff and volunteers with language skills, staff training) and provides the resources necessary to achieve agreed upon targets.

Another organization identifies that people with disabilities are under-represented among its volunteer contingent. The organization develops a strategic plan that encompasses the issues of partnership building with disability organizations, identification of jobs suited to people with various disabilities, specialized training programs that incorporate issues of concern to people with disabilities, etc.

Each of these organizations can also take time to celebrate their successes and achievements while recognizing there will be more issues to address in the future.

IDENTITY TAKES MANY FORMS

We often talk about barriers that may exist for people based on any number of attributes and conditions. New immigrants, people with disabilities, young people, seniors, people living in poverty, and Aboriginal people are examples of groups which experience exclusion in a variety of contexts. One problem is that human beings do not fit neatly into one of these distinct categories. Identity has multiple dimensions. An individual may be made of a range of identities including immigration status, age, gender, sexual orientation, level of ability or disability, heritage, etc.

It is critical to base our action on an understanding that a single marker of identity does not tell the whole story. While we may be a member of a group identified as vulnerable we may also be a writer, artist, dancer, mathematician, teacher, elder, worker, student, or play any one

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of hundreds of thousands of roles. We may be tall, short, skinny or fat, smart, not so smart. We need to recognize our own strengths and vulnerability, as well as the strengths and vulnerability of others.

One project that has studied social inclusion issues extensively has concluded that inclusion is linked to "both the feeling and the reality of belonging." The feeling of belonging is based on working together to build "caring, cooperation, and trust" while the reality of belonging "comes through equity and fairness, social and economic justice, and cultural as well as spiritual respect." (Ontario Prevention Clearinghouse, 2005)

Another approach has identified a number of values that serve as a foundation for work on social inclusion:

- **SOCIAL JUSTICE** – Distribution of social and economic resources of society for the benefit of all people.

- **VALUING DIVERSITY** – Recognition and respect for the diversity of cultures, races, ethnicity, languages, religions, abilities, age, and sexual orientation; valuing contributions of both women and men to the social, economic, and cultural vitality of society.

- **OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHOICE** – Respect for the right of individuals to make choices that affect their lives.

- **ENTITLEMENT TO RIGHTS AND SERVICES** – Recognition of universal entitlement to rights and services as set out in human rights covenants, charters and legislation.

- **WORKING TOGETHER** – Building common interests and relationships as the basis for actions to achieve shared goals. (Health Canada, Atlantic Region, 2002)

THE MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS OF INCLUSION

As we recognize the complexities of identity, we also need to be aware that social inclusion takes many forms. The Inclusive Cities Canada project has articulated five dimensions of social inclusion which have been adapted for this workbook. Social inclusion involves:

DIVERSITY – How does your facility, program or service provide valued recognition and respond to diverse groups in the population? This dimension of inclusion involves a thorough consideration of access issues including physical access, cultural recognition, income levels, etc. Note that one of the approaches in developing inclusion "might include the creation of exclusive 'niches' in which individuals feel comfortable, in addition to the creation of communal space and opportunities." (Donnelly and Coakley, 2002)

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT – What opportunities exist for participants to develop their talents, skills and capacities? This approach recognizes that inclusion is related to participation and interaction. Supporting individuals in gaining access to facilities programs and services is an important accomplishment, but it is not the end point. Once people gain access it is equally important that they are able to fully participate in programs and services that support their development to the fullest extent of their abilities.

INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT – What is being done to promote active participation in governance and decision making? It is one thing to build programs and activities *for* a particular population group. It is quite another to ensure that programming is developed with full participation *by* the people affected. This involves participation from the population group on the board of directors, key decision making committees, and full involvement in program development and planning decisions.

This dimension of inclusion appreciates the value of "lived experience" as a starting point for the decision making process. An Inclusive Cities Canada paper suggests that "the need for a stronger connection

between community experience and policy development at the front end and throughout the policy and program planning process is becoming accepted wisdom." (Inclusive Cities Canada, 2004)

An important lesson was learned in one facility when a program for immigrant mothers had to be substantially changed when participants insisted that their children be allowed to attend with them. (Donnelly and Coakley, 2002) The program had been developed by decision makers without involving the people affected. To their credit, program organizers where open to making a significant change midstream based on the feedback of program participants.

RELATIONSHIP TO LIVING CONDITIONS – How does the facility, program or service recognize and address circumstances in the surrounding community? Important issues may include affordable housing, community safety and crime, transportation, access to child care, employment and unemployment. For example, creative solutions to transportation barriers may allow seniors to gain access to much needed recreation services. Volunteer training and support programs could be designed to develop skills, experience and references for groups such as youth or new immigrants seeking to enter the job market.

CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY SERVICES – How is the facility, program or service linked to other programs or services in the community? This dimension of social inclusion raises the issue of developing effective partnerships with organizations who may already be part of the lives of the people you want to serve. Partnership building with social service agencies (e.g. immigrant serving agency, disability support organization, seniors' information and referral service) or gathering places (e.g. Sikh Temple, seniors' centre, youth drop-in centre, Aboriginal Friendship Centre) is an important strategy that can increase the effectiveness of both organizations in addressing social inclusion issues.

[See Section 3, "Welcoming Everybody," for more information on these five dimensions of social inclusion, including issues for assessment, key questions and suggested activities.]

WHY SUPPORT SOCIAL INCLUSION?

Given the complex issues involved, it is important for those promoting a social inclusion perspective to articulate effective arguments that support and recognize the importance of social inclusion strategies.

One organization that has identified social inclusion as a priority issue has identified three reasons why facilities and programs should tackle these issues (411 Seniors Centre, 2005):

1   **EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY –** Organizations which deliver services better understand and are more responsive to all users who live within their catchment area which enables the organization to fulfill their mandates and key organizational objectives.

2   **THE VALUE OF DIVERSITY –** Our attempts to build diversity are based on "embracing the talents, experience, and knowledge of the wide variety of members, volunteers and staff who are part of the centre." Diversity makes us stronger by introducing new dimension of experience, knowledge and skills to our environment.

3   **HUMAN RIGHTS LEGISLATION –** Ability to comply with the BC Human Rights Code, Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the Canadian Human Rights Act which prohibits discrimination in employment and services.

In addition, inclusive facilities, services and programs have benefits that may extend far into the community. For example creating social inclusion can be linked to:

SOCIAL, HUMAN, AND ECONOMIC CAPITAL – In recent years there has been increasing recognition that economic development and security is linked to inclusive communities. Full participation in programs and services can have a series of tangible and intangible benefits. Benefits can include building skills, knowledge and relationships. Building trust and relationships is linked to the development of social capital, which in turn is linked to issues such as trust and the ability to take collective action on issues of common concern. (Torjam, 2004)

POPULATION HEALTH AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES – Increasing attention is being paid to social determinants of health. From this perspective social relationships are an important component of community health. Many studies have documented a relationship between equitable distribution of resources, social inclusion and health outcomes. One important goal from a population health perspective is to reduce inequities in health between population groups. (Labonte, 2004)

CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT – The importance of social inclusion has also been recognized by researchers exploring the crime prevention through social development. Many studies have documented the benefits of social inclusion in prevention of crimes such as vandalism, petty theft, etc. (Canadian Centre for Social Development, 1984)

The above listing provides only a brief overview of reasons why an investment in social inclusion will have benefits well beyond the immediate context of community recreation services.

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§3 WELCOMING EVERYBODY

Creating Your Inclusion Plan

Developing a plan for building social inclusion is an important part of making change within organizations. This section will provide an outline of issues to consider and a starting point for developing a comprehensive plan for inclusion.

As outlined, an effective plan will take into account both process and outcome elements. The plan will also incorporate the five dimensions of inclusion that have been identified as well as addressing the areas of infrastructure, superstructure, and procedures.*

Many workbooks and other resource materials address issues of inclusion for particular populations (see the *§ Resources* for a listing of some materials developed to address particular issues). The information in this section is intended to supplement those materials, not replace them. Although the specifics of approaches may vary, there are common issues and stages that are common to most processes of change. These include:

1 UNDERSTAND THE ISSUES – At the very beginning it is important to educate yourself about the issues. This may include working through the exercises in this booklet, accessing some of the resource materials listed here, and gathering data and statistics specific to your

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* *Infrastructure refers to affordable or free programs, timing and scheduling, and physical facilities; superstructure refers to policies, nature, and design of activities, respect for cultural mores, leadership, and opportunities for dialogue; procedures refers to consultation, social support, and awareness of rights. (Donnely and Harvey, 2006)*

community. You may want to talk with people from other organizations or community groups in order to build connections as well as understanding. Your growing understanding of the issues will serve as a foundation for the next stages of the work.

2   BUILD RECOGNITION OF THE NEED FOR CHANGE – Sharing information and insights with others involved in the organization is an essential next step. At this stage of development you may want to consider developing small one time activities that help to illustrate the issues. For example, you may want to consider inviting a speaker from a local disability organization, settlement services organization, or anti-poverty to group to speak about he challenges faces by members of the organization. Another excellent activity is to engage with a diversity trainer who can lead a facilitated discussion with people from all levels of the organization.

3   MAKE AN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT – At some point the board of directors or governing body will need to make an organizational commitment to social inclusion in order for the change to take place at all levels in the organization. Some people ask what they can do if there is not a full commitment at the governance level. The answer is to continue working on activities in the first two stages and to look for opportunities as they arise. For example, funding may become available to address one or more inclusion issues, or partnership opportunities may develop with an organization working with a vulnerable community. By taking advantage of these opportunities you are building awareness and addressing resistance in the organization.

4   DEVELOP A PLAN THAT INCLUDES ACHIEVABLE RESULTS – Once a level of commitment is achieved, it becomes essential to start documenting what will take place and how change will be accomplished. Your action plan can be used as a tool to explain to people in all parts of the organization what is going to change and how it is going to happen. By including achievable results in your plan you are outlining the benchmarks and timelines that will be used to create and assess change.

5   ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION – Ongoing evaluation of your change efforts is important because it can help guide decision making in

the long run. An effective evaluation and assessment strategy can also serve as an ongoing reminder of the organizational commitment that has been made as well as providing a framework for future activities.

6 **CELEBRATE SUCCESS –** Celebration is an essential component of any change process. Remember that food, music, dance, storytelling and other forms of expression are essential elements of a culture of inclusion. A multicultural potluck can do more to break down barriers of isolation than any number of reports and workshops. In one inner city community centre the decision was made to celebrate all holidays.

"In contrast to the current trend of downplaying cultural or religious practices in order not to offend others, Forest Hills now takes the position of observing them all. The politically correct 'Happy Holidays' is eschewed in favour of 'Merry Christmas' or 'Happy Chanukah'. With the approach of Ramadan, staff and students alike look out for the crescent moon so that everyone, both Muslim and non-Muslim, can wish each other Ramadan Mubarak, or a Happy Ramadan."

"The same applies for the Lunar New Year celebrated by Chinese students and others from East Asia. Forest Hills is not afraid of Christmas trees, menorahs, or acknowledgements of Buddha's birthday. They embrace these symbols as a way to open the lines of communication, rather than cutting them off. They ask: 'What is this holiday you are celebrating? What does it mean? What do you eat? What do you do?' Inevitably, people from very different parts of the world discover similarities in beliefs and practices, as well as distinctions, and through this dialogue, develop increased understanding and respect for each other."

IFS, 2006

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ADDRESSING MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS OF IDENTITY

In order to develop an effective social inclusion plan organizations must take into account the variety of issues related to each of the multiple dimensions of social inclusion. The information on the following pages is intended suggest key questions, assessment tools, and activities in each one of the five dimensions of social inclusion outlined in previous sections of this booklet.

The key questions are intended to stimulate brainstorming about how issues are experienced within the facility or program. They can be used as a starting point to understand what the problem is and how it is experienced by programmers and community members.

The assessment tools are intended to be used to identify concrete benchmarks that can be used to track progress as social inclusion issues are addressed within the organization. Assessment activities may include collecting statistics, conducting interviews or surveys to gather impressions and experiences, documenting existing policies and procedures, and reporting on other actions within the organization. They can be repeated over time as a means for discovering what lessons have been learned and to develop next steps and future activities.

The list of suggested activities in each section is intended to provide examples that have worked in a variety settings. As we commit to our work on social inclusion it's important to keep in mind the power of celebration. If social inclusion is about bringing diverse elements together in a meaningful way, then pot lucks, talent shows and other events can be an essential (and fun!) part of our work.

DIVERSITY

KEY QUESTIONS

Who are the current users of your facility or service? Who is missing?

What are the barriers that may prevent some users from accessing your facility or service? (Signage, access, information available in a variety of formats and languages, programs charges and costs)

What successes can the organizations point to that will help support the development of greater inclusion?

ASSESSMENT

Program users (registration, interviews with program staff, interviews with program users).

Demographics of catchment area (Statistics Canada, Municipal records).

Discussion with community partners.

ACTIVITIES

Where in the world were you born? *Post a map of the world in a public space. Ask participants to use a pin to indicate where they were born. After a month to six weeks, summarize and share the results.*

What languages do we speak? *Survey users on the number of languages that are spoken and what the primary language is that is spoken at home.*

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Accessibility tour. *Invite a person who uses a wheelchair to guide you through your facility indicating common trouble-areas (if found). Do the tour with people from other disability groups (vision, hearing, cognitive impairment). Report to board members or, better still, take them on a tour to show them the areas that could be improved for increased accessibility.*

Guest Speaker. *Invite a representative from a local anti-poverty organization or social services organization to speak to the board, staff and volunteers about poverty and social inclusion issues.*

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

KEY QUESTIONS

Is there a culture of inclusion in your facility or program?

Are staff members properly trained to support inclusion of all people? Does the training include conflict resolution and problem solving?

Does everybody feel included?

ASSESSMENT

Availability of education and training programs for board, staff and volunteers on social inclusion issues

Policies that support inclusion at the level of infrastructure and superstructure (Donnely and Harvey, 2006).

Some issues to consider (Infrastructure)

- Fee structure
- Location and transportation
- Scheduling
- Welcoming facilities
- Communications
- Security and safety

Some issues to consider (Superstructure):

- Equity and harassment policies
- Culturally sensitive activities
- Active outreach
- Inclusive language
- Open dialogue that invites individuals and the community to overcome barriers together.

ACTIVITIES

Social Inclusion Survey *(See sample in* Excercises + Activities *appendix.)*

Have a celebration! (Pot Luck Dinner, Talent Show, Story Telling Event)

INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT

KEY QUESTIONS

Are members of key population groups involved with the board of directors and committees?

How are members of key population groups involved in program development and planning decisions?

Are there ongoing opportunities for participants to be involved in assessing programs and recommending improvements?

ASSESSMENT

Board membership and involvement

Program evaluations report that participants felt that their needs were addressed

Community questionnaire or survey; focus group

ACTIVITIES

Build a partnership *with other community organizations (e.g. non-profits, volunteer centre, social services) to organize and conduct skill training sessions on governance issues for members of under-represented groups.*

Build relationships *with community organizations serving under-represented populations; recruit community members to sit on committees*

Hold a focus group *to conduct a needs assessment and/or inform program planning*

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RELATIONSHIP TO LIVING CONDITIONS

KEY QUESTIONS

How well do program planning activities take into account community issues such as transportation, safety, access to child care, income level?

Do events and celebrations recognize all participants (e.g. is food available that fits with a variety of diets, are people from a variety of skill levels, ages, and backgrounds able to participate?)

Are there opportunities for sharing knowledge, customs, and experience?

ASSESSMENT

Research to identify community issues

Discussion with community agencies

Community survey

ACTIVITIES

Open house – *invite community members to come and enjoy your facilities. Be sure to include on your invitation list members of target groups you feel may be under represented. Ask for their thoughts on how your facility or program might be more heavily used by member of their community.*

Presentations – *Develop a presentation on your program and take it out to meetings in your community. Use the presentation as a starting point for discussion and dialogue. If you live near a community college inquire if they have an Audio Visual program and if any students may be able to help you with your presentation as a class assignment.*

Have a celebration! – *Ask members of various communities if they are willing to share details of their celebrations.*

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CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY SERVICES

KEY QUESTIONS

Are programs and services integrated with other community supports?

Are there gaps in services and supports that need to be addressed?

Have relationships and partnerships been developed with key organizations?

ASSESSMENT

Participation in an inter-agency council, social planning body, or other ongoing community partnership that includes a variety of representatives and works to build comprehensive solutions to community problems.

Identify key issues and work on successful partnerships.

Build personal relationships with individuals from a variety of communities.

ACTIVITIES

Speakers' Series – *Invite representatives from community organizations to give a talk on issues of importance to the community.*

Directory of Services (or referral services) – *Ensure that staff and volunteers have current information about the range of agencies and organizations within the community.*

Brainstorm possible community partners *and develop strategies for building relationships. Steps may start with sharing coffee or other snacks or may include larger size projects.*

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REFERENCES

[See §4 Resources for details on how to access these publications.]

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§4 RESOURCES

There are many, many resources on social inclusion published by a variety groups from around the world. The resources listed in this booklet are not meant to be comprehensive. Rather, these are key resources that can provide an orientation to the topic area. Many of these resources were selected because they provide useful links to further information.

We have divided the resources into sections:

- Social Inclusion in Recreation and Community Centres

- Social Inclusion: Tool Kits and Manuals

- Social Inclusion: General Resources – Canada

- Social Inclusion: General Resources – International

SOCIAL INCLUSION IN RECREATION AND COMMUNITY CENTRES

Building Inclusive Communities

THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SETTLEMENTS AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES

<inclusion.ifs.network.org/role>

One of the most potent strategies for promoting inclusion involves facilitating voluntary community encounters in settings that support respectful interaction. This website includes extensive background information, case studies, and resources for those working in Neighbourhood Houses and Settlement Houses.

Everybody Gets to Play™ Tool Kit

CANADIAN PARKS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION

<www.cpra.ca/e/initiatives/everybody.htm>

Recreation is essential for building strong bodies, healthy minds, self esteem, social skills, and community values, but many kids in low-income families do not have the chance to participate. The *Everybody Gets to Play™* initiative is designed to help recreation practitioners and volunteers mobilize the resources already available in their community by providing research and facts about poverty in Canada, partnership building tools, skill building and awareness building workshops, and success stories.

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Impact: Feature Issue on Social Inclusion through Recreation for Persons with Disabilities

INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY INTEGRATION, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

<umn.edu/products/impact/162>

Recreation programs have a number of characteristics that make them ideal places for individuals with disabilities to experience social inclusion and friendship building. The articles in this issue describe those characteristics, strategies for making use of them to enhance the opportunities for meaningful and ongoing social connections between participants with and without disabilities, and barriers to recreation participation that must be addressed.

Leisure Access: Enhancing Recreation Opportunities for Those Living in Poverty

KAMLOOPS WOMEN'S ACTION PROJECT

<www.lin.ca/lin/resource/html/al023%5B0%5D.htm>

This workbook is based on the experiences of the people and stakeholders involved in the Kamloops Women's Action Project (KWAP). It was developed as a practical guide for those working in the health and recreation field that are committed to enhancing recreation service provision for those living in poverty and for community members interested in gaining increased access to recreation opportunities.

The Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Bisexual (LGTB) Generations Project

411 SENIORS CENTRE SOCIETY

<www.vcn.bc.ca/411/Contentpages/lgtb.htm>

The Generations Project recognized that significant numbers of LGTB people are ageing and older. Many experience invisibility within LGTB communities, seniors serving agencies, and care facilities. This invisibility, along with other barriers to accessing inclusive and sensitive resources, affects the health and well-being of this population.

Making Space of Everyone: Accessible, Inclusive and Safe Communities

SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH COUNCIL OF BC

<www.sparc.bc.ca/msfe_booklet>

This booklet focuses on issues of concern to people with mobility, sensory, and cognitive impairments. It contains a set of minimum guidelines and best practices for design, policy, and education. We encourage all communities to meet and exceed standards described within.

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The Role of Recreation in Promoting Social Inclusion

DONNELLY, PETER, AND JAY COAKLEY, LAIDLAW FOUNDATION

<www.voicesforchildren.ca/documents/laidlaw/donnelly.pdf>

In considering 'the role of recreation in promoting social inclusion', the benefits of participation are a clear starting point. However, such benefits are not automatic, and it is necessary to delineate the circumstances under which social inclusion might be promoted by recreation programs.

SOCIAL INCLUSION: TOOL KITS AND MANUALS

Closing the Distance: Social and Economic Inclusion Initiative

SOCIAL PLANNING NETWORK OF ONTARIO

<www.closingthedistance.ca>

Late in 2002, the Social Planning Network of Ontario launched a number of local projects under the Social and Economic Inclusion Initiative. These projects were designed to help "close the distance" between certain marginalized populations in these local areas and mainstream community life. This website provides tools and analysis based on the experiences of five communities' experiences with a variety of social and economic inclusion issues. The communities were Kingston (homelessness), Peel-Halton (health and social services), Central West Ontario (youth and seniors in rural and urban communities), Sudbury (Aboriginal and Francophone children and local schools), and Thunder Bay (isolated youth).

Count Me In! Tools for an Inclusive Ontario

ONTARIO PREVENTION CLEARINGHOUSE

<www.count-me-in.ca>

Count Me In! was, in part, designed to create a Canadian definition and framework for inclusion as the basis for a new approach to health promotion. This approach recognizes that individuals, families, and communities benefit from the feeling and the reality of belonging.

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Cultural Diversity in Organizations and Business: Gaining a Competitive Advantage

ASSOCIATION OF MULTICULTURAL SOCIETIES AND SERVICE AGENCIES OF BC (AMSSA)

<www.amssa.org/pdf/diversity2000.pdf>

This primer is intended to serve as a guide for organizations—whether business, not-for-profit, or institutions that desire to become more effective in today's fast changing markets and demographics. It is for organizations that need help in their process of organizational change to value and manage cultural diversity.

An Inclusion Lens: Workbook for Looking at Social and Economic Exclusion and Inclusion

HEALTH CANADA, POPULATION AND PUBLIC HEALTH BRANCH, ATLANTIC REGION

<www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/canada/regions/atlantic/pdf/inclusion_lens-E.pdf>

A tool for analyzing legislation, policies, programs and practices to determine whether they promote the social and economic inclusion of individuals, families, and communities.

Turning the Tide: Why Acting on Inequity Can Help Reduce Chronic Disease

HEALTH CANADA, POPULATION AND PUBLIC HEALTH BRANCH, ATLANTIC REGION

<www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/canada/regions/atlantic/Publications/Tides_of_change/Tool_kit.pdf>

The tool kit contains a variety of hands-on resources for use in presentations and group discussions. It includes handouts, overheads, a Power Point presentation, a presentation outline, tips for presenters, and a CD with all of the materials in pdf format.

Many Worlds, One Community: A New Westminster Toolkit for Inclusion

PACIFIC IMMIGRANT RESOURCES SOCIETY

(Not available online—email info@pirs.bc.ca)

This Tool Kit came into being after extensive work done in the community of New Westminster demonstrated a need for a local, community-based response to racism. The purpose of the Tool Kit is to provide practical strategies for the Community of New Westminster in working towards building an inclusive community. There are a multitude of resources on the themes of anti-racism and diversity.

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Simple Solutions: How NGOs can Eliminate Barriers to Volunteering by People with Disabilities

PEI COUNCIL OF THE DISABLED

<www.kdc-cdc.ca/attachments/manual_pei_council_eng.pdf>

The goal of this manual is to help NGOs involve more people with disabilities as volunteers by showing them how to reduce or eliminate barriers. Two factors make this particularly important. First, the rate of disability rises with age and the Canadian population as a whole is aging. Second, the level of volunteer participation is falling in most provinces. This suggests that NGOs need to be prepared to involve more volunteers with disabilities in the future.

SOCIAL INCLUSION: GENERAL RESOURCES – CANADA

A New Way of Thinking? Towards a Vision of Social Inclusion (Ottawa, 2001)

CANADIAN COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

<www.ccsd.ca/subsites/inclusion>

Papers from a conference held in 2001. Social inclusion requires policy-makers to move outside of their silos of income, race, gender and ability, to recognize that these factors often overlap in a variety of ways to exclude people.

Combating the Social Exclusion of At-Risk Groups (Meyer Burstein, 2005)

POLICY RESEARCH INITIATIVE: NEW APPROACHES FOR ADDRESSING POVERTY AND INCLUSION

<policyresearch.gc.ca/doclib/Pri-Burstein-e.pdf>

Commissioned by the PRI in the context of its project, New Approaches for Addressing Poverty and Exclusion. The main focus is on policy, particularly on new approaches making an appearance in North America and Europe.

Crime Prevention through Social Development: A Discussion Paper for Social Policy Makers and Practitioners

CANADIAN CENTRE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (CCSD)

<www.ccsd.ca/cpsd/ccsd/pdf/cptsd1984.pdf>

This booklet is intended to stimulate discussion and action on how crime could be reduced by targeted social development programs, such as those aimed at improving the family, housing, school or work experiences of disadvantaged Canadians.

Inclusive Cities Canada: A Cross Canada Civic Initiative

INCLUSIVE CITIES CANADA (ICC)

<www.inclusivecities.ca>

ICC is a unique partnership of community leaders and elected municipal politicians working collaboratively to enhance social inclusion across Canada. The goals are to strengthen the capacity of cities to create and sustain inclusive communities for the mutual benefit of all people, and to ensure that community voices of diversity are recognized as core Canadian ones.

Social and economic inclusion: The extent to which people are included and can participate in our society's social and economic life

EDMONTON SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL (THE FACTIVIST, WINTER 2004)

<www.edmspc.com/Uploads/factivist%20winter%202004.pdf>

Adopting social inclusion as a societal principle requires that we acknowledge in policy and practice that our success is measured through each citizen's experiences in our community. Therefore it evolves past traditional notions of social justice where the focus is on obligation and charity, or on the right versus left policy debates, and moves us towards the creation of systemic tools that purposefully adapt to individual needs.

Social Inclusion and Community Economic Development (Literature Review)

PAN-CANADIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT LEARNING NETWORK (CANADIAN CED NETWORK)

<www.ccednet-rcdec.ca/en/docs/pccdln/PCCDLN_20040803_LitReview-L.pdf>

This document reviews literature on social inclusion and its related concepts, and examines the strengths of integrated, community-based responses such as community economic development to promote social inclusion. A cross section of examples of community-level initiatives for improving social inclusion are briefly presented, illustrating various principles that are fundamental to successful, community-based social inclusion strategies.

Social Inclusion and Community Economic Development – Profile of Effective Practice (Survey Report)

PAN-CANADIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT LEARNING NETWORK (CANADIAN CED NETWORK)

<www.ccednet-rcdec.ca/en/docs/pccdln/PCCDLN_SurveyRpt-E.pdf>

This document presents the results of a survey of 78 community-based initiatives that examined their comprehensive efforts through a social inclusion lens. The Pan-Canadian Community Development Learning Network seeks to promote learning about and examine how integrated, community-based initiatives contribute to social inclusion. The project facilitates peer learning and develops evidence-based research to strengthen integrated models of service delivery that build assets, skills, learning, social development and economic self-sufficiency opportunities relevant to local community conditions.

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Social Inclusion as a Determinant of Health

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH CONFERENCE (EDWARD GALABUZI AND RONALD LABONTE, 2002)

<www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ph-sp/phdd/overview_implications/03_inclusion.html>

Social exclusion describes the structures and dynamic processes of inequality among groups in society. Social exclusion refers to the inability of groups or individuals to participate fully in Canadian life due to structural inequalities in access to social, economic, political and cultural resources. These inequalities arise out of oppression related to race, class, gender, disability, sexual orientation, immigrant status and religion.

Social Inclusion as Policy: Challenges and Opportunities

POLICY RESEARCH INITIATIVE, GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

<policyresearch.gc.ca/page.asp?pagenm=v7n2_art_13>

How is the concept of social inclusion evolving in policy terms? Are we working from a common understanding or "definition" of the notion? What does social inclusion mean for issues like poverty, and the growing racialization of poverty? What theories and practices are most relevant in developing a made-in-Canada version of social inclusion that is policy relevant?

Social Inclusion/Exclusion and Health: Dancing the Dialectic

"HEALTH PROMOTION INTERNATIONAL." RONALD LABONTE, MARCH 2004. V.19 (1).

ALSO IN "SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH: CANADIAN PERSPECTIVES," RAPHAEL, DENNIS (ED.), CANADIAN SCHOLARS PRESS INC.

<heapro.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/reprint/19/1/115>

The latest construct being wielded by health practitioners, researchers and policy-makers are the twinned concepts of social inclusion and social exclusion. These represent a conceptual sophistication over social capital and social cohesion. Like their predecessors, however, there are risks in their adoption without a critical examination of the premises that underpin them. For example, how can one 'include' people and groups into structured systems that have systematically 'excluded' them in the first place? The cautions expressed in this article do not dissuade use of the concepts. Their utility, however, particularly at a time when not only inequalities, but also their rate of growth, is increasing, requires careful questioning.

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Social Inclusion: The Role of School Boards

CANADIAN SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATION

<www.cdnsba.org/pdf/socinclusion_f.pdf>

Expands and informs discussion and debate around the issue of child and family poverty and its impact on school success. By offering a broader framework for school boards to examine their policies and procedures, it is hoped that constructive action will be facilitated.

Working Paper Series on Social Inclusion

LAIDLAW FOUNDATION

<www.laidlawfdn.org/cms/page1069.cfm>

The Laidlaw Foundation commissioned a series of working papers to examine social inclusion from a number of perspectives. Although the authors approach the topic from different starting points and emphasize different aspects of exclusion and inclusion, there are important common threads and conclusions. The working papers draw attention to the new realities and new understandings that must be brought to bear on the development of social policy and the creation of a just and healthy society.

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SOCIAL INCLUSION: GENERAL RESOURCES – INTERNATIONAL

National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC)

THE GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR CHILD AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (GUCCHD)

<gucchd.georgetown.edu/nccc>

The mission of the National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC) is to increase the capacity of health and mental health programs to design implement, and evaluate culturally and linguistically competent service delivery systems.

Social Exclusion

THE COUNTRYSIDE AGENCY (CHELTENHAM, ENGLAND)

<www.countryside.gov.uk/EssentialServices/Social_Inclusion/index.asp>

Ask most people about social exclusion and the likelihood is that they will describe inner cities, run down housing estates, boarded-up shops, vandalism and crime. They will not think of green fields, beautiful countryside and pretty villages. Yet social exclusion exists in both settings.
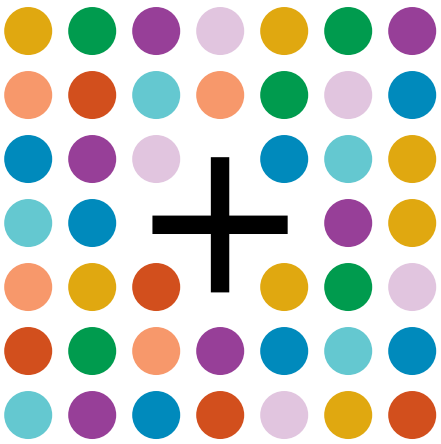
The Social Inclusion Website

SOCIAL INCLUSION INITIATIVE (SOUTH AUSTRALIA, AUSTRALIA)

<www.socialinclusion.sa.gov.au/site/page.cfm>

The Social Inclusion Initiative is about finding ways to make sure everyone who lives in South Australia has the opportunity to access all that our society offers; it is about helping people live fulfilling lives and to feel a part of the community.

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Exercises

+ Activities

INTRODUCTION

The exercises on the following pages are intended to assist program developers in addressing common issues involved in supporting the creation of socially inclusive environments. Although no two situations are alike, the commonality among these real life examples is that the solution was found in creative thinking, consultation, and communication. These solutions also helped support the development of a new culture of inclusion based on the principles outlined earlier in this booklet.

The questions that follow each example are intended to provide a framework for understanding that can be used as a basis for developing effective solutions. The background information outlines of how these situations were actually resolved.

These examples are intended as conversation starters only. Please feel free to add to them or utilize the framework to address the unique situations you will encounter through your own experiences. You may also wish to look at the resources section for more information.

The Social Inclusion Check List following these exercises provides a framework for developing activities suitable to the stage of development of your organization. If you are just getting starting or are facing resistance or misunderstanding you may want to look at the early level activities that provide a foundation for more intensive activities at the organizational level. As support within the organization develops you can look to later stages for ideas and inspiration.

Remember that at all stages it is important to celebrate and appreciate your efforts to build a more inclusive community. Don't forget to take the time to acknowledge your efforts no matter how massive the remaining tasks seem.

EXERCISE #1

PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIAL INCLUSION

Three social inclusion scenarios are provided in the pages that follow. Each describes a real problem faced by an organization in BC. The goal of these exercises is to demonstrate how the principles and practices presented in the *Everybody's Welcome* booklet can be applied to real world programming challenges.

Appropriate for groups of 2–10 participants.

Instructions

1 As individuals, read each scenario, write your answers to the questions in the space provided (use extra paper if necessary).

2 Together, read the background and solution. Discuss.

3 As a group, discuss the discussion questions.

Scenario #1

FINDING A PLACE FOR YOUTH IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Youth living in the Columbia Basin area of British Columbia face many challenges. The area is renowned for its physical beauty and unique history. However, in recent years, economic changes have meant that there are fewer opportunities for young people. Many have chosen to leave in order to pursue education or other opportunities. Rarely do they return to their home communities to live. For many of the young people that choose to remain, few economic opportunities exist for work apart from minimum wage jobs. In addition, little opportunity exists for youth to get together to speak about their experiences.

What issues are involved in this situation?

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_____

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Who would you talk to in order to understand more about this situation?

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What other steps would you take?

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What indicators would show you had successfully addressed the identified issues?

_____

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Scenario #2

CREATING CONNECTIONS FOR SENIORS

For seniors who don't drive, getting around in North Vancouver can take a while. While there are few accessible bus routes, many seniors find it difficult to get from their home to transit stops. All too often, elderly men and women become home-bound and isolated. The resulting feelings of exclusion can be overwhelming and can contribute to depression and other mental health concerns. *(See p. 7 for background and solutions.)*

What issues are involved in this situation?

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Who would you talk to in order to understand more about this situation?

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What other steps would you take?

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What indicators would show you had successfully addressed the identified issues?

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Scenario #3

RESPECTING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

A program coordinator at a community recreation centre in Victoria realizes that there are a large number of women from Muslim countries living in the immediate area who do not regularly make use of the facility. Curious, she consults with people that she knows who are familiar with the Muslim community and learns that many of women who follow Islam would not likely consider taking part in an exercise program at the centre. They are concerned that in order to be comfortable they must take off their veils and might feel extremely uncomfortable taking part in exercises within a building that is open to the public and has men and women doing activity in the same classes or facilities. *(See p. 8 for background and solutions.)*

What issues are involved in this situation?

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Who would you talk to in order to understand more about this situation?

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What other steps would you take?

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What indicators would show you had successfully addressed the identified issues?

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BACKGROUND + SOLUTIONS

Scenario #1: Finding a Place for Youth in Rural Communities

The Columbia Basin Trust Youth Advisory Committee is an advisory committee that provides input on youth involvement and youth issues to the Columbia Basin Trust. The main purpose of the committee is:

- To provide a youth voice and perspective to CBT's programs
- To build a greater network amongst young people across the Basin in order to share ideas and build Basin culture and identity
- To promote youth leadership and skill development
- To address youth issues through creative projects and programs

Some of the initiatives started by the Youth Advisory Committee:

- Columbia Basin Youth Grants – a new youth projects granting program
- Youth Media Project – Scratch Magazine and www.scratchonline.ca
- Basin Youth in Communities Funding - grants for youth community projects
- Youth Action Forum – a gathering of youth to build skills and raise our voices. Currently planning a forum on environment & water issues for 2004!
- Youth Participation Workshop – a workshop for adults on breaking down the generation gap.

Youth Advisory Committee members have also been active in representing Basin youth at a number of conferences in BC, Canada and Washington State.

Criteria for applicants:

- 15–29 years
- Motivated to initiate changes for youth in the Basin
- Live in the Columbia Basin (CBT area)
- Have access to email regularly
- Commit to attending meetings and conference calls, and participating in sub-committee activities
- Work well in a group
- Be creative and enthusiastic
- Willing to share information with other youth in your community

Being part of the Youth Advisory Committee is a big commitment, but it is a great opportunity to develop leadership skills while putting ideas into action. Childcare subsidies are available for young parents.

Source: Columbia Basin Youth Advisory Committee, Columbia Basin Trust (undated), found at: <www.scratchonline.ca/pdf/backgrounder.pdf>

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

What are the links between economic exclusion and social exclusion?

Are similar issues faced by youth and seniors (e.g. transportation, access to information) in rural areas?

How could youth and seniors work together to address these issues?

Who would you talk to in order to establish a Youth Advisory Council?

What could be the mandate of a Youth Advisory Council in your area?

Scenario #2: Creating Connections for Seniors

Hilary King of the North Shore/Coast Garibaldi Health Region works on a project called Creative Connections for Seniors. It has been a process of community engagement that has involved seniors themselves, service providers, caregivers and local businesses. In some communities a Seniors Health Survey was conducted to identify issues that were important to enable seniors to stay as independent as possible in their own homes for as long as possible.

Hilary was at her local Honda dealer, when she thought of connecting local seniors who needed a way to get around the city, with the shuttle service the dealership provided. A partnership was formed and the dealership now provides a weekly shuttle service for the seniors of a residence in North Vancouver to enable them to get out into the community for weekly shopping trips. A local business, the Honda dealership, has the opportunity to contribute to the community, and local seniors have the chance to get out into the community.

Source: Vancouver / North Vancouver City: Community Voices, Perspectives and Priorities, Inclusive Cities Canada (November, 2005)

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

Are seniors able to find transportation to your program or facility?

What creative partnership opportunities exist in your community to assist in addressing isolation among seniors?

How do the various dimensions of identity affect seniors with regard to issues of exclusion and isolation? What are the issues that are unique to seniors who have recently immigrated, have a disability, or are gay, lesbian, transgendered or transsexual?

How do issues of community crime and safety affect seniors?

Scenario #3: Respecting Cultural Diversity

The solution in this case was to arrange for instructors from the recreation centre to conduct an exercise class for Muslim women off site. The group was able to find a safe, secure, and private location where women could freely take part in exercise classes without fear that they would be interrupted and not compromise cultural values. The creation of women's only swim times have also been successful to support women being active.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

Discuss the statement: "Inclusion might include the creation of exclusive "niches" in which individuals feel comfortable, in addition to the creation of communal space and opportunities."

What is the balance between privacy and participation?

Does everybody who uses your program of facility feel a sense of safety and belonging?

How are different spiritual traditions honoured and respected in your facility?

EXERCISE #2
SOCIAL INCLUSION CHECK LIST

This checklist is a framework of ideas for organizations and program developers to use to add social inclusion as an aspect of planning and program design. The checklist is divided into six conceptual components that when completed should form a complete foundation for social inclusion in your organization. The checklist leaves room to add items appropriate to your organization's unique circumstances.

Understand the issue
- ❑ Collect information on social inclusion
- ❑ Collect information on your neighbourhood, community or catchment area (demographic information)
- ❑ Use mapping and evaluation to understanding how the issue affects your facility
- ❑ Consult with groups affected (both within and outside your facility)
- ❑ _____
- ❑ _____

Build recognition of the need for change
- ❑ Develop a clear vision for change
- ❑ Get buy-in and support from decision makers
- ❑ Educate staff and users
- ❑ Build relationships with funders and other supporters
- ❑ _____
- ❑ _____

Make an organizational commitment
- ❑ Confirm a vision for change and include in statements of purpose, mission and vision
- ❑ Establish engagement processes to ensure ongoing involvement of affected groups
- ❑ Establish a committee (or assign authorities to existing committee)
- ❑ Review decision making structures and develop recommendations for change
- ❑ Review of policies and procedures (e.g. Anti-harassment policy) and develop recommendations for change
- ❑ _____
- ❑ _____

Develop an action plan that includes achievable results

- ❑ Ongoing training and support for staff, volunteers and members
- ❑ Review of volunteer recruitment, orientation and training program
- ❑ Engagement with community partners
- ❑ Involvement in identified areas
- ❑ Plan for short-term wins and "low hanging fruit"

Ongoing assessment and evaluation

- ❑ Clear and easily understood benchmarks
- ❑ Demonstrate that change is occurring
- ❑ Communicate to members, users, decision makers, and general public
- ❑ Establish future goals
- ❑ _____
- ❑ _____

Celebrate success

- ❑ Multicultural pot-luck dinner
- ❑ Share music, stories and laughter through gatherings, talent shows, etc.
- ❑ Ask elders to share neighbourhood stories, memories and artifacts
- ❑ _____
- ❑ _____

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

The *Everybody's Welcome!* booklet is a first attempt to distill lessons and learning from the Inclusive Cities Canada project into a format that will be useful to people working on issues related to social inclusion. As we continue to develop this resource we are very interested in hearing from you about your experiences so that we can continue to provide a useful and practical resource guide.

Please take a moment to answer the following questions and to provide us with any other feedback you might have.

1   What did you like most about the *Everybody's Welcome!* workbook?

_____

_____

_____

2   What did you like the least about the *Everybody's Welcome!* workbook?

_____

_____

_____

3   Is there anything missing that should be included in future editions of the workbook?

_____

_____

_____

4   Do you have any success stories that you would like to share?

_____

_____

_____

5   Have you visited the *Everybody's Welcome!* website?   ___ Yes   ___ No

6   Do you have any suggestions for improvement of the *Everybody's Welcome!* website?

_____

_____

_____

7   Other comments?

_____

_____

_____

Please send your responses by email to <jsands@sparc.bc.ca>, fax to (604) 736-8697, or mail to Jim Sands, 201–221 E. 10th Ave., Vancouver, BC V5T 4V3.