

Creating a More Inclusive Voluntary Sector: A Focus on Diversity.



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John Howard Society
of Greater Moncton Inc.

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The opinions in this book do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Canadian Heritage.



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BACKGROUND:

New Brunswick is a multicultural society and is becoming even more culturally diverse. Today, we are seeing people from many cultures and nationalities choosing to make New Brunswick their home. Of course, many ethnic and visible minorities are not new immigrants but have been in New Brunswick for many generations. There is a rich and cherished history of diversity in our province.

New Brunswick is also experiencing a tremendous growth in the number of new voluntary organizations being created to serve the increasing needs in our society. The very nature of the non-profit organization includes involvement of volunteers on Boards of Directors, and to help the agency carry out essential programs and services.

Research has shown that the number of new volunteers is declining. We know that volunteering is one of the best ways to involve and engage people in the community. It can also be one of the best ways for a community agency to learn about different cultures, language, history, and traditions of the people we serve.

In essence, in order to be fully inclusive and provide equal opportunity to access and participation in the community, the voluntary sector in New Brunswick must look at its policies, programs, and practices, through a new lens.

The new view would be one of social inclusion, and this can only be achieved through education, public dialogue, and opportunities to learn and understand multiculturalism in New Brunswick.

PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDEBOOK:

Given New Brunswick's multicultural environment, a voluntary sector that reflects the ethnicity of its communities will greatly increase the effectiveness of non-profit organizations that serve all sectors of the population.

To this end PolicyLink New Brunswick, in collaboration with the John Howard Society of Greater Moncton Inc., have developed this guidebook.

This guide has been designed for use by organizations in the voluntary sector and the multicultural community. It is our hope that this guidebook will be used by both the multi-cultural community and the voluntary sector as a resource to help increase the level of participation of people from all of the diverse cultures that are represented in New Brunswick as active volunteers in our community.

It is meant to be an introduction to the concept of social inclusion and as such, organizations that are committed to diversity will need to explore the many websites and publications that are presented in this guide to complete the transformation into a more inclusive voluntary sector organization.

This guidebook should serve as a self-help tool for both the voluntary sector and the multicultural community to:

Voluntary Sector

- look beyond perceived barriers to understand and value the special skills, attributes and experiences that people from ethnic minorities can bring to volunteer programs.
- adjust and adapt their policies and volunteer management techniques to reflect a diverse volunteer workforce.
- avoid the trap of recruiting minority volunteers without understanding their needs, backgrounds, and skills.

Multicultural Sector

- help the multi-cultural community to see the opportunities in the voluntary sector.
- de-mystify volunteering in New Brunswick for the multi-cultural community.
- help voluntary organizations and the multi-cultural community to find resources and contact information to support their efforts to engage and participate in New Brunswick.

ARE YOU READY?

The simple checklist below can be useful for voluntary sector organizations to use to determine how diversity-friendly they are.

Checklist

- Do your brochures, pamphlets and newsletters depict a multicultural organization through language, graphics, and/or messaging?
- Have you every invited someone from the multicultural community to provide feedback on how your organization might be perceived by people from within that community?
- Is your volunteer base representative of the people your agency serves?
- Does your organization have a diversity policy?
- Do you provide cross-cultural or diversity training for staff and volunteers?
- Are you in regular contact with local ethnic groups? Do you have local ethnic groups on your mailing list, and are they invited to your functions?
- Have you discussed different concepts and practices of volunteering with representatives of various ethnic groups?
- Are you aware of the settlement programs in your community (check with your local Department of Citizenship and Immigration)?

If you checked off only a few of the items in this checklist, your agency may not be perceived as being a diversity-friendly place to people of the many minority groups in New Brunswick.

Welcoming diversity in your volunteer workforce can:

- Increase the pool from which to recruit new volunteers.
- Broaden the diversity of ideas and experiences of volunteers, staff, and clients which can result in more innovative problem-solving experiences.
- Extend agencies reach deeper into community.
- Increase level of support and involvement from a greater segment of the population.
- Enrich existing programs and services through the skills, knowledge and experiences of a more diverse worldview.
- Discover opportunities for new programs and services to meet identified needs.

Incorporating some of the simple strategies that follow may increase your capacity to recruit and maintain volunteers that are representative of the multi-cultural groups in the province.

Most of the strategies require little or no expense, and your organization can benefit in many ways.

GETTING STARTED

A healthy system of community participation exists in most cultures. In Canada, the highly structured and formal system of volunteering could be confusing to people with a different cultural experience.

Before you begin recruiting new volunteers, take a few minutes and write down your responses to these questions. This exercise may help you to be more strategic and increase your chances of a successful recruitment campaign.

- ✓ **What can your agency offer to volunteers from the multi-cultural community?**
 - Opportunities to learn or enhance English speaking and writing skills.
 - Develop new social networks.
 - Learn more about the community and our culture.
 - Provide an outlet for full participation in the community as a new citizen.

- ✓ **What language abilities do you need?**
 - Remember that language difficulties do not reflect intelligence level or potential value to your organization.
 - Consider pairing a new volunteer with an existing one to overcome language barriers.
 - Phasing in new volunteers through different levels of activities can provide opportunities to increase their English or French language skills while learning about your organization.

- ✓ **What skills and experiences do you want to recruit within the multi-cultural community?**
 - Are you looking for leadership, mentors, supporters, people with specific skill sets and experiences?

- ✓ **How will you communicate with potential volunteers from the multi-cultural community?**
 - What is the current relationship with the multi-cultural community?
 - Do you need to review internal diversity policies?
 - Do you need to learn more about the diverse volunteering traditions and customs before approaching members of the multi-cultural community?
 - What opportunities are there for diversity training?
 - Review the checklist for more ideas
 - Consider that misunderstandings can arise because of language, syntax, facial expressions, tone of voice or eye contact.

Now You Are Ready!

Now that you have taken the time to prepare yourself and your organization to experience a more diverse volunteer workforce, we have prepared the following suggestions for the recruitment, orientation, training, placement, and support of new volunteers from the multi-cultural community.

The following suggestions have been developed using resources found in an extensive internet search, and, two focus groups of members of the voluntary sector and the multicultural community. A comprehensive list of additional resources and contact information has been included in this guidebook.

Recruitment

“The Voluntary sector needs to make its presence known clearly to the multi-cultural community.”

Here are some ideas for recruiting from within the multi-cultural community:

1. Develop networks within the multi-cultural community by attending a variety of ethno-cultural activities.
2. Encourage existing agency volunteers to participate as well, and promote personal contact through one-on-one introductions.
3. Market directly to the multi-cultural community and be sure that promotional materials are diversity-friendly.
4. Organize a welcoming program for newcomers to encourage them to get involved in volunteer work.
5. Talk about the importance of volunteering in Canada and be prepared to discuss the different cultural understandings of the word volunteering (in some countries “volunteering” means “military duty”).
6. Be clear about the flexibility of volunteer opportunities in your organization.
7. Invite leaders, or key people, from the multi-cultural community to become involved in your agency – it could encourage others to follow.
8. Invite people from other cultures to become involved as Board Members.

“Encourage an exchange between new and existing volunteers to share the skills and experiences, interests, hobbies, and worldviews, that they each bring to the organization.”

Orientation

Once you have selected your new volunteers, here are some important points to remember as you begin the process of orientation to your agency and the activities your new volunteers will be responsible for. The orientation can be the most important step in a successful volunteer experience.

1. Provide a clear and detailed explanation, in simple language, of your organization, its goals and plans, and the purpose of the work being done.
2. Allow plenty of opportunity for questions from new volunteers and check for understanding.
3. Talk about the benefits of volunteering, including the intangible things like experience that can be included on a resume, skills enhancement, social interaction, practicing English or French, etc.
4. People whose experience of volunteering has been less formally structured may require a more in-depth explanation of your organization's volunteer program.
5. Discuss expectations – some newcomers volunteer to develop new social networks.

Training

Volunteers can carry out their assignments more effectively when provided with adequate information and tools. Organizations with good training programs are more likely to maintain a satisfied and stable volunteer workforce.

1. Plan training sessions at a time and date convenient to your new volunteers by being aware of religious holidays and customs, and family responsibilities, that may affect their ability to attend.
2. Choose participatory and interactive training. It is more effective than lecture style or reading training manuals. These methods also allow new volunteers to demonstrate what they have learned.
3. Consider experiential training – it is remembered longer than traditional teaching. For example, a seniors home may ask volunteers to spend part of a day in a wheelchair in order to experience what a client must face.

4. Assign a “training buddy” from among your experienced volunteers to assist the new volunteer.

Placement

1. Provide detailed explanations on what assignments are available and what is required in terms of commitment, expectations and responsibilities.
2. Be careful not to make assumptions about skill level just because of language skills.
3. Consider if some volunteer activities can be adjusted to accommodate a different language or skill level.
4. If language is a barrier, consider ways you can phase in a new volunteer while they are expanding their English or French language skills. When they are ready for activities that require a higher level of language skills they will have learned a lot more about the organization.
5. To ensure that ethnic minority volunteers do not feel singled out, clarify that all volunteers receive training, mentoring, etc.

Follow-Up

1. Follow-up with new volunteers on a regular basis as a check-in to identify any further training needs, and resolve any problems or issues as they rise.
2. Make sure that you give your volunteers credit and acknowledgement for their efforts. Newcomers are frequently unsure about whether what they are doing is right or wrong. Appreciation and recognition for efforts is not only deserved, it can motivate volunteers to stay with your organization in the long-term.

ON-LINE RESOURCES

Although we have provided you with a few tips and suggestions for getting started, there are a variety of resources available to support organizations to better understand issues such as inclusion and the recruitment and retention of multi-cultural volunteers.

We have searched over 100 web sites to come up with a list of 14 that we consider to be worth visiting. Each of these web sites offer links to other resources and can be a great starting point for gathering tips, tools and strategies.

1. Toolkit and Train the Trainer Sessions 2003 and 2004 - The Canadian Ethnocultural Council has produced a “toolkit” for emerging communities to use as they grow in today’s Canada.. Toolkit not online only information about the training sessions.
<http://www.ethnocultural.ca/activities.html>
2. An Exclusive Construct? Exploring Different Cultural Concepts of Volunteering, Article by Priya Lukka and Angela Ellis, Institute for Volunteering Research.
<http://www.ivr.org.uk/culturalconcepts.htm>
3. Social Inclusion, Anti-racism and Democratic Citizenship by Anver Saloojee. Part of a Laidlaw Foundation series on social inclusion.
http://www.laidlawfdn.org/programmes/children/summaries_jan2003.pdf
4. Searchable bibliography database of materials on volunteering and diversity.
<http://www.schulich.yorku.ca/nmlp.nsf>
5. VSI Sector Research on Visible Minorities
http://www.vsi-isbc.ca/eng/about/vis_min_research.cfm
6. The Giving and Volunteering of new Canadians written by Larry McKeown. Fact Sheet #12 in the series from the National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating.
<http://www.givingandvolunteering.ca/pdf/n-f12-ca.pdf>
7. Voluntary Sector Initiative
http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/pc-cp/vsi_e.cfm
8. Canada Volunteerism Initiative (CVI)
http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/pc-cp/cvi_e.cfm

9. Canada's site for information on volunteering. www.volunteer.ca
10. Citizenship and Immigration Canada
<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomer/host%2D1e.html#act>
11. Culturelink
<http://www.culturelink.net/>
12. Volunteer Today
<http://www.volunteertoday.com/>
13. Department of Canadian Heritage
<http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/heritage/ComPartnE/Promo1.htm>
14. Promoting Volunteerism- Voluntary action directorate
<http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/heritage/ComPartnE/pdfdocs/Promotin.pdf>
15. Check links in www.inclusiontoolkit.ca

Interesting publications:

Burgess-Murray, John S. and Christopher I. Cullen.(1995) Bridging the Gap: Responding to Diversity Part I. Ottawa : Family Service Canada.

Fine, Marlene (1995). Building Successful Multicultural Organizations: Challenges and Opportunities. Westport CON : Quorum Books.

United Way of Greater Toronto (1988). Multicultural Development Handbook. Toronto: United Way of Greater Toronto.

United Way/Centraide Ottawa Carleton (1997). Priority Goals for United Way/Centraide Funding, 1997 - 1998. Ottawa, ON: United Way.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

It is important to know where the multi-cultural community organizations can be found and who the lead agencies are for the voluntary sector in New Brunswick. The following section is a resource guide to help make the connections.

Links to Multi-cultural/Ethnocultural Organizations

National:

Canadian Race Relations Foundation
<http://www.crr.ca>

Canadian Scene
<http://members.home.net/canscene>

Cultures Canada
<http://www.culturescanada.ca>

Multicultural Councils in New Brunswick

New Brunswick Multicultural Council Inc.
123 York Street, Suite 207
Fredericton, NB E3B 3N6
Tel: 506-453-1091/474-8095
Fax: 506-474-8095

Multicultural Associations in New Brunswick

The Multicultural Association of Fredericton Inc.(MCAF)
123 York Street
Fredericton, N.B. E3B 3N6
Tel: 506-454-8292
Fax: 506-450-9033
Email: mcaf@mcaf.nb.ca
Website: www.mcaf.nb.ca

Multicultural Association of Carleton County (MACC)
Florenceville, NB
Tel: 506-392-5529
Fax: n/a
Email: svgchava@yahoo.ca
Website: www.nb-amcc.org

Multicultural Association of Chaleur Region
Bathurst, N.B.
Tel: 506-548-2048
Fax: n/a
Email: gypsy1@nb.sympatico.ca

Multicultural Association of St. John
P.O. Box 6446, Station A
Saint John E2L 4R8
Tel: 506-634-7432
Fax: n/a
Email: n/a

Multicultural Association of the Moncton Area (MAGMA)
1299-A Mountain Road, Suite 2
Moncton, NB. E1C 2T9
Tel: 506 : 858-9659
Fax: 506-857-9430
Email: rpellerin@nb.aibn.com/magma@nb.aibn.com

Ethno-Cultural Organizations

Association of Indo-Canadians
37 Baxter Court
Fredericton NB E3B 6M2
Tel: 506-450-4380
mkishore@edsoftware.com

Chinese Cultural Association
P.O. Box 101, Station A
Fredericton NB E3B 2R6
Tel: 506-454-4343
gidjan@hotmail.com

Latino Association of New Brunswick
87 Linden Crescent
Fredericton NB E3A 5A1
Tel: 506-457-6293

Lebanese Association
St. Charbel's Church
229 Argyle Street
Fredericton NB E3B 1T8
Tel: 506-459-4380

New Brunswick African Association
611, Hanwell Road
Fredericton NB E3B 2R6
Tel: 506-453-4976

New Brunswick Scottish Cultural Association
221 Springwater Lane
New Maryland, NB E3B 1J5
Tel: 506-447-8103
www.nbscots.com

Maritime Geeta Bhawan
P.O. Box 303
Fredericton, NB E3B 4Y9
Tel: 506-459-3382

Fredericton Islamic Association
130 Lincoln Road
Fredericton, N.B. E3B 2Y1,
Canada
E-mail: mobarak@nbnet.nb.ca
<http://www.fia.islam.8m.com/>

La Société des Acadiens et Acadiennes
du Nouveau-Brunswick
702, rue Principale, bureau 204
Petit-Rocher, NB E8J 1V1
Tel: 506-783-4205
1-888-722-2343

Native Friendship Centres

Fredericton Native Friendship Centre
210 Brunswick Street
Fredericton, NB E3B 1G9
Tel: 506-459-5283
email: n6friend@nb.aibn.com

Volunteer Centres of New Brunswick

Bathurst Volunteer Centre Inc.

464 King Avenue
Bathurst, NB E2A 1P6
Tel: 506-549-5949
Fax: 506-549-5866
bvc@nb.sympatico.ca

Centre de bénévolat de la péninsule acadienne inc.

220, boul. St-Pierre Ouest, Suite 100
Caraquet, NB E1W 1A5
Tel: 506-727-1860
Fax: 506-727-1862
centbene@nbnet.nb.ca
www.cbpa.ca

Miramichi Volunteer Services Inc.

85 Pleasant Street
Miramichi, NB E1V 1X8
Tel: 506-622-6565
Fax: 506-622-2933
mvs@nb.aibn.com

Saint John Volunteer Centre Inc.

P.O. Box 7091 Station A
115 Hazen Street
Saint John, NB E2L 4S5
Tel: 506-658-1555
Fax: 506-652-3791
volunteer.sj@nb.aibn.com
www.saintjohnvolunteer.ca

Moncton Volunteer Centre du bénévolat Inc.

236 St. George Street, Suite 315
Moncton, NB E1C 1W1
Tel: 506-869-6977
Fax: 506-853-7856
vcbed@nbnet.nb.ca
www.volunteergreatermoncton.com

Volunteer Centre of Charlotte County Inc.
P.O. Box 271, 199 Union Street
St. Stephen, NB E3L 2X2
Tel: 506-466-4995
Fax: 506-465-0988
vccc@nb.sympatico.ca

United Way Agencies

United Way/Centraide (Central N.B./Région du Centre du N.-B.) Inc.
214 - 1133 Regent Street
Fredericton, NB, E3B 3Z2
Tel: 506-459-7773
Fax: 506-451-1104
Website:
<http://www.fredericton.unitedway.ca>
E-Mail: unitedwy@nbnet.nb.ca

United Way of Greater Moncton &
Southeastern New Brunswick Region Inc.
1560 Main Street
P.O. Box 768, Moncton, NB, E1C 8M9
Tel: 506-858-8600
Fax: 506-858-0584
E-Mail: office@moncton.unitedway.ca

United Way of Greater Saint John Inc.
69 King Street
Saint John, NB, E2L 1G5
Tel: 506-658-1212
Fax: 506-633-7724
Website: <http://www.saintjohn.unitedway.ca>
E-Mail: tom.unitedway@nb.aibn.com

EVALUATION:

Your feedback is very important to the further development of this guidebook. Please take a few moments to complete this brief questionnaire. Fax your responses directly to (506) 854-2057. Thank you.

- 1) Is the format of this guidebook easy to read and follow for you?
 Yes
 No

- 2) In your opinion, are the suggestions practical? Achievable?
 Yes Yes
 No No

- 3) Will the information help your organization to be more inclusive and diverse?
 Yes
 No

- 4) Do you have any suggestions for improvement, or information that you think should be included in this guidebook?

- 5) Are you:
 Visible minority (If yes, please answer question 6)
 Representative of a multicultural association or ethnocultural group (If yes, please answer question 6)
 Volunteer coordinator
 Manager/Coordinator/Director of a non-profit organization
 Volunteer

6) How do you think the information help you, or your organization, get involved in the voluntary sector as a volunteer?
