

# **Community Connectors Activity Report**

By  
Sophie-Michèle Cyr  
Falls Brook Centre



Submitted to Canadian Red Cross

February 10, 2009

## **1. Type of Activity**

Falls Brook Centre has been delivering community asset mapping workshops to rural communities in New Brunswick since 2007. Based on the community connectors training workshop in Ottawa, the experience at the Burtts Corner round table and Falls Brook Centre's network and facilitation experience it became possible for us to offer an emergency preparedness asset mapping workshop as well as tools and resources to interested communities as the first step towards emergency planning. The Village of Meductic immediately marked interest in renewing their emergency plan by using asset mapping. Pam Grant, the Village Clerk for Meductic, collaborated with Sophie-Michèle Cyr, Community Development Coordinator at Falls Brook Centre, as the community liaison in the organization of the workshop. Ms. Grant mentioned that it was necessary to revise the Village's emergency plan and was always interested in doing so since her implication with the Village Council.

The community asset mapping took place on January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009 from 7h00 p.m. to 10h00 p.m. at the Village of Meductic Council Room located in the Meductic Bicentennial Community Centre at 320 Route 165. The session was facilitated by Sophie-Michèle Cyr and co-facilitated by Cheryl Ripley.

### Workshop Agenda

19h00-19h15 Introduction and Welcome

19h15-19h30 Project Background

- Workshop goals and objectives
- Introducing the handouts (2 Volunteer Sector Framework documents, 72 hours-your emergency preparedness guide and the handout prepared by the facilitator)
- Introducing asset mapping process

19h30-20h45 Asset mapping exercise (in break out groups):

- Activity #1 - Identifying Key Players
- Activity #2 - Identifying Important Assets

20h45-21h00 Nutrition break

21h00-21h20 Assessing your organization (next possible steps)

- Presenting Activity #3 - Alignment with Determinants of Health
- Presenting Activity #4 – From Service Continuity to Community collaboration
- Presenting Volunteer Framework
- Offering Service Continuity Planning Online Tool

21h20-22h00 Where de we go from here?

Adjournment

The ultimate goal of the village council is to renew and update their EMO (Emergency Measures Organization) plan which dates from the 1966. This being the village's first public round table about emergency preparedness I focused on mapping the usable assets of their community. We did two activities.



### ***Activity #1 - Key Players***

In small groups, we asked the participant to identify the key players in community resiliency and emergency preparedness involved at the different levels: Public Authority, non-profit and volunteer groups with disaster relief mandates, non-profit and volunteer groups serving vulnerable citizens, any community organizations and, community conveners (associations or networks). We then had a discussion about them and compiled results of each group into a list (on the flip charts).

### ***Activity #5 Asset Mapping***

In small groups, we asked the participants to look at the categories to inspire them in listing the key assets in their community that could be used in response to emergency. The proposed categories of assets: people, equipment, space, services.

There was then a facilitated discussion to share and list the results of every group. It became clear that to discover and reveal the assets, it's best to create a general list of all assets. I would suggest categorizing all the assets, at the risk of repeating some in different categories, only for future reference and planning.

## **2. Participation from Voluntary Sector**

This workshop targeted the Village of Meductic, but the participants recognized that they were in close relation with the villages of Riceville, to the North West and Temple, to the South East. There are a total of 200 people in the Village of Meductic and therefore the volunteer and NGO sectors are limited to two churches group, one seniors group, the fire department, the village and recreation councils and the snowmobile and ATV clubs.

Twelve organizations were invited: Village Council (clerk and deputy Mayor), Meductic Fire Department, Abundant Life Church, Brunway Highway, RCMP, Dept. of Natural Resources, Dept. of Transportation, Golden Glows Seniors Club, Canterbury High School, Cummings Bros Store and Sabian (cymbal factory). In addition, a retired nurse plus an additional two private individuals were invited for a total of sixteen invitees.

Although there was a great interest expressed from all over the community and as it is frequently the case in gatherings, about half of the invited parties actually participated in the workshop. Overall, a total of eight participants took place in the workshop representing these different organization and range: Village of Meductic (Village clerk and Deputy Mayor), United Baptist Church, Brunway Highway Operations, Retired Nurse, Golden Glows Seniors Club, Cummings Bros Store (Irving Gas Station).

## **3. Results of the Workshop**

### ***Transferring the knowledge:***

I opened the session by introducing the 72 Hours guide and telling them the importance of being personally prepared and then the two framework documents to introduce them the importance of including the volunteer sector in the emergency plan. I ended the session with the introduction/homework of the activity #3 and #4 and introduction to SCP concept (gave them the link) to assess their ability to be included in the plan and as a successful business tool.



Resources distributed at the workshop:

- New Brunswick Emergency Measures Organization (NB EMO) 1-800-561-4034
- Service Continuity Planning Online tool at: <http://bcp.nonprofitrisk.org/>
- 72 Hours-Your Emergency Preparedness Guide in paper form and [www.getprepared.gc.ca/index\\_e.asp](http://www.getprepared.gc.ca/index_e.asp)
- Ready for Crisis Website at: [www.readyforcrisis.ca](http://www.readyforcrisis.ca)
- Handout prepared by the facilitators

*Feedback from participants*

Although some participants mentioned the bad weather, the low number of participants and the short length of the session as restrictive factors, there was a general realization that the community had lots of assets to draw from. They thought this session was constructive and helpful in beginning the planning for health emergencies. The participants were pleased with the resources to take home. Most people understood this list of assets was the first important step and like one participant said “A lot more work has to be done before we are ready.” Therefore, it is important to maintain this resulting momentum with a follow-up session allowing more players and time for the planning process to be persuaded. (See appendix No1 for an evaluation form summary)

*Follow-up*

Lots of questions still remain to build upon this asset mapping session, the major questions to ask now would be:

Are there some needs that are not covered by the identified assets? If yes, which assets could fulfill these gaps? Could some of those gaps be over taking by an already recognized asset? Could these organizations or business use a Service Continuity Planning to do so?

Are the identified assets reliable? If not, which one? And how can you, as a community, secure those assets?

According to their answer to those questions and to their needs I told them that we could be doing a follow-up session where I could introduce in more details the SCP Online tool. I also created a report for them to keep records of the whole workshop and what has been accomplished.

As a result of this asset mapping workshop, the Village of Meductic has asked me to having a follow-up session with them to help them with the next steps and in order to maintain the momentum. This session is scheduled for February 23<sup>rd</sup> 2009.

***In the frame work of the Upper St. John River Valley Initiative***



[www.fallsbrookcentre.ca](http://www.fallsbrookcentre.ca)

**Sophie-Michèle Cyr**, *Community Development Coordinator*  
125 South Knowlesville Road  
Knowlesville, N.B.  
E7L 1B1  
Tel.: 506-375-4310  
Fax: 506-375-4221  
E-mail: [sm@fallsbrookcentre.ca](mailto:sm@fallsbrookcentre.ca)



*Report prepared by Sophie-Michèle Cyr - Falls Brook Centre*  
[www.fallsbrookcentre.ca](http://www.fallsbrookcentre.ca)

Appendices No1

**Workshop Evaluation Form**  
**Please take the time to answer the following questions.**

1. Overall, how would you rate the methods used to deliver the workshop?

Not at all interesting                      Reasonably interesting                      Very interesting  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
*Most participants indicated 5 with the exception that one of them*

2. How would you rate the facilitator's knowledge of the subject matter?

Poor                      Fair                      Excellent  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
*Most participants indicated 5 with the exception of two of them*

3. Did the facilitators present the subject matters effectively?

Not at all                      More or less                      Very much so  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
*Most participants indicated 5 with exception of two of them*

4. Has the workshop met your needs?

Not at all                      More or less                      Very much so  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
*Most participants indicated 5 in the exception of three of them*

Please explain: *"Due to weather a lot of key players were missing so I feel there could have been a lot more input in the meeting", "Very well presented and informative", "Didn't realize there were so many contacts in our region", "The process has just started", "Great job",*

5. What did you like best about this workshop?

*I was able to meet more people in the area, better contacts for overall help and it allowed me to show and tell them of some of the items I can offer.", "Open our eyes to the assets of people and equipment.", "Open discussion and helpful suggestions", "All working together and hearing everyone's inputs", "The amount of information we received", "The handouts were very informative and help explain what is needed in on emergency situation", "Made me think and realised how much we had to draw from." And "The girls seemed very much prepared for the session and got right down to business".*

6. What did you like best about this workshop?

*It would be nice for the instructor's to know a little about the area before they attend.", "More people, more time", "It was a good start", "No, it was great", "No, I think they had everything under control"*



Additional comments:

*“The meeting was overall very good, it was a good eye opener for the local people and also showed then they have a lot of resources.”, “Presenters very knowledgeable and answered all of questions and open up many more and got us all thinking.”, “A lot more work has to be done before we are ready.” and “Thank you so much!”*

**Thank You!**

