

***Enhancing Financial Capability  
Among Youth in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve  
(Québec, Canada)***

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April 2011**

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for the  
M.S. in Community Economic Development**

**Approved by Dr. Jolan Rivera**

## Acknowledgements

Many thanks to...

Puneetha, Catherine, and Jolan,  
not just for teaching, but for  
mentoring me and pushing me  
in my thinking

Glenn and Sandy, for  
challenging me and believing in  
me personally, academically,  
and professionally

Charlie, for being my biggest  
fan, for listening, debating, and  
proofing-reading throughout the  
entire process; this is as much  
yours as it is mine.

This is dedicated to Alexandra,  
Annie, Fanny, Thierry, Mouctar,  
and Houde, and other kids like  
them who, if given the chance,  
will surprise and inspire you,  
and maybe just change the  
world.

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## Abbreviations and Definitions

*CDI*: Christian Direction Inc., parent organisation of Programme Accroche

*CED*: Community Economic Development

*HM*: Hochelaga-Maisonneuve

*Francophone*: Refers to people for whom French is their mother tongue.

*Les Enfants de l'espoir (EdE)*: “Children of Hope,” community organisation whose center is shared by Programme Accroche. Les Enfants de l'espoir does programming for families with children aged 0-12 years; Programme Accroche serves youth aged 12-17 years.

*LICO*: Low Income Cut-Offs, or the poverty line, is determined by analysing family expenditure data, below which families will devote a larger share of income to the necessities of food, shelter and clothing than the average family would (Statistics Canada, 2009).

*Programme Accroche*: “Accroche” translates as “hooked on;” it is the antonym of the “décroche,” which is a colloquial term for dropping out of school. Christian Direction Inc. started the Accroche programs in 1993 and now has three locations around Montréal; these programs aim to help secondary school students in the development of their academic, home and social life, and to counter Québec’s high drop-out rates.

*Quiet Revolution*: A very important episode in Québec’s history, which played out mainly from 1960 to 1966. From the mid-1930s to the late 1950s, Maurice Duplessis, Québec’s Prime Minister, formed a society characterised by traditionalism, conservatism and a rejection of contemporary ways and values. The Catholic Church played a major role in maintaining this traditionalism through means such as prohibiting any form of

contraception, aggressively urging women to have as many children as they could, and shunning or attacking anyone who spoke out against the Church or the state. The Quiet Revolution started with the election of a Liberal Prime Minister in Québec; the next six years were a time of intense and very fast development and social change. Québec today has been shaped in large part by the Quiet Revolution (Bélanger, 1999).

## Abstract

The project described in this paper aimed to enhance financial capability among 12 to 17 year-old youth in a low-income neighbourhood in Montreal, Canada. Based on the capability approach, this community economic development project was designed to link financial skills and knowledge with opportunities to practice those skills and to access financial services for economically vulnerable youth.

Hochelaga-Maisonneuve is a geographically isolated neighbourhood, situated east of downtown Montréal, in Canada's French province of Québec. According to Canada's most recent census, 10.5% of all persons in the country registered an income below the Low Income Cut-Off; the incidence of low income in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve was 41.7% (Statistics Canada, 2006).

A major problem facing families in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve is that they lack the financial capability to enable their children to learn the skills and access the resources that will allow them to grow up to be economically autonomous. The literature review which explored this problem includes discussions of the capability approach and how it is applicable to youth, definitions that lead to the idea of "financial capability," financial exclusion and intergenerational transmission of poverty in Canada, and building financial capability among economically vulnerable youth.

The intervention model developed to address this problem includes three project components: financial education workshops, access to financial services through matched savings accounts, and a revenue-generating microentrepreneurship activity. These joint components were designed to meet the following desired outcomes:

- Short-term outcomes: increased knowledge and skills in financial literacy, increased awareness of the value of financial knowledge, and access to resources and venues for financial skills;
- Intermediate outcome: youth demonstrate financial capability;



- Long-term outcome: youth plan for the future (e.g. finish high school, join the workforce);
- Longer-term outcome: families break the cycle of generational transmission of poverty.

The project was implemented as a pilot project with seven (7) participants, all of whom were involved in the host organisation's after-school program. The project retained six (6) of the seven youth (85.7%) who initially began the project. Of those six, 100% attended the financial education workshops and participated in the matched savings accounts, opened at the local credit union. Of the microenterprise activity, youth deposited an average of 81.67% of their profits into their savings accounts and 100% continued participating in the project beyond the pilot phase.

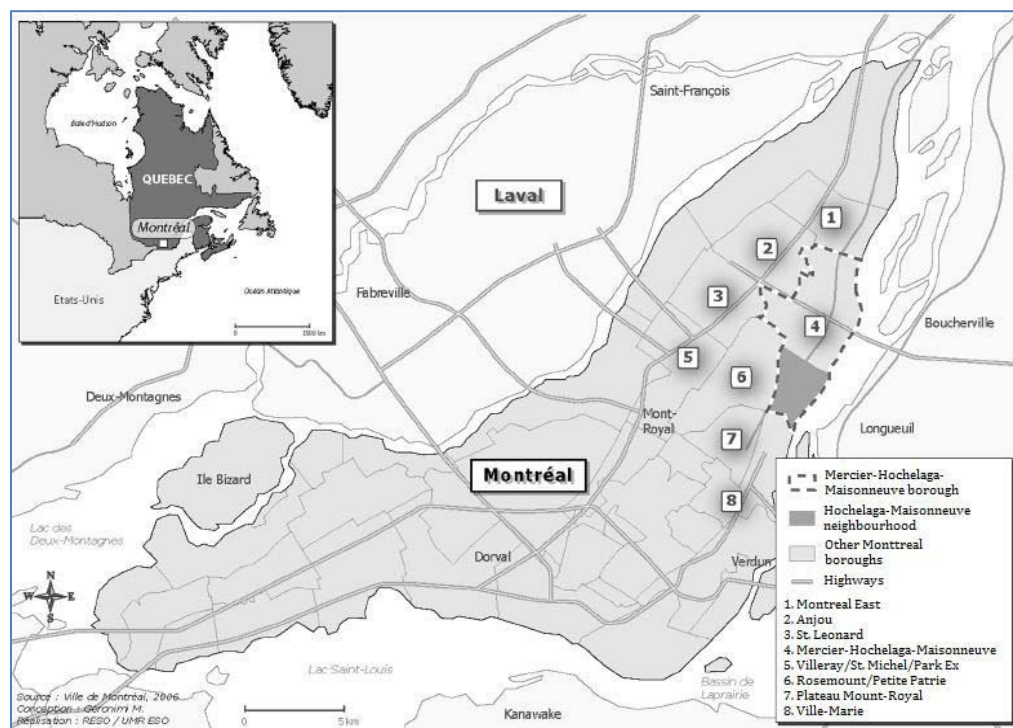
Evaluation interviews with project participants, partners, and managers confirmed the achievement of short-term outcomes. Beyond the increased knowledge of financial skills and of the value of financial skills, and access to financial services, every participant interviewed stated teamwork as a main lesson and achievement of the project. Also, although each short-term outcome was achieved in some way, participants have not yet demonstrated financial capability. Their continued participation in the project, and changing components of the project to reflect lessons learned, will enable them to achieve this intermediate outcome.

As the sample size of the pilot project is very small, the results of the project cannot be too generalized. However, the intervention model and success of the project has garnered attention from youth practitioners at both a local and national level. The author was solicited to create a curriculum based on the model for a national-level institution with partner organisations across Canada.

## 1. Community Context

### 1.1 Community Profile

Hochelaga-Maisonneuve is part of a larger borough called Mercier-Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, situated east of downtown Montréal. It borders the St. Lawrence River on the south, the Olympic park on the north,<sup>1</sup> and the Pacific and National railroads on the east and west. It was historically a working-class area, but the closing down of many of its factories has led to unemployment and poverty. The majority of the population is French-speaking, born in Québec and raised in Montréal. There is a small and slowly growing immigrant population, made up mainly of French-speakers. Most residents are renters and live in apartment buildings. One in every four households is a single parent family (Montréal en Statistiques, 2009, p. 2).



**Figure 1. Map of Montréal**

Source: (City of Montreal, 2006).

<sup>1</sup>

The Olympic park includes the Olympic Stadium, where the 1976 Olympics were held, the Saputo Soccer Stadium, and many popular tourist attractions including the Biodôme and the Botanical Gardens.

## History

Hochelaga-Maisonneuve was an industrial, working-class neighbourhood for much of its existence, since the founding of Hochelaga village in 1870. The Canadian Pacific railroad was built on Hochelaga's western border in 1876, along with numerous factories. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Maisonneuve, the town just east of Hochelaga, experienced unparalleled growth in industries such as textiles and shipbuilding, earning the nickname "Pittsburgh of Canada."

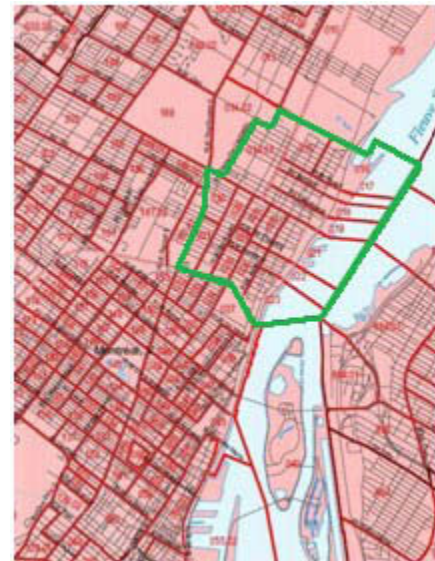
Québec's first unions were formed in Maisonneuve in 1899 when workers started mobilising against factory owners for poor working conditions and created the Workers' Party. In the 1930s, the Great Depression weighed heavily on the manufacturing industry in Montréal and many families were forced to apply for social assistance (Heritage Montréal, n.d.). Municipal public works projects and a resurgence of manufacturing made the years between 1945 and 1960 the golden age of Hochelaga-Maisonneuve (Christian Direction Inc., 2006, p.5). However, in 1967, thousands of homes and buildings were demolished to make way for two new highways; this, combined with the movement of capital and production to Toronto, hurt the neighbourhood's economy and vitality. Between 1961 and 1976, 20,000 people left the area; many of those who stayed behind were forced to go on social assistance (Heritage Montréal, n.d.). Although the 1976 Olympics were thought to bring the area prosperity – the Olympic stadium was built on the northern boundary of Hochelaga-Maisonneuve – once the Olympics ended, poverty persisted, and the many tourists who visit the Olympic site are not even aware they are in one of Canada's poorest areas.

Hochelaga-Maisonneuve has a strong, largely francophone working class heritage. It is a great proponent of socialist policies, mainly due to its contribution to the creation of unions in the province. Today the manufacturing industry is being replaced mainly by small- to medium-sized service businesses (Heritage Montréal, n.d.). Some old heritage sites are being revamped as tourist and cultural centres, and the area's rich history is being valued and promoted. Despite the high incidence of unemployment and poverty,

there is a great sense of community and solidarity. One thing HM residents love most, according to one focus group respondent, is that “everyone knows each other and there is always someone to say ‘hello’ to on the street.”

### Socioeconomic Profile <sup>2</sup>

Hochelaga-Maisonneuve is composed of 18 census tracks, covering 6.64 square kilometres and totalling a population of 50,585, which is but a 0.1% increase since the last census period (see Figure 2 opposite). The population in this neighbourhood is very dense; whereas the overall population density of Montréal is 3,678 inhabitants per square kilometre, it is 5,472 inhabitants per square kilometre in HM (CDI, 2006, p. 11). Table 2 and Figure 3 below show more particular demographic statistics. As seen in Table 2, the highest proportion of residents is between 25 and 34 years of age; there is also a high proportion of elderly people living in the area, especially elderly women. Figure 3 shows that the highest concentration of children is found in the south and east parts of the neighbourhood; the eastern section of the area is where the target population in this study reside.



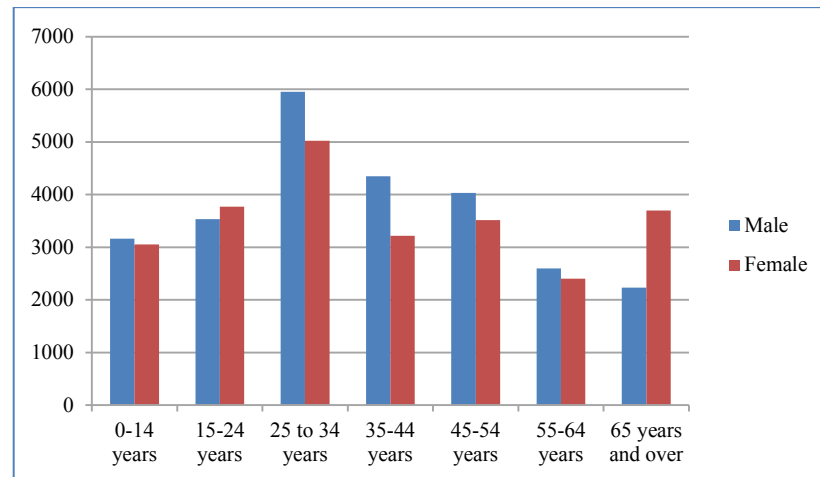
**Figure 2. Census map of Hochelaga-Maisonneuve**

This is a largely French Canadian neighbourhood; 81.4% of the population is Francophone, 51.5% speak only French, and 43.4% speak both French and English. Many Francophones in Québec identify themselves as Québécois “de souche”, which translates as “old stock” and refers to Québécois who can trace their ancestry back to the New France era; or Québécois “pure laine,” which translates as “pure wool. ” Francophones in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve mainly self-identify as such. Therefore, there

<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, statistics are taken from the Statistics Canada 2006 census. The Canadian census is executed every five years by Statistics Canada.

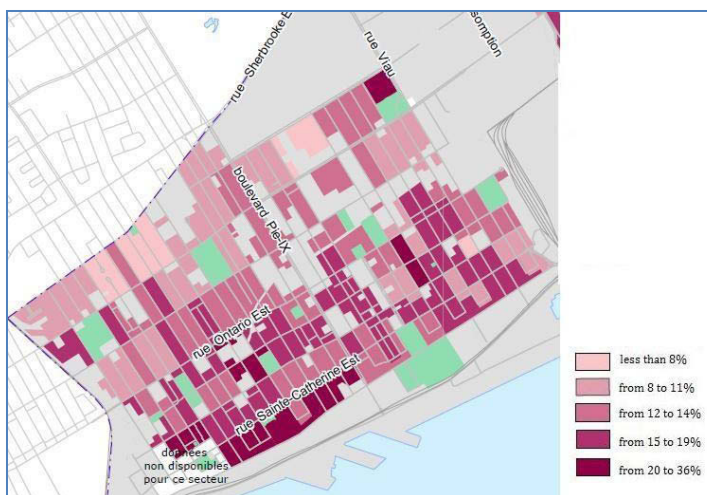
are fewer visible minorities and immigrants in the area compared with the rest of Montréal.

**Table 1. Age and Gender Distribution of Hochelaga-Maisonneuve's Population**



Source: (Statistics Canada, 2006, p. 2-3).

While just over 20% of Montréal's population is made up of immigrants, they account for only 13% of Hochelaga-Maisonneuve's population. Hochelaga-Maisonneuve is a newer destination for immigrants; whereas 52% of Montréal's immigrants arrived before 1990, 67% of Hochelaga-Maisonneuve's immigrants arrived after 1990.

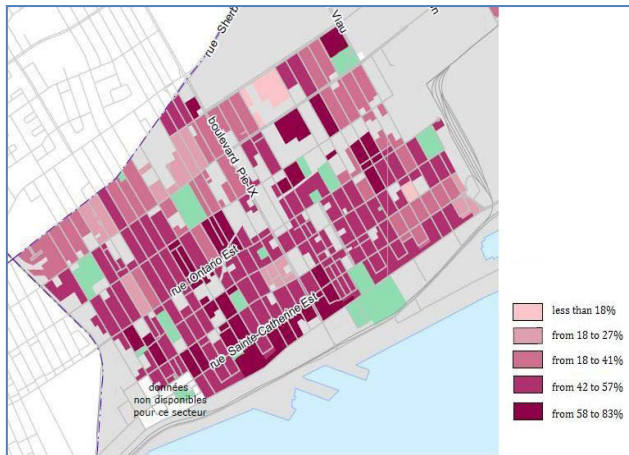


**Figure 3. Concentration of Children Aged 0-14 years (as a percentage of the population)**

Although 81.8% of Hochelaga-Maisonneuve residents consider themselves Roman Catholic, few people are practicing Christians. Most Catholic churches have very few attendees at their services, and attract mainly senior citizens and immigrants; there are some Protestant churches, although their members do not live in the



neighbourhood (CDI, 2006, p. 17). Up until the Quiet Revolution in 1960s, the Catholic Church played a huge role in Québec, both in education and social and community life.<sup>3</sup> Since then, there has been more and more of a marginalisation of the church as people have freed themselves from the oppression that is often associated with pre-revolution society. As a result, French Canadian society is largely secular and often bears animosity against any Christian ideology.



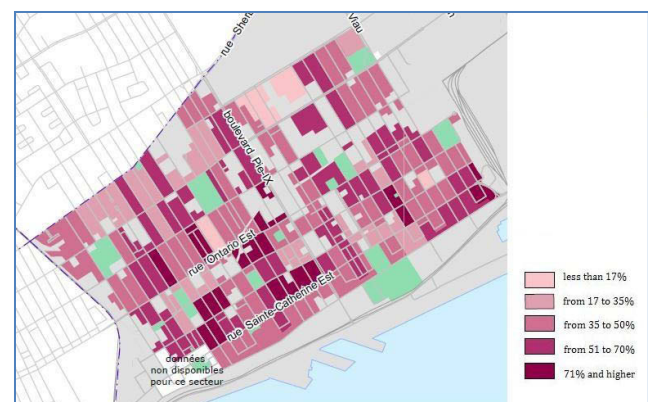
**Figure 4. Households living under the Low Income Cut-Off (as a percentage of the total population in private households)**

Eleven of Hochelaga-Maisonneuve's 18 census tracks registered 40% or more incidence of low income; the overall incidence of low income in private households is 41.7%, down from 45.4% in the last census period. See Figure 4 for the incidence of households living under the LICO.

Although the whole area has a high incidence of households living under the LICO, the blocks directly

surrounding the project area (lower right-hand corner of area map) are among those with the highest percentage of incidence of poverty.

The incidence of unemployment for people aged 25 years and over has gone from 12% to 8% (above Montréal's rate of 6.1%); however, the percentage of adults without schooling beyond grade nine has not improved, nor has the percentage of adults holding a bachelor's degree. See Figure 5 for the concentration of youth

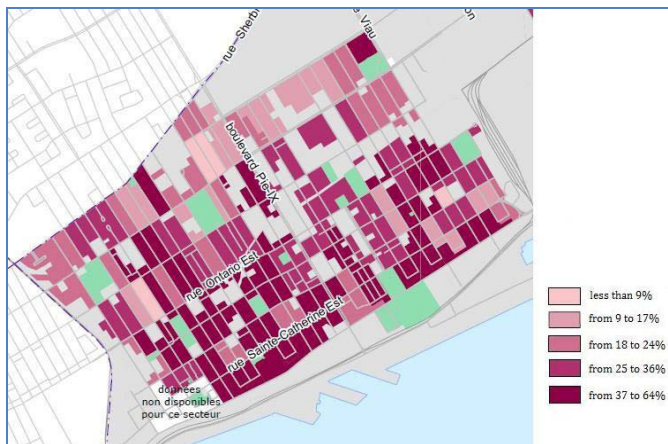


**Figure 5. Concentration of persons aged 15 to 24 years not attending school (as a percentage of the total population aged 15 to 24 years)**

<sup>3</sup>

See note on the Quiet Revolution in Abbreviations and Definitions on page 5.

between the ages of 15 and 24 who are not in school. Many of those not in school are also not participating in the job market; they are either dependent on other family members or receiving social assistance from the government.



**Figure 6. Concentration of lone-parent families (as a percentage of total number of families)**

Median family incomes have improved significantly from \$33,589 in 2001 to \$42,753 in 2006. Twenty-nine percent of children (0-17 years) are in families living on social assistance (Cadotte, 2007). Lone-parent families currently account for over 50% of all families, compared to 35% in 1981 (CDI, 2006, p. 8).

The prevalence of low income in male lone-parent economic families is 18%, with a median family income of \$33,148. In female lone-parent families, the prevalence of low income is 48%, with a median family income of \$25,814. There are 340 male lone-parent families and 2,605 female lone-parent families in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve. See Figure 6 for the concentration of lone-parent families in the neighbourhood. This figure shows just how high the proportion of lone-parent families in this area is; it is much higher than the city's average of 18.1% of all families (Statistics Canada, 2006).

## 1.2 Community Needs Assessment

Beyond providing a descriptive profile of the community, the goal of a community needs assessment (CNA) is to identify or further research community problems and challenges. A CED project is usually based on the community needs assessment; a useful project should be intended to address a particular problem identified in the CNA. The questions asked in a CNA are crucial to understanding the nature, extent, causes and effects of the stated problem.

The information for this CNA, and the problem statement below, was gathered both through primary and secondary research: interviews and focus group discussions were conducted, and reports and articles confirmed and further informed the research. The stakeholders interviewed include both the coordinator of Programme Accroche and the director of Les Enfants de l'espoir (host and partner organisation of Programme Accroche); two directors of community organisations in the neighbourhood; and, a program coordinator of the local YMCA. See Appendices 1 and 2 for interview and focus group discussion notes. The main questions asked in these interviews were the following:

1. What are your aspirations for the youth/families/community of Hochelaga-Maisonneuve?
2. What are the main assets of the youth/families that live in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve?
3. What factors may limit the hope for youth/families that live in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve?
4. What types of solutions could help to overcome these obstacles?

A common aspiration many stakeholders expressed was the hope that youth would not follow in the footsteps of their parents, to not repeat their parent's bad decisions and get out of the generational cycle of poverty. Many who expressed this desire also stated their concern that these youth do not have many good role models in their lives and need mentors and heroes to look up to and to give them a positive vision for the future. More detailed analysis of stakeholders is found below, in the Problem Statement.

Youth registered in Programme Accroche, who are aged between 12 and 17 years, were also asked to participate in interviews. All but one teenager participated. The questions were adapted for the interviews with youth. Each teenager interviewed was asked the following questions:

1. Imagine your life when you are 25 years old. What is your life like? What do you imagine for this life?



2. Which strengths or qualities will help you realise this dream/this life? What do you need to realise it?
3. Who can help you achieve your dream? How?
4. If you were given \$100 to spend on yourself, how would you spend it?
5. If someone gave you \$5,000 to spend on something for your family, what would you spend it on?
6. If you could change one thing in your neighbourhood, what would it be?

See Appendix F for the complete interview notes. The results of the interviews with the youth are included in the CNA because, although youth often do not know their own needs or how to express them, their input offers valuable insight into how they see the world around them. Their input was also key in planning the activities that were carried out in the project.

The interviews with the youth showed that many of the teenagers interviewed were not very realistic about their dreams for the future. When talking about what profession they wanted to pursue, many did not readily see the link between their present behaviour and decisions and future career prospects. For example, a 15-year-old who struggles to obtain his below-average grades stated his intention to become a doctor. The point is not that he has no chance of attaining that goal; it is that he struggles at putting into place the day-to-day incremental steps that will build his ability to achieve his goal. Over half the youth interviewed stated perseverance, hard work, and “not giving up” as important strengths to achieve one’s dreams, although they do not understand what “perseverance” means. They know they need to “persevere,” but do not see its link to doing and understanding their homework every day, going to see a teacher who could explain difficult problems, or valuing paying full attention in class.

Youth were also given the opportunity to express dissatisfaction with their neighbourhood when asked, “If you could change one thing in your neighbourhood, what would it be?” During the initial interviews and in a follow-up focus group discussion held on February 4, 2010, the youth identified several things that bothered them in the

neighbourhood. Some changes the youth wanted to make included less racism, no more drug problems, improved parks (e.g. there is no outdoor skating rink in the winter), less homelessness, fewer gangs and less bullying. However, the one thing mentioned by the highest number of teenagers said what bothered them most in the neighbourhood is the pollution: graffiti, syringes littering the parks, dog feces left on sidewalks, and garbage and litter on the streets and in back alleys.

The follow-up discussion focused on this last part of the initial interviews. Apart from throwing out ideas of what a “nice neighbourhood” could look like, the discussion also turned to more structural problems in “have-not” areas, exemplified in the following statement made by a 15-year-old boy, “I go to school in Rosemont [a more economically prosperous area] and whenever there’s a snow storm, they plough the whole area right, all the way down to the sidewalks ... some neighbourhoods have everything, and here, there’s nothing.” Another girl answered the question, “What can we do to improve our neighbourhood?” in a different way than the others by responding, “We need to get to know our neighbours better!” Her observation pointed to the importance of community-building in improving their neighbourhood.

Additional CNA research showed that there are a number of vulnerability factors that place families in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve at risk. The poverty experienced in this neighbourhood is an entrenched, long-running phenomenon. According to David Ley, professor of urban geography at University of British Columbia, “It is the poorest continuous borough in Canada dating back to the first (1871) census” (as cited in World Vision, 2009, p. 5). It is also one of the poorest boroughs in Canada and this poverty is handed down from generation to generation (Géronimi, 2006, p. 46).

Individuals receiving their income through social assistance are often part of a community that has received social assistance for at least two generations. Teenage girls in these families who drop out of high school are often encouraged to get pregnant, because women with children can start receiving welfare before they turn 18; the social norm in this community is to throw a party for friends and family with the first welfare

cheque. There is a strong deep-rooted generational poverty combined with low levels of decision-making ability and motivation.

Despite being favourably placed in proximity to downtown Montréal, and accessible by major roads, highways, and mass transit, HM is still geographically isolated. It is physically hemmed in by the river, railroad tracks and a heavy, though mainly vacant or abandoned, industrial zone (Géronimi, 2006, p. 48). In an effort to gentrify the neighbourhood, development companies have started building condominiums and multi-income housing.<sup>4</sup> Local residents look negatively on these projects and there were even aggressive anti-gentrification actions in 2004. In the opinion of a member of a local housing rights cooperative, "Gentrification and the development of condominiums in working-class and low-income neighbourhoods represent, in their own way, a time bomb against poor tenants" (Singh, 2004). With very few single family dwellings, the many low-income apartment complexes add to the residents' sense of community (CDI, 2006, p. 10).

Currently, 50.3% of young people do not complete high school in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve (World Vision, 2009, p. 5), and over 20% of mothers do not have any education above the ninth grade (Caron, 2009). The rate of illiteracy is higher in this neighbourhood than elsewhere in Montréal and parents often discourage their children from continuing their education beyond the ninth grade (CDI, 2006, p. 22).

Child abuse is also a problem in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve. The rate of sexual abuse in this neighbourhood is the highest both in percentage and in numbers for the City of Montréal, and 30% of all requests made by police officers to the Victims of Violent Acts Help Centre are regarding cases of domestic abuse (CDI, 2006, p. 21). The victimisation rate of children (0-17 years) in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve is 63 for 1,000 children, whereas it is 21 for 1,000 children for all of Montréal (Cadotte, 2007).

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<sup>4</sup>

Multi-income housing consist of apartment complexes made up of units for all types of income families: some are sold, some are rented out, and some are used as subsidised housing units.

Other social vulnerability factors include poor health, high suicide rates and lower than average life expectancy. Most families do not go to a family doctor or paediatrician, but only bring their children to seek medical attention once the child has fallen ill.

Preventative medicine and healthy nutrition are often ignored. There is also a high incidence of circulatory system and respiratory illnesses. Between 2000 and 2002, there were 153 deaths due to circulatory diseases in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, compared to an average of 100 in Montréal, and 71 in Montréal's richest borough. There are a number of causes that explain this high number, most of which are associated with poverty, including poor nutrition, a sedentary lifestyle, and stress. In the same period, 217 people died of respiratory diseases compared to an average of 100 in Montréal. The causes are also many for this phenomenon, in addition to higher pollution rates due to the working industrial zone and a higher number of smokers in the area (Cadotte, 2007).

### 1.3 Target Population

Families in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve experience similar socioeconomic situations no matter where they live in the neighbourhood. In consultation with the community organisation by which the project will be hosted – Christian Direction Inc. or CDI – families living under the LICO in districts 14 and 15<sup>5</sup> have been chosen as the target population for this project. See Figure 7 for a map of districts 14 and 15. In addition to the fact that these districts show the presence of the greatest number of children in families, it is also the area where CDI has an existing after-school program for 12-17-year-old youth, called “Programme Accroche.” It is the mandate of CDI and Programme Accroche to not only work with these children, but with their families as well, as part of the larger community. The youth in Programme Accroche, with the families’ support and indirect participation, will be asked to participate in this project.

Districts 14 and 15 occupy 19.4% of Hochelaga-Maisonneuve’s square kilometres and its population is 19.1% of the total. Although the HM borough only reported a 0.1%

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<sup>5</sup> The official names for these districts are “014.01” and “015”; for the purposes of this study, I will be shorten these to “14” and “15.”

population increase since the last census period, districts 14 and 15 averaged a 4.1% population increase. There are more children under the age of 14 in these districts than in others, and there are more lone-parent families than in the rest of the neighbourhood.



**Figure 7. Map of districts 14.01 and 15**

There are three times as many rented dwellings in districts 14 and 15 than there are owned dwellings, and 35% of renters spend over 30% of their income on housing. The unemployment rate in districts 14 and 15 is at 11.3%, well above the borough's average of 8%, and one of the highest in the borough. However, it also has one of the highest employment rates in the area, at

61.3%. The median income for all economic families in these two census tracks is

\$44,554; for female lone-parent economic families it is \$31,027. As in other districts, this is an improvement from the last census period. However, according to an urban demographics expert (Gebauer, 2006), "The overall intuition is that some sectors have seen more affluent landowners or renters move in which have changed the median income ... It appears, however, that for many, the overall situation has not changed or has grown slightly worse" (p. 2).

### Project Participants

The youth enrolled in Programme Accroche were invited to participate in the financial capability project. Table 3 below describes the demographic make-up of the group that participated. There are two characteristics that all the youth had in common:

1. They are all attending high school, grades 7-11;
2. They all live in the target geographic area (see Figure 7 on page 21).

Other than that, the youth differed in age, gender, race, and cultural background.

**Table 2. Project Participant Characteristics**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Cultural background</b>	<b>Resident status</b>
1	17	Female	Caucasian	Québécoise	Citizen
2	16	Female	Caucasian	Québécoise	Citizen
3	16	Female	Caucasian	Québécoise	Citizen
4	15	Male	Caucasian	Québécois	Citizen
5	14	Male	Black	Congolese	Immigrant
6	13	Male	Black	Guinean	Refugee

N.B. The participants are designated by number to protect their privacy.

## 2. Problem Analysis

### 2.1 Problem Statement

A major problem facing many families in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve is they lack the financial capability to enable their children to learn the skills and access the resources that will allow them to grow up to be economically autonomous.

Financial capability is participation in economic life that maximizes life chances and enables people to lead fulfilling lives; this requires knowledge and competencies, and the ability and the opportunity to act on that knowledge. This involves linking individual functioning to institutions. It also involves use of pedagogical methods that enable people to practice and gain competency in this functioning (Johnson & Sherraden, 2007, p.122).

Economic autonomy refers to a person's "ability to make a living independent of government authorities" (McMann, 2006, abstract), or "to the concept that people do not need to economically rely upon other people within the society in order to live within that society" (AEM, 2003). Financial capability increases a person's chance of being economically autonomous, participating fully in economic and social life.

Although the employment rate in districts 14 and 15 is 61.3%, one of the highest in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, over 40% of families are still living under the LICO. The rate of unemployment is 11.3%, and the amount families receive if they are on social assistance keeps them well below the poverty line. Whether they are working poor or unemployed, families lack the knowledge on how to properly manage their income until the next pay or welfare cheque arrives.

There are both internal and external barriers to financial capability, and both types of barriers must be addressed in order to understand the causes of low financial capability

among poor youth and their families. The Problem Tree and Analysis below outline the causes and consequences of this problem.



## 2.2 Problem Tree and Analysis

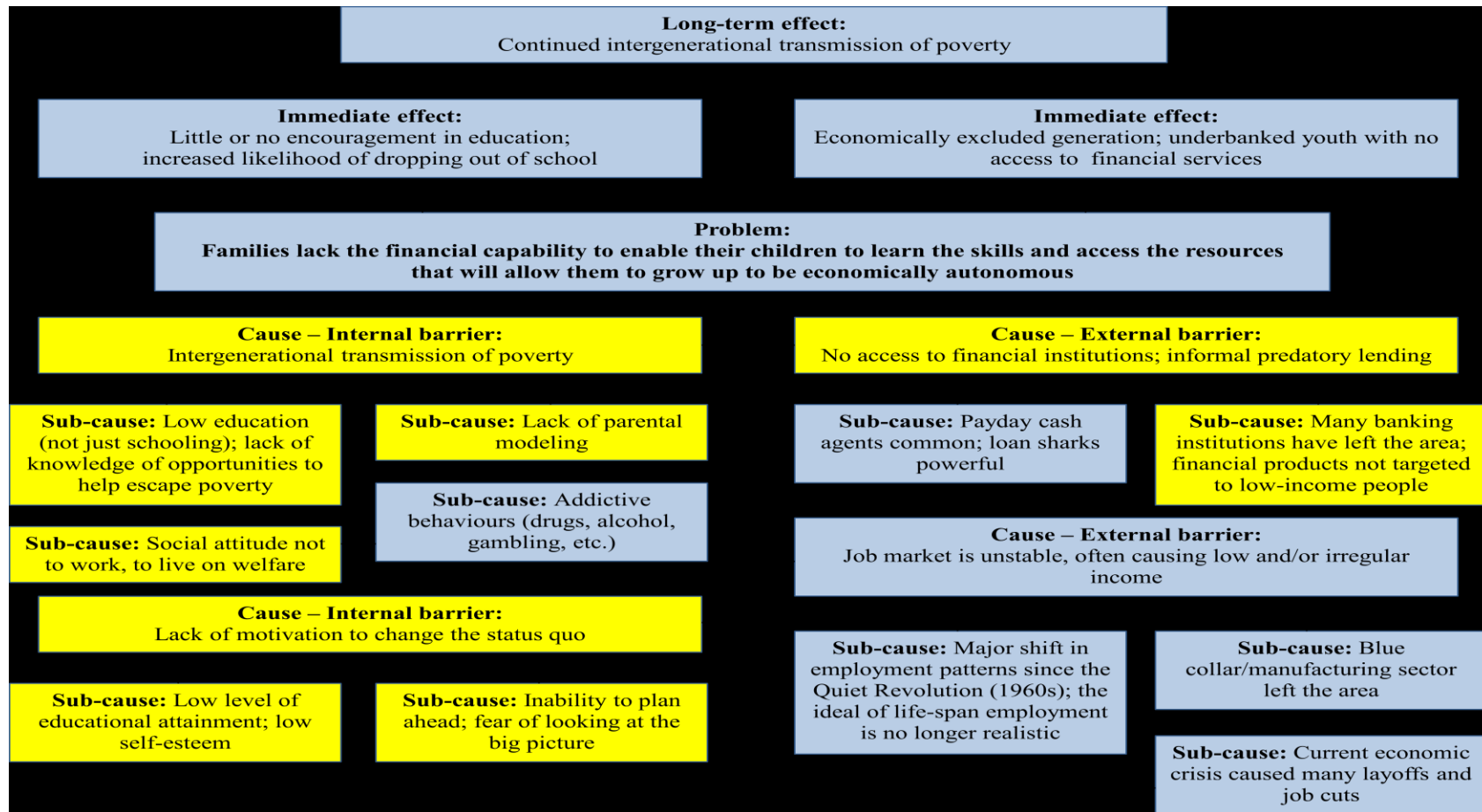


Figure 8. Problem Tree

N.B. Sections highlighted in yellow indicate causes and sub-causes directly addressed in project.

### Internal Barriers to Financial Capability

One of the main causes of families' low financial capability is the generational cycle of poverty. According to David Ley, professor of urban geography at University of British Columbia, Hochelaga-Maisonneuve "is the poorest continuous borough in Canada dating back to the first (1871) census" (as cited in World Vision, 2009, p. 5). According to Martine Géronomi (2006), researcher and professor of geography at UQAM (University of Québec in Montréal), it is also currently one of the poorest boroughs in Canada and this poverty is handed down from generation to generation (p. 46).

Some factors causing generational poverty include a lack of soft skills and adequate education that would develop cognitive capabilities; lack of knowledge about opportunities to help escape poverty; attitudes in some families and communities to survive on social assistance; lack of parental modeling; and addictive behaviours, often related to drugs, alcohol and gambling.

Many families survive on a dual economic system: they supplement their income by frequenting the many social service and community organisations in the area. For instance, Chic Resto Pop is a social economic initiative that serves healthful meals at low prices: children under six eat for free, children between seven and 12 as well as pregnant women eat for \$1.50, and everyone else pays \$3.00 per meal (Chic Resto Pop, 2008). However, though there are many good organisations in the neighbourhood, "... people do not seem to take full advantage of the services offered" (World Vision, 2009, p. 6).

A common thought coming out of stakeholder interviews was that youth do not have many good role models in their lives that represent healthy lifestyles, good decision-making and hope for the future. Denise Hervé, the coordinator of Programme Accroche, said, "My hope for youth is that they will not repeat the behaviour of their parents" (personal communication, October 26, 2009). Two other stakeholders interviewed said one of the main obstacles for youth in the area is that they do not have good models in their parents (M. Bonin, personal communication, October 21, 2009; J. Bouffard,

personal communication, October 22, 2009). Anne St. Pierre, a community gatekeeper and a stakeholder from Carrefour Jeunesse Emploi (Youth Employment Centre), lamented that although many teenagers are left with much of the household responsibility, and are often put in a position of filling a void in the family functioning, they are not seen as a validated group by the society around them. She states, “We have to meet youth in their environment with the dream of full citizenship.” She insists the community needs to start giving youth a constructive visibility in society, that there needs to be a change in the way society views youth, to give them status, to promote them in the community, and to support them (A. St-Pierre, personal communication, November 4, 2009). It is sometimes very difficult for a teenager who has grown up in a culture of social assistance to step outside of that box and enter the job market. There is often pressure from family and friends to continue living on social assistance, so there is a need for community organisations to understand that pressure, how it threatens family culture and to address it with the youth.

Addictions and addictive behaviours also impact the well-being of families in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve. When families and individuals present themselves to Cap St-Barnabé, where an important stakeholder and leader in the community, Janelle Bouffard, is the director, they must each sit down with a counsellor to discuss their financial situation before they are approved for food aid. Mrs. Bouffard’s main observation is that, once she has looked at a family’s sources of income and then at all their expenses, it is not normal that there is no money left for food. Often the unspoken cause of ongoing difficulty is tied to debt and addiction problems (personal communication, October 22, 2009). Mr. Plouffe, a socio-community advisor for CDEST (Development Corporation for East Montreal), corroborates this assertion, observing also that drug addictions are more dangerous now because of the easy accessibility and low prices of illegal substances. He adds that drug, alcohol and gambling addictions are used as means of escape from harsh daily realities, and that the gambling industry, for example, takes advantage of people in poor areas: it has been proven that video-poker machines in these areas consistently pay out significantly less than those in the casinos (personal communication, November 4, 2009).

Another cause of low financial capability in this area is the lack of motivation to change the status quo. There is a range of economic behaviours surrounding the availability of services in the neighbourhood: some families do not know how to maximise their benefit of the many social services around them, while others use the services as a crutch to avoid learning how to better manage their income.

This issue is also related to low educational attainment. Many parents are under-educated: an average of 20% of mothers have eight years of schooling or less, and in some sectors, the rate goes up to 33% (Je Passe Partout, 2009). Parents have lost the priority of education, and often feel judged and criticised by their children's teachers. For example, when asked why they do not go to parent-teacher interviews, many respond that they do not want to go through another evening of being blamed and having their children blamed for their poor performance in class. With everything else on their plates and so many different problems in their lives, thinking about their child's education is just "too much to handle" (M. Bonin, personal communication, October 21, 2009). For this and other reasons, parents do not have the skills or the confidence to help their children with their schoolwork, and often discourage their children from continuing their education. This leads to a two-sided problem: on the one hand, parents do not stimulate their children from an early age or motivate their children once they are in school, and on the other hand, because parents often do not have high levels of education, they are not respected or included in their child's education by school teachers and other educational workers (La Clé, 2006, p. 23). These bad habits and low self-esteem are passed from parent to child, and neither learns to take action to better their economic situation, either in the day-to-day management of the household or in long-term life goals.

The refusal to change the status quo also demonstrates an inability to plan ahead, or a fear of looking at the "big picture." One stakeholder described the situation with insight, "They don't see the light at the end of the tunnel, so they don't even want to look at the tunnel at all" (M. Bonin, personal communication, October 21, 2009). They refuse the opportunity to improve their situations; they are so caught up in their numerous problems

that they cannot think of the future, even if it means improving their children's lives. One stakeholder said that people don't want to change, or can't change, don't know where to start, and are scared. There are many organisations offering help but fear plays a big role in preventing parents from taking the steps to let others help them (J. Bouffard, personal communication, October 22, 2009).

### **External Barriers to Financial Capability**

One of the main external barriers to financial capability is the lack of access to financial services and financial knowledge resources in the area. Whereas historically banks were institutions of proximity, based on the parish system, starting in the 1960s there were fewer and fewer banks in the area because of the economic decline in that period. In the 1980s the banks were almost entirely replaced by automated teller machines (ATMs) and credit unions; by the 1990s, parish-based banking locations disappeared altogether, and the credit unions were centralised into only two branches in the whole neighbourhood. Today, most people receive social assistance and other government cheques through direct deposit; however, almost no one ever frequents a physical bank location. Some banks refuse to open accounts for people with low income; for example, in order to open an account, clients need a fixed address and pieces of government identification, which many poor people do not have (J.-F. Plouffe, personal communication, November 4, 2009).

In the absence of more formal and accessible financial services and resources, loan sharks often come in to fill the void (J. Bouffard, personal communication, October 22, 2009; J.-F. Plouffe, personal communication, November 4, 2009). When unexpected expenses arise, families resort to these informal, predatory lending mechanisms, with interest rates of 100% or higher. Once the debt cycle has begun, it is very difficult for families to pull themselves out of it, and are left paying for years what could have been a minor expense had they had access to more equitable and reasonable credit.

Another external barrier to financial capability is the instability of the job market. During and since the Quiet Revolution, employment patterns have vastly changed in Québec, as in

much of North America. Until recently (i.e. the past 40 years), people were employed for most of their lives in the same company, often in the same position. Although the ideal of life-span employment is no longer realistic, many people in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve tend to think this is still the norm, and are overwhelmed when the fluidity of the job market disproves their belief (J.-F. Plouffe, personal communication, November 4, 2009).

Like the banks, many manufacturing companies and other blue collar industries moved out of the area in the 1960s and 1970s, followed by many of the residents of the area. Those left had fewer employment options and opportunities. The current economic crisis has also caused many job cuts and layoffs. All these factors contribute to a more unstable job market, often causing low and irregular income to flow into the home.

Another factor influencing the low financial capability of poor families is related to both internal and external barriers, and that is the Western culture of hyper-consumerism. This issue came up in several interviews and consultations. Families do not want to deprive themselves or their children of material goods and they often will put themselves in financial jeopardy for the instant gratification which hyper-consumerism offers. There needs to be a change of mentality, and of behaviour; parents need to learn how to make good choices and how to prioritise their spending. Families need to deprive themselves of certain things to prevent going into debt; hyper-consumerism is a contributing cause to families turning to loan sharks when an unexpected expense comes up. Janelle Bouffard says, “Families need to accept to deprive themselves of certain things to prevent going into debt” (personal communication, October 22, 2009). A focus group discussion with the staff of Les Enfants de l’espoir also brought out concerns about the excessive consumer behaviours among poor families in their programs; the Christmas period is especially difficult because parents go into debt to buy their children extravagant presents. Parents will also reward themselves for very small accomplishments with excessive gifts. Similar to gambling, hyper-consumerism is used as a means of escape from or avoidance of the daily difficulties they experience.

### Effects of Low Financial Capability

The consequences of negative economic behaviours and decision-making in this neighbourhood are intrinsically linked to the effects of poverty; many families contribute to their own poverty because they do not know how to properly use the limited resources they have. A lack of confidence and other soft skills often prevents parents and families from participating in programs that could potentially help them make better decisions and improve their lives. For instance, the community organisation Je Passe Partout, that works to help children achieve better results in school and enables parents to help their children achieve scholastically, reported that, for the 2005-2006 year, two thirds of their clientele either needed help (35%), or had major psychosocial difficulties (30%) in getting involved in the program (Lussier, Bilodeau & Bélanger, 2007, p. 15). Any program addressing economic behaviours of families must take into consideration these psychosocial barriers.

When heads of households are desperate to provide for their families, they are often led to participate in illegal activities. Intervention and social workers worry about “end-of-month” prostitution they hear about from many single mothers and young girls who run out of money before they receive their next pay or welfare cheque. It is often informal prostitution and they work out of their homes or in the homes of the buyers (R. Lamont, personal communication, August 26, 2009).

Drug and alcohol abuse are a growing problem among youth in this area. In one of the neighbourhood high schools, approximately 50% of youth confirmed use of substances, such as marijuana, beer, and speed. Drug use is much higher for teenagers who have dropped out of school than for those who stay in school; whereas 3% of teenagers in school over the age of 15 said they consumed alcohol regularly, and 6% said they had tried cocaine, 47% of teenagers over 15 who are not in school said they drank beer every week, and 73% said they had tried cocaine (La Clé, 2006, p. 16).

Food security is also greatly affected by poverty. Many families do their grocery shopping at convenience stores instead of supermarkets because, although product prices are much higher, these “corner stores” are more accessible and, most importantly, many of them offer credit. Apparicio et al.’s (2007) evaluation of the accessibility of supermarkets in Montréal confirms that districts 14 and 15 in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve are indeed “food deserts”; residents have to travel an average of 1.5 kilometres to the nearest food supermarket (p. 10), most often by foot, whereas convenience stores are found on almost every street corner in the area. The credit offered by convenience stores has an incredibly high interest rate and people are constantly in debt for feeding their families.

Many of the causes listed above also result in creating an under-banked and financially illiterate generation of youth. Many youth in this area are not financially capable enough to make healthy economic decisions about their lives, and often end up following in their parents’ footsteps, including dropping out of school, having babies very young, and getting into serious debt. Anne St-Pierre criticises society for not doing more to protect youth economically; to help them develop self-checks in their consumption, and to develop their capability to think critically about money. She proposes, “The value of empowerment opposes the value of capitalism” (personal communication, November 4, 2009).

In order to work towards a viable solution to generational poverty in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, a key problem must be addressed: families lack the financial capability, caused by both internal and external factors, to enable their children to become economically autonomous and fully contributing adults.

## 2.3 Stakeholder Analysis

In order to understand a poor neighbourhood and its problems, it is important to understand their context and the neighbourhood’s social structure. As is the case with most poor neighbourhoods in North America, Hochelaga-Maisonneuve has a significant



reliance on social institutions to help the poor “navigate their world” (Sánchez-Jankowski, 2008, p. 18-19). Neighbourhood institutions, in particular, “embody, teach, and differentially reinforce local value orientations and social identities, their concomitant activity scripts, and social engagement etiquette” (Ibid, 19). Long-time workers in neighbourhood institutions often act as gate-keepers to working with the community, and can be either a great help or a great hindrance to development within their area.

As the target population for the present research is the youth and their families in districts 14 and 15 of Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, the area directly surrounding the Accroche Programme centre, the main stakeholders listed below are connected either to the youth or to the program itself.

**Table 3. Stakeholder Analysis for Accroche Youth Program**

Stakeholders	Attitude		Influence		Actions
	E	C	E	C	
Youth involved in Programme Accroche	+	?	H	/	Involve in decision-making and as co-actors; seek early success to gain trust
Parents of youth in Programme Accroche	o	??	M	/	Hope to involve through youth; consult throughout
Denise Hervé, Accroche coordinator (2009-10)	++	/	H	/	Decision-maker, co-actor
Samuel Augustin, Accroche coordinator (2010-11)	++	/	H	/	Decision-maker, co-actor
Volunteers of Programme Accroche	o	??	M	?	Involve in carrying out of project
Staff of EdE	+	/	M	/	Decision-making consultant
Manon Bonin, director, Les Enfants de l'espoir	++	/	H	/	Decision-maker, co-actor
Hochelaga-Maisonneuve child & family partnership	o	/	M	?	Informants and consultants
Hochelaga-Maisonneuve education partnership	o	/	M	?	Informants and consultants

Anne St-Pierre, director, Carrefour Jeunesse-emploi	+	?	L	?	Consultant
Christian Direction, parent organisation of Accroche	++	/	H	/	Decision-maker, co-actor
World Vision, partner to end child poverty	+	??	M	?	Co-actor, consultant, possible funder
CDEST, branch of Canadian CED Network	+	??	L	?	Consultant, possible funder, possible co-actor in future
Local bank branches (e.g. Desjardins, Royal Bank)	o	/	L	/	Consultant, possible co-actor in future of project

Legend			
E	Estimate	/	fully confident
C	Confidence	?	reasonably confident
++	strongly in favour	??	informed guess
+	weakly in favour	???	wild guess or sheer fantasy
o	indifferent or undecided	H	high; person has power of veto
-	weakly opposed	M	medium; we can achieve goals against this person's opposition, but not easily
--	strongly opposed	L	low; can do little to influence the outcomes of our intended actions

The stakeholders with the highest degree of influence with regard to this issue are the youth involved in Programme Accroche, the coordinator of Accroche, the director of Les Enfants de l'espoir, and CDI, as the parent organisation of Accroche. These four stakeholders or stakeholder groups will be important decision-makers and actors in regards to addressing issues in the program. If any of these stakeholders strongly opposes any actions taken, the project will be greatly affected.

Those with medium influence in this area are the parents of youth in the program, volunteers and staff of Accroche and Les Enfants de l'espoir, World Vision Canada, and the two partnerships of which CDI is a member. Although it is the preference that parents become involved in programs for their children, such programs may proceed

without their involvement. A higher risk may present itself if a parent or group of parents actively oppose what their children are involved in, although the probability of that happening is low. World Vision Canada is a possible funder and partner; if this partnership is achieved, their influence will be important, although they do encourage community organisations to take ownership of their own programs and so do not impose control. If funding from World Vision is not approved, other sources of funding are also available. The two HM partnerships of which CDI is a member are very influential and are important gate-keepers to working with other organisations. It is possible to do work without their approval, although the further the project proceeds, the more important their influence may be to the organisation.

Anne St-Pierre and Jean-François Plouffe are both stakeholders with low influence on the Accroche Programme. They are very helpful informants about the community and its issues and will be invaluable consultants in the development of a project to respond to the problems outlined in the research. Another low influence stakeholder is any bank that the organisation may approach to help facilitate workshops for the youth in the program. Their level of involvement is yet to be determined.

At this point in the research, there has been no strong opposition to the ideas and issues discussed with community stakeholders. They have been very helpful and sometimes cautionary, but so far the feedback has been positive.

Hochelaga-Maisonneuve has a number of needs, many of which are being addressed by community organisations, government institutions, and neighbourhood agencies. Youth often do not get the support they need from parents and teachers to continue their studies and join the work force. They are not taught or shown how to properly handle money and often end up on social assistance at a very young age, continuing the generational cycle of poverty. Education is of utmost importance for these youth, but they also require access to financial and economic services and opportunities to practice what they learn.

### 3. Literature Review

Many families in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve lack the financial capability to enable their children to learn the skills and access the resources that will allow them to grow up to be economically autonomous. This problem involves many issues and, in order to address the problem, an understanding of these issues and how they relate to one another are required. Financial literacy education must go beyond classroom-style teaching into real-world application. There are both internal and external barriers to financial capability present in the neighbourhood and environment that may prevent families and individuals from practicing their knowledge.

The lack of financial capability in families in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve involves many cross-cutting issues. These issues have been studied and defined in the academic world, both in Canada and around the world; they have also been addressed in government reports, internal organisational documents, studies, seminars and conferences. This paper, although acknowledging the importance of government and organisational contributions to the discussion, focuses mainly on academic literature that has dealt with the issues. Mostly American and European sources filled the gaps where Canadian literature was lacking; the former also help to inform learning on how we can exchange lessons across borders and sectors. Some non-peer reviewed studies were included, either to fill a gap in the academic literature or when the content was especially relevant to the discussion. The issues discussed in this literature review include the following:

- A discussion of the capability approach, as presented by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum; and how the capability approach is applicable to children and youth;
- A discussion of definitions that lead to the idea of “financial capability”;
- Financial exclusion of youth in industrialized nations, and in Canada in particular;
- The intergenerational transmission of poverty in Canada;
- Building the financial capability of economically vulnerable youth.

### 3.1 The Capability Approach

#### The Capability Approach: Sen and Nussbaum

The capability approach was mainly developed by Amartya Sen and further expanded by Martha Nussbaum. Ingrid Robeyns recently brought together the relevant writings on and critiques of the capability approach into a theoretical survey. According to her survey, the capability approach is:

[A] broad normative framework for the evaluation and assessment of individual well-being and social arrangements, the design of policies, and proposals about social change in society. ... It can be used to evaluate several aspects of a people's well-being, such as inequality, poverty, the well-being of an individual or the average well-being of the members of a group. ... [T]he capability approach is not a theory that can *explain* poverty, inequality or well-being; instead, it rather provides a tool and a framework within which to *conceptualize* and *evaluate* these phenomena (Robeyns, 2005b, p. 94).

A capability is a combination of functionings that enable a person's well-being. According to Sen, "A functioning is an achievement, whereas a capability is the ability to achieve" (as cited in Saito, 2003, p. 18). The difference between a capability and a functioning is like the difference "between an outcome and an opportunity. All capabilities together correspond to the overall freedom to lead the life that a person has reason to value" (Robeyns, 2005a, p. 65). Therefore, poverty is seen not as income deficiency but as capability deprivation, and well-being is seen as "a person's ability to do valuable acts or reach valuable states of being" (Sen, 1993, p. 30) in order to achieve the kind of life that person values. Whereas the utility-oriented approach focuses on wealth for its own sake and goods that provide instrumental value (what people are able to buy), Sen's freedom-oriented approach focuses on what is of intrinsic value in life (what people are able to do) (Sen, 1999a, p. 27; Saito, 2003, p. 19). Capability and freedom are intrinsically linked; as Sen explains, "The capability to achieve functionings

reflects the person's real opportunities or freedom of choice between possible lifestyles" (as cited in Saito, 2003, p. 21).

The capability approach asks questions such as, "What is she able to do and be? What is he in a position to do? What are their opportunities and liberties?" Capabilities are not just what resources are "sitting around," but whether they do or do not go to work, allowing people to function in a fully human way (Nussbaum, 2000, p. 71).

Sen and Nussbaum approach capabilities from different fields. Sen comes from an economics background, and focuses on measures and mathematical reasoning; Nussbaum comes from a humanities perspective, basing her approach in Aristotelian and Marxian moral-legal-political philosophy (Robeyns, 2003, p. 24). Sen's approach to capabilities raises the question of equality and inequality, and provides a good framework for comparing these based on people's capabilities in different contexts. Nussbaum goes beyond the evaluative goal and uses the capability approach as a basis upon which to articulate central constitutional principles that people have the right to demand from their governments (Nussbaum, 2000, p. 12). Unlike Sen, Nussbaum speaks of a capability threshold as more important than capability equality. The capability threshold is "the level at which a person becomes ... truly human, that is, *worthy* of a human being" (Ibid, p. 73). The goal of each government should be to provide the social basis to enable each person to access the minimum threshold of each capability (Ibid, p. 81).

Nussbaum, unlike Sen, also defines three types of capabilities – basic, internal, and combined – and provides a list of the capabilities included in her approach. Her central human functioning capabilities are: life; bodily health; bodily integrity; senses, imagination, and thought; emotions; practical reason; affiliation; other species; play; and, control over one's political and material environment (Ibid, p. 78-80). Finally, Sen and Nussbaum agree that capabilities should be pursued for each person, "treating each person as an end and none as a mere tool of the ends of others" (Ibid, p. 5).

### **The Capability Approach: Children and Youth**

Much of the literature on children and the capability approach centres on issues of child labour, specifically in developing countries. More published research is needed on the capability approach to child well-being and development. Nussbaum and Sen address child capabilities marginally in their works. Nussbaum argues that "...functioning in childhood is necessary for capability in adulthood" (Nussbaum, 2000, p. 90). Amartya Sen elaborates on this idea:

If the child does not want to be inoculated, and you nevertheless think it is a good idea for him/her to be inoculated, then the argument may be connected with the freedom that this person will have in the future by having the measles shot now. The child when it grows up must have more freedom. So when you are considering a child, you have to consider not only the child's freedom now, but also the child's freedom in the future (as cited in Saito, 2003, p. 25).

Sen also addresses how the capability approach applies to children in his keynote address at a 1999 development conference:

The quality of childhood has importance not only for what happens in childhood, but also for future life. ... The capabilities that adults enjoy are deeply conditional on their experiences as children. ... Childhood preparations and confidence also contribute to the ability of adult human beings to earn a living and to be economically productive. ... Our ability to live with others, to participate in social activities, and to avoid social disasters, is also deeply influenced by the skills we form as children (Sen, 1999, p. 5-6).

Sen stressed the importance of the potential that each child has to grow up and enjoy the full range of capabilities. As Saito summarised, "[Sen] emphasises the importance not of the freedom a child has now, but of the freedom the child will have in the future. ... We, therefore, have to consider the freedom for a child in a lifelong perspective" (Saito, 2003,

p. 25-26). It is often based on this belief that we often refer to “the best interest of the child,” and parents are given authority over their children’s decisions, because “the well-being of the child is better judged by parents or other adult persons” (Ibid, p. 26). This is one way that the capability approach distances itself from the utility approach; parents may make certain decisions for the child’s own good, even if such decisions and actions do not necessarily make children happy.

This approach to child well-being may promote a child’s health and “best interests”; however, it may also promote a view of children only for their future potential well-being. Phipps (1998) argues “many economic models of children’s well-being or children’s attainment are interested in the eventual well-being of children, once the children become adults. ... These issues are obviously extremely important, but children are people now, too. They are not simply ‘human becomings’” (p. 3). Although children and youth may have more practical and life-enhancing needs than adults, they may still be seen as full human beings who can contribute to society and to their own well-being. Nussbaum stated this dichotomy well: “There are many types of dignity in this world, including the dignity of mentally disabled children and adults ... and the dignity of babies at the breast. ... We thus need to adopt a political conception of the person ... that sees the person from the start as both capable and needy” (as cited in Di Tommaso, 2006, p. 2). The most effective approach for promoting children’s well-being may, in fact, combine both supporting a child’s welfare in their current situation as well as enabling their formation for future potential as an adult.

### **3.2 Financial Literacy, Education and Capability: Some Definitions**

The discussion on financial literacy and education has recently become more important, especially in light of the recent economic crisis. Much of the debate centers around helping people prepare for retirement. The discussion on youth financial education focuses on how financial education can be integrated into primary and secondary school curricula, and that impact evaluation of financial literacy education is inadequate. Less dealt with, but of more significance in the context of this paper, is the discussion of youth



financial capability in economically vulnerable communities and the transfer of financial knowledge into healthy economic practices. Before dealing with these issues there is a need for cohesive definitions of financial literacy, financial education, and financial capability.

There is no official definition of these terms agreed upon by theorists and practitioners; however, it is useful to explore different definitions offered by various scholars in order to settle on a specific definition for the purposes of this study and the project tied to it. Beyond definitions of each individual term, it is important to understand how these terms build on each other to achieve a more holistic view of financial capability, and to decide which of these terms best characterises the focus a community economic development project should have.

### **Financial Literacy**

Financial literacy may have the most straightforward definition. A widely accepted definition of financial literacy, first proposed by Lois Vitt and colleagues (2000), and used by the Policy Research Initiative (2004), the Canadian Policy Research Networks (Orton 2007), among others, is the following:

The ability to read, analyze, manage and communicate about the personal financial conditions that affect material well-being. It includes the ability to discern financial choices, discuss money and financial issues without (or despite) discomfort, plan for the future, and respond competently to life events that affect everyday financial decisions, including events in the general economy (Vitt et al., 2000, p. xii; PRI, 2004, p. 5; Orton, 2007, p.8; Johnson & Sherraden, 2007, p. 122).

One of the strengths of this definition is that it describes financial literacy in terms of managing, not simply understanding, one's finances. The problem that many scholars have with the current idea of financial literacy is that the impact of financial literacy is

very difficult to track. It is often easy for financial literacy students to respond to questions concerning finances and to prove in writing that they have financial knowledge. Therefore, people often think they have a better grasp on financial knowledge than they actually do. However, it is difficult to track the results of a financial literacy course on people's real life outcomes. A major obstacle contributing to this problem is that financial literacy is taught mainly from a theoretical standpoint, so that people are taught financial literacy "on paper," but not how to take that knowledge into the real world. Starting with a definition that may lead into more practical application of a theoretical education will help lead financial literacy programs in the right direction.

Having the ability to manage and communicate financial conditions suggests that financial literacy programs must go beyond classroom teaching. Cutler and Devlin propose that "financial literacy has both a knowledge component (i.e., individuals' performance on objective tests of financial knowledge) as well as a confidence component (i.e., individuals' self-reported knowledge, abilities, and efficacy related to financial matters)" (as cited in PRI, 2004, p. 5). Programs that wish to address the latter part of financial literacy, particularly as it relates to abilities and efficacy, must go beyond literacy into education.

### Financial Education

Being able to bring academic or theoretical knowledge into real life situations is an important component of education in general, not just in financial education. Although the term *financial education* is not as widely used as *financial literacy* or *financial capability*, it is a useful term to understand the cognitive transition between the other two concepts. According to McCormick (2009),

Literacy is the possession of basic knowledge or competence, and education is the means to build that capacity. Most broad-based financial education programs for adults and children attempt to bring all participants to a minimum basic knowledge of money management skills regarding banking, finance, savings,

credit, and so forth; many attempt to accommodate individual or familial goals” (McCormick 2009, 71).

By accommodating a student’s personal goals, financial education helps that student bring basic knowledge and competence into a real life setting. An important step in financial education is “using that knowledge and understanding to plan, implement, and evaluate financial decisions” (McCormick, 2009, p. 71).

Orton (2007) goes beyond McCormick’s definition and further closes the gap between financial education and capability:

Financial education is the process by which financial consumers/investors improve their understanding of financial products and concepts and, through information, instruction and/or objective advice, develop the skills and confidence to become more aware of financial risks and opportunities, to make informed choices, to know where to go for help, and to take other effective actions to improve their financial well-being (Orton, 2007, p. 8).

Including well-being in his definition, Orton opens up the sphere of financial education to the possibility of addressing financial illiteracy as part of the bigger problem of economic poverty. He does not push the idea far enough, though, in that he does not account for other non-economic factors that may prevent some people from improving their well-being, financial and otherwise.

Many other studies on financial education curricula in schools and community programs have shown that financial education does not necessarily lead to healthy financial practices. In some cases, there is actually a negative impact on financial behaviour. Mandell (2008) found “no apparent relationship between financial education in school and financial literacy scores” (as cited in Sherraden, 2010, p. 5). Financial education may have this negative impact because knowledge without access to financial products and services makes low-income students lose confidence and feel powerless to act on their

newly acquired knowledge. Willis (2008) finds that current financial education models places too much blame on the consumer, who often end up being the victims of harmful creditor policies and practices. She judges this blame is detrimental for two reasons:

1. “It provides a convenient excuse for society to refrain from assisting consumers who experience poor financial outcomes...
2. [E]ven as it blames low-wealth consumers and their communities for their financial plight, any benefits of financial education are likely to flow disproportionately to the financially better-off” (Willis, 2008, p. 280-281).

Willis concludes “consumer financial woes are more tractably understood as the result of a government that fails to regulate, an industry that hawks inappropriate products, and a deluge of complex products that change quickly” (Ibid, p. 283).

Both financial literacy and financial education are a good starting point for beginning a dialogue on financial well-being, but neither allow for a holistic view of human development and well-being. Financial literacy and education may help people understand and perhaps even better manage their finances, but both concepts lack the key to what makes financial capability the more comprehensive and holistic approach to financial well-being. Financial education is helpful, but alone is not sufficient to promote people’s financial well-being. Knowing what a budget is or memorising financial facts will not ensure a person’s participation in financial society. As Pool (2006) puts it in his elimination of flawed definitions of capability, “Those who see in financial capability a possibility that if you know enough mathematics you will avoid money problems have yet to prove their case” (p. 31).

### **Financial Capability**

The idea of “financial capability” is relatively new and has been developed in the UK and Canada, and, more recently, in the United States. The Policy Research Initiative’s discussion paper on financial capability and poverty is referred to extensively, and defines financial capability as a combination of financial knowledge and skills, financial

competence, and financial responsibility (PRI, 2004, p. 6). Orton also uses this definition of financial capability, and offers a definition of economic capability:

“While personal financial management remains a core component, economic capability also includes notions of economic citizenship and reference to the need for a better understanding of how macro-economic and micro-economic forces and the labour market relate to daily life and decisions” (Orton, 2007, p. 8).

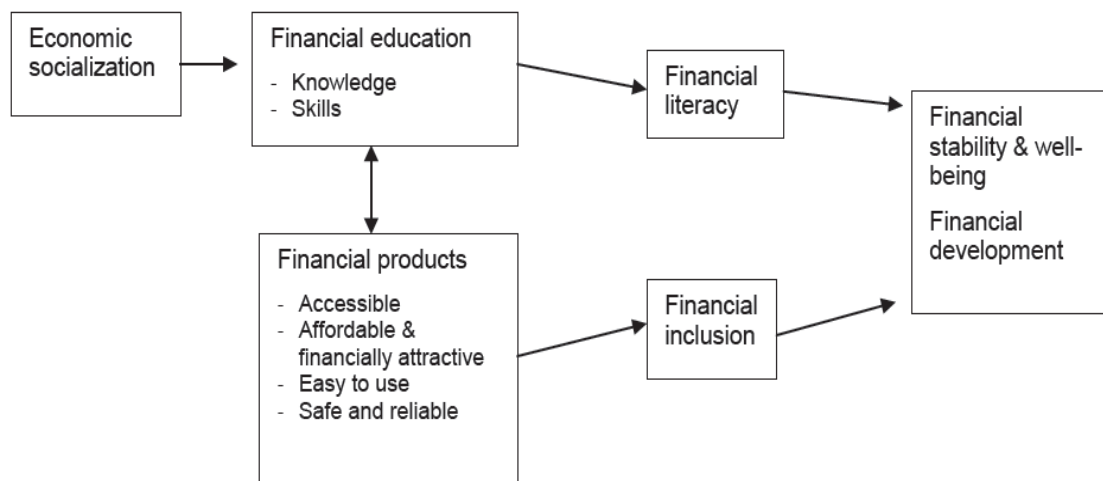
The weakness in Orton’s definition of both financial education and economic capability is that he does not take account of the role that external entities play in providing access to financial services to economically vulnerable communities. He addresses the issue of access with the use of the terms “financial exclusion” and “marginalisation,” but he does not link financial exclusion with financial capability and economic capability.

Johnson and Sherraden (2007) build on the PRI discussion paper, as well as Amartya Sen’s capability approach, to develop the financial capability approach this paper will assume in the future. In Johnson and Sherraden’s view,

[F]inancial literacy is a helpful but not sufficient idea. Participation in economic life should maximize life chances and enable people to lead fulfilling lives. This requires knowledge and competencies, ability to act on that knowledge, and opportunity to act. This involves linking individual functioning to institutions. It also involves use of pedagogical methods that enable people to practice and gain competency in this functioning. We refer to this as ‘financial capability’” (Johnson & Sherraden, 2007, p. 122).

Financial capability goes beyond financial literacy and education; “the concept of *financial capability* includes financial literacy but also addresses... institutional barriers facing low-income households” (Sherraden, 2010, p. 2). In other words, “financial capability would require that a person have basic analytic capabilities (internal capabilities, or the ‘ability to act’), but also benefit from external conditions that allow

them to exercise these abilities” (Ibid, p. 3). Nussbaum (2000) developed the idea of internal capabilities and external conditions and though “each are important, [they] may also interact in ways that make the combination more beneficial than the sum of its parts” (Sherraden, 2010, p. 16). Sherraden’s model of financial capability takes into account economic socialisation as a person’s starting point in financial experience, and acknowledges that education and institutions interact to form a person’s financial capability: “Together financial literacy and financial inclusion build financial capability in low-income households” (Ibid, p. 15).



**Figure 9. Sherraden's Model of Financial Capability**

The key difference between this definition and previous definitions of financial education is the “opportunity to act.” Financial literacy and education focus on the individual’s competence and internal financial barriers to success, whereas financial capability offers of much more holistic focus on internal financial, social, economic, and psychological barriers, as well as external barriers to success. McCormick (2009) summarises this very well:

The term financial capability is intended to include not only the concept of education but also access to financial services and institutions, arguing that knowledge alone—without access to the resources and services of financial institutions, especially for those coming from under- or unbanked communities—

will not ultimately allow people to choose a financially literate lifestyle (McCormick, 2009, p. 71).

### **Financial Capability among Youth**

There exists little literature on financial capability and youth (although there is a wealth of literature on youth and financial literacy and education). Overall, it is generally agreed that “students from lower-income families are less financially literate than others” (Beverly & Burkhalter, 2005, p. 122). Lusardi et al., as well as Mandell, all found “a high correlation between financial literacy and parent education and financial investment” (as cited in Sherraden, 2010, p. 4).

Further, even when financial literacy and knowledge are comparable among lower- and higher-income families, lower-income families have fewer resources and ability to handle unforeseen financial problems. “When a low-income family does not grasp the full meaning of credit card interest rates and fee structures, for example, the results can be far more devastating than in a wealthier household where there is a financial cushion” (Ibid, p. 4). Lower financial capability in families also affects how children and youth learn economic and financial habits that are more difficult to break or change later in life; “if parents lack financial knowledge and skills, they cannot model sound financial decision-making. Children may receive positive reinforcements, especially from peers, for poor economic choices” (Ibid, p. 4).

Research by different scholars (Beverly & Burkhalter, 2005; Danes & Haberman, 2007; Johnson & Sherraden, 2007) and organisations (Jump\$tart Coalition; SEDI) has shown that youth are generally financially illiterate and have little access or knowledge of financial services and institutions in their environment. Johnson and Sherraden (2007) sum it up well, “Youth ... have very little knowledge about how to make wise consumption decisions. Many accumulate significant debt that may lead to poor credit scores and possible bankruptcy. ... At the same time, many youth lack savings accounts and savings” (p. 120). Danes and Haberman (2007) report that “parents are not providing

children with adequate financial education based on their own lack of knowledge” and that “[c]hildren have witnessed informal skills demonstrated by parents in their daily actions that often involve finances” (p. 48, 50). Informal skills demonstrated by lower-income parents often include unhealthy financial behaviour and habits, such as high-interest borrowing, or saving cash at home instead of in a savings account.

Instead of only focusing on the internal capabilities, or lack thereof, of low-income families, more emphasis should be put on the importance of external resources and conditions.

### 3.3 Financial Exclusion

Financial exclusion of low-income youth is a primary contributing factor in their low financial capability: “Minority and low-income youth are less likely to have access to mainstream financial systems. ... Low-income youth are more likely to come from families who are ‘unbanked’ and therefore lack early information and access” (Johnson & Sherraden, 2007, p. 124). The UK Financial Services Authority proposes six dimensions of financial exclusion that constitute barriers to financial participation by low-income consumers.

1. Geographical exclusion: the reduction or closure of bank branches in low-income areas;
2. Access exclusion: the restriction of access through the processes of risk assessment;
3. Condition exclusion: where the conditions attached to financial products make them inappropriate for the needs of some people;
4. Price exclusion: where some people can only gain access to financial products at prices they cannot afford;
5. Marketing exclusion: whereby some people are effectively excluded by targeting marketing and sales to higher income demographics;



6. Self-exclusion: people may decide that there is little point applying for a financial product because they believe they would be refused. Sometimes this is a result of having been refused personally in the past, sometimes because they know someone else who has been refused, or because of a belief that ‘they don’t accept people who live round here’ (Kempson et al., 2000, p. 9).

There are many ways in which youth are excluded from mainstream financial institutions, and if they cannot gain access to bank accounts, credit, and other financial products, they will have no means to practice skills and knowledge learned through financial education programs.

Buckland and Dong (2008) found that, in Canada, “the financially excluded are most likely to be households that have lower income, have less net worth, have no RRSPs, do not own a home, have more children, receive government transfers, are sole parents, are less educated, and have no one to turn to to cushion financial crisis” (p. 258). In addition, Kempson, Atkinson, and Pilley (2004) found evidence that as much as 10% of low earners in Canada over the age of 18 do not a bank account of any kind (p. 30). The reasons for this include many of those listed above. However, those are not always the reasons stated by low-income individuals, who often state “they did not want or need [a bank account], or they disliked banks” (Kempson, Atkinson & Pilley, 2004, p. 30). These types of statements point to the lack of financial capability and low self-esteem low-income families exhibit in their outlook on financial institutions.

This lack of interaction with formal banking institutions, coupled with the rising trend across Canada of closing bank branches (Ibid, 2004, p. 30), is driving more and more low-income families and individuals turn to informal financial services or “alternative banking facilities, such as cheque-cashing firms” (Ibid, 2004 p. 30), which further indebt and victimize them. Finally, low-income families with children and single-parent families tend to be financially excluded (Buckland and Dong, 2008, p. 255, 258). The link between this and the long-term financial outcomes for children and youth is explored in the next section.

### 3.4 Intergenerational Transmission of Poverty

Many practitioners and organisations affirm that the transmission of poverty, or of the conditions of poverty, from parent to child is one of the main reasons they focus on child well-being and development. It is often assumed that if a parent has a continuously low income, the child will grow up also earn a low income. The literature which explores this assumption reveals a more complex picture. Although parental income is influential in a child's long-term financial outcomes in life, there are many other factors that play a role as well.

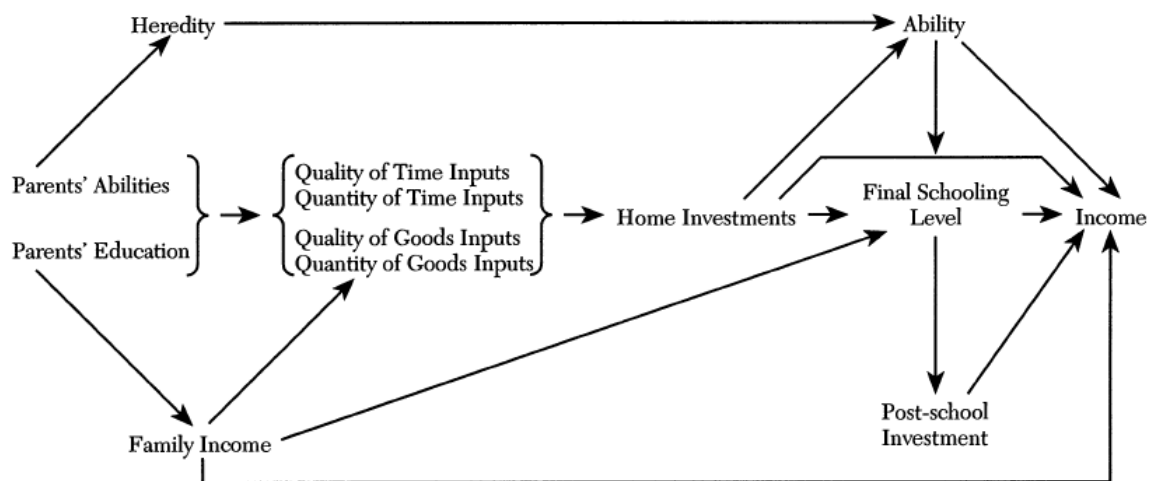
The decision to participate in a welfare program is usually made if an individual's or family's expected utility on welfare is greater than its expected utility off welfare, and the rate of welfare participation will go up as the opportunity cost of non-participation goes up (Charette and Meng, 1994, p. 292). For example, the costs of child and infant care are the highest costs for mothers (Ibid, 1994, p. 304); it is often too high an opportunity cost to justify a single mother working when a large portion of her earnings will go towards paying for child care.

Intergenerational transmission of poverty and social assistance program participation is of great concern to government and policy makers for many reasons; among other things, "Education policy, early childhood investment, access to health care, and immigration policy are all motivated by this issue" (Corak, 2001, p. 2). On a community organisation level, the intergenerational transmission of poverty is a worry, one reason being that single-parent households are among the poorest in the country, and are also more likely to depend on social assistance than other family types. In fact, overall welfare dependence is almost double for single-parent households than for any other type of household in Quebec (Duclos, Fortin, Lacroix & Roberge, 1999, p. 222). There are many more female headed single-parent households than male headed single-parent households, and female single parents are less likely to be well-educated. It is well-documented that the higher the level of education, the lower the probability of welfare participation (Charette and Meng, 1994; Duclos, Fortin, Lacroix & Roberge, 1999; Corak, 2001). Beaulieu, Duclos,

Fortin, and Rouleau (2005) found, “Years of parental schooling have, as expected, a negative impact on the youth’s propensity to participate [in a welfare program];” in fact, one additional schooling year for a parent reduces a child’s likelihood to participate in a welfare program by 1.6% (p. 557).

There are many links between childhood experiences and later-life outcomes, and many studies reveal these links in the Canadian context. Lipman and Offord (1997) found that children whose families repeatedly earn income below the LICO suffer significant academic and psychiatric difficulties (p. 239). Currie and Stabile (as cited in Jenkins and Siedler, 2007, p. 32) state the health of children in low income families becomes worse with age because they are subjected to more health shocks than children in higher income families. Sons whose fathers received social assistance in the past make their first unemployment claim earlier and are more likely to be repeat unemployment claimants (Corak, Gustafsson & Österberg, 2000, p. 7).

It has been proposed that the intergenerational transmission of poverty is dependent on parental income or home investments in children. Haveman and Wolfe’s (1995) process for such home investments is shown below. This process emphasizes the importance of family income, opportunities and support provided by parents to children, and the ability for parents to encourage and pay for post-secondary education.



**Figure 10. Haveman & Wolfe’s Home Investments in Children Process**

Indeed home investments and family income do play some role in a child's later income, and intergenerational transmission of poverty does in fact take place, but the reasons are not clear cut. The many correlations between income and later-life outcomes should not all be seen as causations. "Once one takes account of the other potential factors besides parental income (or poverty) that may play a role in the intergenerational transmission process, the association between income (or poverty) and later-life outcomes is reduced, but typically does not disappear" (Jenkins and Siedler, 2007, p. V). The inconclusiveness of the evidence is captured in some of the key findings of a study on enduring poverty:

The most striking features of the body of evidence on poverty transfers are (i) its ambiguity and highly context-dependent conclusions and (ii) much more evidence of correlations between indicators of parental and child well-being, and of overall levels of social mobility, than of the processes by which poverty cycles are reinforced or broken (Harper, Marcus & Moore, 2003, p. 537).

Furthermore, home investments go well beyond the impact of income levels on family and children. The ability of a parent to send their child to post-secondary education institutions involves much more than the financial investment. Many low-income parents who are not educated do not encourage, and some even discourage, their children to pursue post-secondary education. Heckman (as cited in Corak, 2001, p. 11) summarizes this case well:

Children's tastes for education and their expectations about their life chances are shaped by those of their parents. Educated parents are better able to develop scholastic aptitude in their children by assisting and directing their studies. The influence of family factors that are present from birth through adolescence accumulate over many years to produce ability and college readiness.

Fortin and Lefebvre (1998) make an interesting comparison and find intergenerational income mobility (the process of moving from one income level to another) is higher in

Canada than in the United States or the United Kingdom. However, they also find income mobility is greater for younger age groups; in other words, the longer a person is poor, the more likely he or she will remain poor (p. 20). Corak (2001) makes a similar finding that, although children from at the top of the income spectrum are almost guaranteed to stay at the top when they grow up, children from low-income families are not guaranteed to become low-income adults. He challenges the causation assumption and concludes “there is little relationship at all between their position in the income distribution and that of their parents” (p. 15).

There has been evidence recorded, however, of the transmission of social assistance program participation of parents into an increased probability of future participation by their children. Beaulieu, Duclos, Fortin, and Rouleau (2005) found, “on average, a 1-percentage unit increase in parental participation during the youth’s pre-adult years (ages 7-17) raises the youth’s participation rate by 0.29 percentage unit during early adulthood (ages 18-21)” (p. 539). This transmission of welfare participation can be explained either by a causal link between parental and child participation, or by an intergenerational correlation between the individual and environment-specific characteristics that affect a person’s propensity to participate (Beaulieu, Duclos, Fortin & Rouleau, 2005, p. 540).

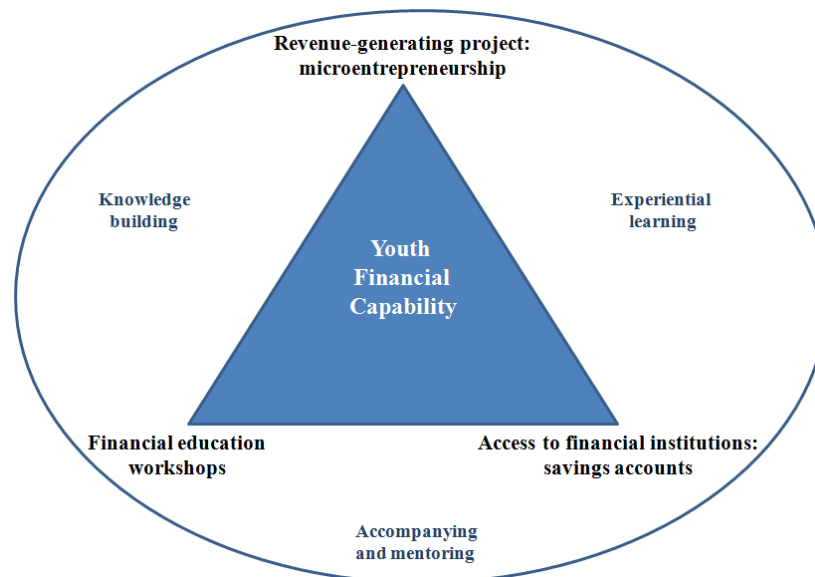
In the causality case, it is influenced by the “conformity effect”, because children often grow up “to imitate family behaviour.” This “conformity effect”, in which the stigma of participation is reduced by parents’ participation, combines with the “learning effect,” wherein the child learns how to use the program while living with the participating parent, thus reducing barriers to participation for the child. On the other hand, transmission of participation could be dictated by environment-specific variables, or the “shared determinants effect,” a set of values and perceptions shared by parents and children. Shared determinants can include such variables as level of education, motivation to work, shared personality traits, and neighbourhood of residence. For example, “if the nonpecuniary dis-utility of working is perceived as very large by both parents and children, voluntary non-participation in the labour market (and thus reliance

on SA) can be viewed as a rational decision by both generations” (Beaulieu, Duclos, Fortin & Rouleau, 2005, p. 544).

Another aspect of the intergenerational transmission of poverty is the study of neighbourhoods’ effect on a child’s long-term outcomes. Contact with neighbours, geographical location, municipal interventions, policies, and services, taxation, the overall socio-economic environment a child grows up in can all impact a child’s choices and opportunities. Vartanian (1999) summarizes different theories on how neighbourhoods influence youth’s later-life outcomes. The social isolation theory, for example, hypothesizes that children in low-income neighbourhoods may be more likely to participate in social assistance programs, even if their own family did not, because there is a lower stigma and more knowledge about such programs in those neighbourhoods (p. 227). He also refers to a number of studies which found that “living in economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods had negative, linear effects on educational attainment and the likelihood of adults exiting the [welfare] program” (p. 228).

### 3.5 Enabling Youth Financial Capability

As stated above, financial education is a necessary but insufficient component for preparing youth to grow up to be economically autonomous adults. The author suggests the following basic model for planning youth financial capability projects.



**Figure 11. Basic Model for Youth Financial Capability Interventions**

Financial education has already been addressed above. Access to financial institutions and opportunities to practice financial knowledge and skills are the two other facets of enabling financial capability among youth; these components are addressed in this section. Both participating in a microenterprise project and opening and managing a savings account are crucial ways youth can learn experientially and apply knowledge acquired in financial education workshops.

## Experiential Learning

Enhancing the financial capability of youth must link financial literacy and education with access to financial services; *experiential learning* through access to financial institutions has been suggested by scholars in this field as a method to enable youth to increase their financial capability and become economically autonomous adults (Johnson & Sherraden, 2007; Boone & King-Berry, 2009).

Johnson and Sherraden (2007) propose experiential learning, or “learning by doing,” because it “allows students to test their understanding and explore their developing ideas through interaction with the environment. Experiential learning uses a cycle of action, reflection, conceptualisation, and new experience” (p. 126). Boone and King-Berry (2009) are also proponents of linking experiential learning with access to financial services and instruments in order to provide meaningful opportunities for students to use their financial knowledge and skills; such experiential learning could include helping students open a bank account (as opposed to simply encouraging them to do so on their own) and providing training on the use of ATMs and credit cards (p. 29).

Sherraden (2010) specifies that financial experiential learning should focus on experience with a particular financial product: “...the addition of the product may increase motivation to learn and assimilation of financial information” (p. 17). Promoting the use of a savings account, for instance, and helping youth access a bank and open an account that will meet their needs could enable the youth to learn more about savings, financial goals, and other bank services and products than simply providing written information, or even hypothetical role-playing, about savings accounts.



### Youth-Inclusive Financial Services: Youth Savings

One of the distinctive features of financial capability, as opposed to financial literacy or education, is the link to financial institutions and services. It is widely agreed by practitioners and researchers that youth savings is becoming the most important financial product needed for the world's growing youth population.

Although to date youth savings has received little scholarly attention, there is a growing amount of research being done on the increasing number of youth savings programs around the world, spanning issues such as characteristics of youth savers, the demand for savings products, and the impact of saving on youth. In a study conducted by the Center for Social Development (Masa et al., 2010), it was demonstrated, through the reports of many different organisations in many different parts of the developing world, that poor youth can and do save, and that savings programs have seen overall success in their youth services (p. 2). Furthermore, it is known that youth want to and do save, "regardless of income, gender, age, religion, parental status, and marital status, and other personal characteristics" (Masa et al., 2010, p. 5). Rosen and Squire (2009) confirm from their experience and practitioner interviews that low-income youth can and will save and make productive asset purchases (p. 2).

In a survey of 131 organisations from around the world offering financial services, products, or linkages to such services and products, Making Cents International (2010) discovered, "In regard to types of services being provided, whereas currently more organisations are providing credit than savings, those providing financial services noted that demand is greatest in the area of savings" (p. 164). In their review of AssetsAfrica's program, Chowa and Ansong (2010) agree that savings is a huge, yet largely unmet, demand in youth populations (p. 1591). Without access to formal savings mechanisms, young people can still save and accumulate assets, but at a slower pace and in very small amounts, which does not enhance well-being in the long term (Ibid, p. 1596).

According to Chowa and Ansong, “Savings for young people represent one of the most predictable determinants of their successful personal and economic development” (p. 1591); they found that “young people who save have a positive view of themselves, plan for the future, have a sense of security in times of shock, and are also cautious about spending and consumption” (p. 1591-92). Masa et al. (2010) found positive relationships between savings accounts and higher levels of savings, income, and assets, higher self-esteem and mental health, higher academic grades and test scores, and improved attitudes on education (p. 6-9).

Scanlon and Adams (2009) also argue that youth savings programs have a positive impact on their well-being, and interviewed youth participants in a matched savings program to understand how the youth themselves perceived these impacts. The most significant impacts which emerged were:

1. Fiscal prudence: the youth felt they were more thoughtful about spending and more cautious in consumption decisions; they also stated learning to differentiate between needs and wants, delaying gratification, and reducing impulsivity;
2. Future orientation: youth stated thinking and talking more about future goals, especially educational and financial;
3. View of self: saving enhanced self-image and confidence overall, as well as a sense of independence and pride (Scanlon & Adams 2009, 36-38).

The impact of future orientation is consistent with Sherraden’s finding that “assets generate a virtuous cycle that stimulates the capacity and desire to exit poverty” (as paraphrased in Scanlon & Adams, 2009, p. 42). By prioritizing future goals, youth are more likely to be fiscally prudent in the present.

Scanlon and Adams also found that, although saving positively affected youth’s self-image, low-income youth participating in the program who were unable to save large amounts actually suffered a decline in self-confidence, perhaps blaming themselves for not saving as much compared to youth from higher-income households, where parents as

more willing and able to contribute to their child's savings account (p. 42-43). This finding has implications for programs targeted at low-income youth, such as incentive structures and motivational technique customized to low-income populations (p. 44).

### **Revenue-Generating Activities: Youth Microentrepreneurship**

Another way to promote experiential learning, build self-confidence, and incentivize savings program adherence is to involve youth in a revenue-generating project.

Microentrepreneurship is not only a good way for youth to earn money, but also teaches valuable knowledge and skills youth can use throughout their lives. Furthermore, “not only does entrepreneurship education help young people develop entrepreneurial skills, attributes and behaviours; but it also can promote entrepreneurship as a viable career path for youth” (Making Cents International, 2010, p. 13).

Microentrepreneurship is also a good way to connect youth with partner organisations and business professionals, which opens up new opportunities and experiences from which youth may not otherwise benefit. “Seasoned business professionals can provide young people with practical advice, encouragement, and support, which can help youth in their transition out of training programs and into jobs and other income-generating activities” (Ibid, 2010, p. 16).

Dixon (2006) suggests two approaches to enabling financial capability in low-income communities:

“[A] direct approach that aims to respond to people's interests and concerns, and build interest and motivation through the provision of education and advice; and a more indirect approach that aims to help people build up a financial stake and thereby promote interest and engagement in financial capability” (p. 42).

Engaging youth in a joint project of microentrepreneurship, savings, and financial education workshops combines both these approaches. By enhancing their financial capability through this holistic approach enables youth to engage in financial inclusion and break the cycle of poverty.

## 4. Project Design

### 4.1 Theory of Change

It is the hope of many community workers and organisations in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve to see families and individuals break the cycle of generational transmission of poverty and the dependence on social assistance. The capability approach, applied to financial inclusion and skills, provides the basis for the theory of change of this project. Whereas financial literacy teaches youth terms and information about the financial world and how to budget, financial capability is a more holistic approach to development. Building on skills of financial literacy, this project aims to also introduce youth to the opportunities to put their knowledge and skills into practice. The capability approach links functioning with institutions, so that people not only learn, but also practice and experience their learning in the real world. A major impediment to breaking the cycle of poverty in this area is the lack of access to the institutions that will enable youth to fully engage as autonomous and capable citizens. Enhancing their financial capability encapsulates all these: skills and knowledge as well as access and opportunity.

The idea of “full citizenship” was first introduced to us by Anne St-Pierre, the director of the neighbourhood’s youth employment centre. She said, “We have to meet youth in their environment with the dream of full citizenship” (personal communication, November 4, 2009): often, youth are not given the opportunity to develop to their full potential. Part of the change that needs to happen is that youth should be given a voice as a group, be allowed the power to act, be given a constructive visibility and demographic weight. The adults in their community need to lose the prejudice of incapability and change the way we view youth and give them status in society. Enhancing their capabilities will empower them to have a voice in their communities and take the place they deserve.

## 4.2 Logic Model and Analysis

### Outcomes

In the short-term, this project's aim was to increase the participants' financial knowledge and skills, raise their awareness of the value of financial knowledge and information, and introduce them to or increase their access to various financial services and venues for enhancing their financial skills.

These short-term outcomes were expected to lead to increased financial capability overall, which youth would demonstrate through sound financial decision-making (e.g. setting and achieving financial budgets and goals), the opening and maintenance of a bank account, and the pursuit of further financial education and training.

Increased financial capability, paired with academic support and mentorship were expected to enable youth to plan for the future. The long-term objective of enhancing the financial capability of youth in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve was to empower them to plan for the future and achieve longer term goals, such as finishing high school and joining the workforce; and, ultimately, to break the cycle of intergenerational transmission of poverty in their families.

### Activities and Outputs

The activities and expected outputs for this project were designed to lead, specifically, to achieving the short-term outcome of youth demonstrating increased financial knowledge and skills, increased awareness of the value of financial knowledge and information, and access to various financial services and venues for enhancing their financial skills.

Financial and budgeting activities were aimed at increasing the youth's knowledge and understanding of financial issues they may encounter as they get older, such as pay checks, bank accounts, saving, credit cards, loans and interest, price comparison, and financial decision-making (or budgeting). This learning was to be paired with field trips so youth

could actually see and experience how some of these issues play out in the real world. Each field trip had a purpose for the project, such as, for example:

<b>Field trip</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Caisse Desjardins (local credit union)	How to open and manage a bank account
CDEST (Montreal East Development Corporation)	Social economy and small business for youth
CJE (Youth Employment Centre)	Career options (and pay) for high school, CEGEP, or university graduates

Much of the learning and visits mentioned above were designed to have more impact in the context of participatory fundraising activities with the youth. In order to make money for the group, themselves, and other causes, youth had the opportunity to participate in a fundraising, or microenterprise, project, through which they learned how to budget for, plan, and execute a money-making project in their neighbourhood. With each project, more of the decision-making and leadership was given to the youth. The money raised was then used to teach youth how to properly plan and use money at their disposal, whether it for the common use of the group, or divided among members of the project. For those youth who were especially interested in how to run an enterprise, they would eventually be connected with other community organisations that have the resources to allow them to pursue this passion.

The expected outputs from the above activities included:

- Youth learn how to budget, and to set and achieve financial goals;
- Youth learn financial systems and services;
- Youth open checking/ savings accounts;
- Youth are empowered through community participation.

Youth would demonstrate financial capability when they felt comfortable with money matters, when they felt they could have control over their own finances and over the

interactions they have with financial institutions. In short, youth would have financial capability when they were empowered to deal with the financial and economic world, and this would enable youth to live out a full citizenship within their society.

### **Assumptions and Environmental Factors**

The project's context, Programme Accroche's after-school tutoring and mentoring program, provided activities, knowledge and services that placed the youth's enhanced financial capability within a broader context of persevering to finish high school, learning healthy habits for interpersonal relationships, and building self-confidence. This program provided the foundation youth needed to apply their knowledge and access to opportunities to then plan for the future, join the workforce, and break the cycle of poverty in their families.

One of the assumptions that was very important for the success of the project was the project and activities were fun enough to keep the youth's interest and participation. Many people to whom we presented this idea were enthusiastic, but also warned that teaching youth about money risks being boring, or too much "like school". Therefore, we had to always be aware of this risk and adjust our activities accordingly. Another way of upholding this assumption was to involve the youth as much as possible in the planning and development of activities, especially that which relates to the fundraising projects. The assumption was that by involving the youth, not only would the activities maintain the "fun" factor, the youth would also be empowered by the leadership they are being allowed.

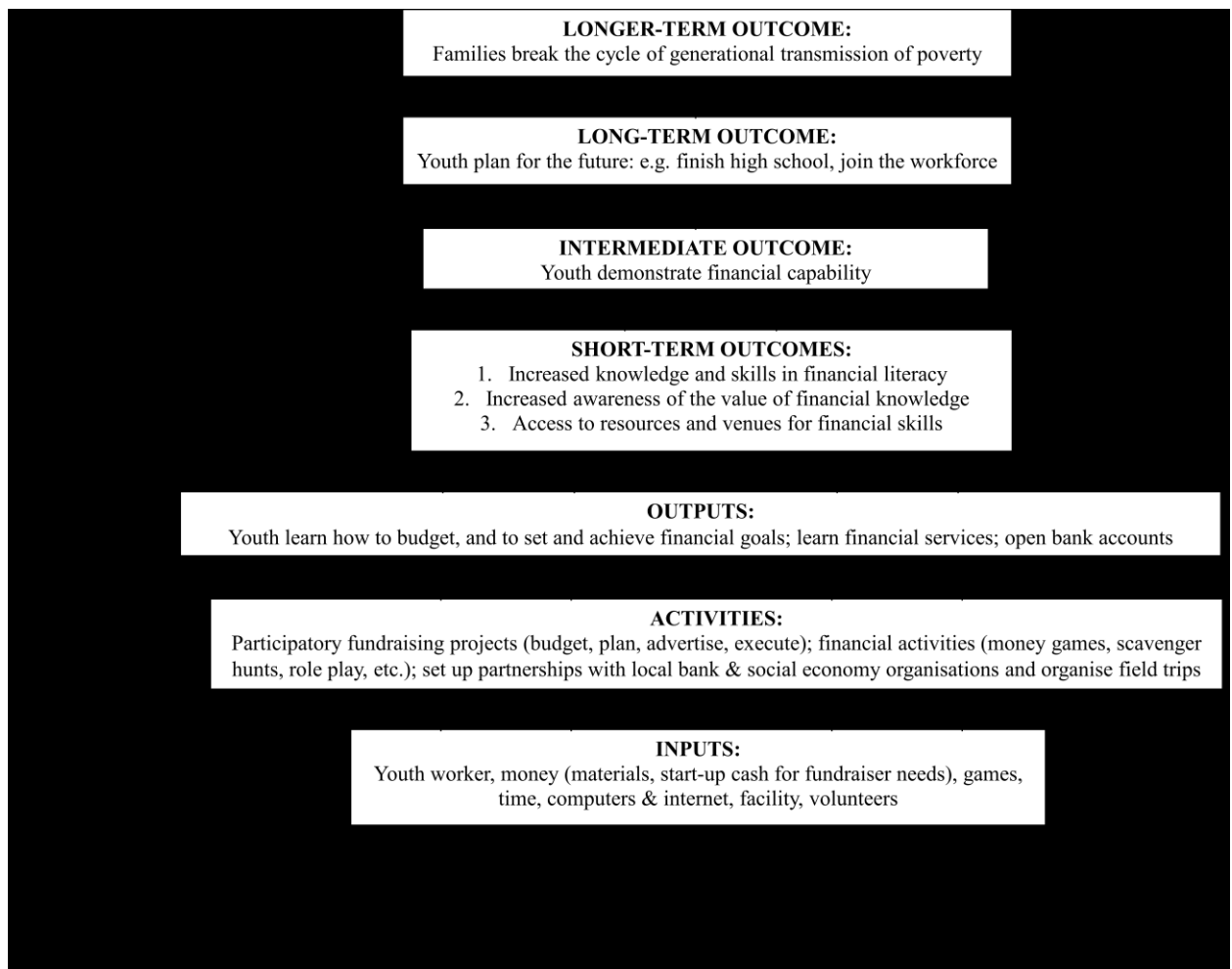
An environmental factor that may have had a negative impact on the project was the unwillingness or inability of parents to allow or encourage their children to change the status quo. Although they take advantage of the many social services in the area, some parents do not want to admit they are in trouble financially. Parents may discourage their children from getting involved in something that could change the way their family and



community is shaped. Other parents do want more for their children but have lived so much disappointment in their own lives, they are afraid of hoping for their children's lives. Whatever the cause of parents' reticence is, staff and volunteers in this project needed to be aware of this reality and sensitive in dealing with it.

## Logic Model

The logic model below outlines this process, and how the Financial Capability Project was set up to achieve the outcomes states above.



**Figure 12. Financial Capability Project Logic Model**

## 4.4 Project Rationale

The situation addressed with this project was that families lack the financial capability to enable their children to learn the skills and access the resources that allow them to grow up to be economically autonomous. Although working with both youth and their parents

would be ideal, this project will focus mainly on enhancing the financial capabilities of youth. Previous financial activities and projects in the area geared only towards parents have proven difficult and often unsuccessful.

For example, Les Enfants de l'espoir offered a series of financial planning and budgeting workshops to the parents whose children attend the centre; only two of the 50 to 75 parents signed up. When staff asked parents why they did not wish to sign up for the classes, many responded that they already knew how to budget and they did not need the class. These same parents request to pay their yearly \$5.00 membership fee to the centre in two instalments because they cannot plan to have the whole payment on a particular day (M. Bonin, personal communication, October 21, 2009). A focus group discussion with the staff team at Les Enfants de l'espoir revealed that some parents did attend another personal finance and budgeting workshop; when the facilitator conducted a home visit of one of the attendees a few weeks later, she observed all the training materials and tools still in a bag by the front door. Many parents know what budgeting and planning is, but they do not know *how* to implement their knowledge in their lives and families. They cannot get past their personal and environmental barriers to achieve capability.

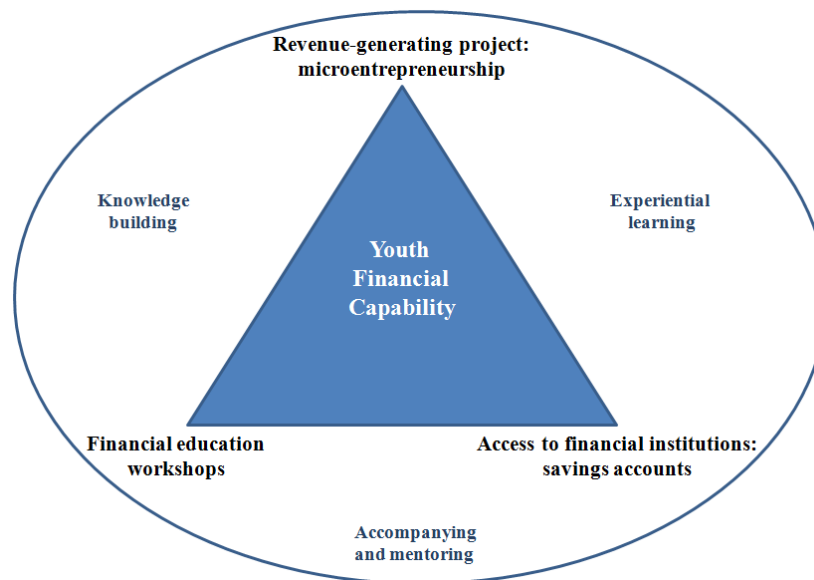
Another community worker ran vocational training programs for women on social assistance to help them transition into the employment sector; she saw woman after woman successfully complete a program only to return to unemployment and welfare, and show up for the next round of trainings. Many vocational training and other types of programs and services do not address people's issues holistically, resulting in incomplete or unsuccessful implementation.

Community stakeholders who have worked with both parents and youth state, "Hope for the neighbourhood is in the children and youth." The Partnership for Children and Families in the neighbourhood is, in fact, in the process of redefining what "family" means in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve because of the great number of separated parents, reconstituted families, and simile child-headed households. Many children and youth are indeed responsible, not only for their own well-being, but also for their younger siblings

and often for their parents. Some community organisations are trying to provide the right support to these young people, even if it means bypassing involving their parents in the process.

Often youth do not have role models at home; therefore, Les Enfants de l'espoir and Programme Accroche put an emphasis on one-on-one mentoring and care. Financial capability development can fit into this paradigm because youth have been exposed to bad, and sometimes even fraudulent, financial practices. For example, some children witness their parent "deposit" an empty envelope into an automated banking machine and immediately withdraw a large sum of money from the machine. The children rarely see the legal or financial consequences of this crime, nor do they even realise it is a crime. Nor do they realise, for example, just how high the interest rates are for borrowing from a local money "lender," or loan shark, or that credit cards have interest rates at all.

As described above in the literature review, the theory of change and project rationale can be illustrated in the following diagram:



**Figure 13. Basic Model for Youth Financial Capability Interventions**

## 4.5 Operationalisation of Terms

For the purposes of this project, the terms below are defined as follows.

- **Financial capability** is the linking of knowledge with access and opportunity. Whereas financial literacy involves theoretical knowledge of financial issues, financial capability goes further and also offers access to financial services and opportunities. It is a more holistic approach to financial inclusion.
- **Economic autonomy** is the capability to live without depending on economic assistance from the government or other social sector organisations. It implies a certain ability, not only to work, but to manage and budget one's income to maintain one's autonomy.
- **Intergenerational transmission of poverty** refers mainly, in this case, to families who have survived for generation after generation on social assistance, although some trapped in this cycle are working poor. The culture that is created through the continuous cycle of social assistance is one out of which it is very difficult to break. Youth from these families who are preparing to join the workforce, perhaps for the first time since their great-grandparents' generation, face the social barriers of separating themselves, not only from their parents, but from their extended family, their neighbours, and probably most of their friends. As one community worker said, "Teenagers who start working upset the culture of social assistance in the family" (A. St-Pierre, personal communication, November 4, 2009). They must learn and be allowed to manage well the distance they will take from their family's lifestyle, in order to escape this type of poverty.

## 5. Methodology and Implementation Plan

### 5.1 Project Participants

The youth enrolled in Programme Accroche were invited to participate in the financial capability project. Table 5 below describes the demographic make-up of the group that participated. There are two characteristics that all the youth had in common:

3. They are all attending high school, grades 7-11;
4. They all live in the target geographic area (see Figure 7 on page 21).

Other than that, the youth differed in age, gender, race, and cultural background.

**Table 4. Project Participant Characteristics**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Cultural background</b>	<b>Resident status</b>
1	17	Female	Caucasian	Québécoise	Citizen
2	16	Female	Caucasian	Québécoise	Citizen
3	16	Female	Caucasian	Québécoise	Citizen
4	15	Male	Caucasian	Québécois	Citizen
5	14	Male	Black	Congolese	Immigrant
6	13	Male	Black	Guinean	Refugee

### 5.2 Community Role

As the project became more known in HM, more organisations and workers took an interest in how they could support it. For the financial education phase, a staff member of Carrefour Emploi Jeunesse (Youth Employment Center) ran one of the workshops free of charge. Also, the local credit union hosted a field trip to their branch to introduce the project participants to financial products and how youth could take advantage of them. With both these community participants, there is expressed interest in exploring a bigger partnership for the future of the project.

Other volunteers from the community came forward to contribute to the project. One woman came to talk to the youth about how her own grandfather had started Quebec's first credit union. Another woman came during the microenterprise phase to demonstrate how to make more complicated chocolate recipes. The manager of a well-known chocolate shop and café in Montreal took time to talk to the youth about chocolate during a field trip.

Overall, there was a lot of interest in this new approach to financial education for youth. For a full list of community stakeholders and a stakeholder analysis for this project, refer to Table 2 on page 32. For a review of potential community participation as a result of this pilot project, refer to Project Sustainability on page 80.

### 5.3 Host Organisation

The Program Accroche is a joint program of Christian Direction, Inc. (CDI) and Les Enfants de l'Espoir (EdE). Christian Direction, Inc. is a faith-based organisation in Montreal, Quebec and whose vision is to partner with the church for city. CDI's education department was founded in 1993 in response to the unusually high secondary school drop-out rates in the province; the program consists of providing a fun and safe environment for students to get tutoring and engage in mentorship relationships with adults.

From 2006 to 2009, CDI carried out a series of interviews and studies on churches, social service, and organisations in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve. After seeking feedback from many stakeholders, CDI partnered with EdE, a small organisation offering a basket of services to families with children aged zero to 12, to expand the center's programs to teenagers from 12 to 17 years old. CDI provides the program design, the staff and volunteers, and most of the funding for the youth program, while EdE provides the facility and administrative support. It is a very successful partnership and the Accroche format fits in very well with EdE's overall approach to helping children and families.

## 5.4 Project Roles and Staffing

### Project Manager

The author of the present report was hired by CDI to carry out a community assessment and implement a pilot project of youth financial capability that is described in this document. Working with the Accroche program coordinator and CDI's community development director for the HM area, the author acted as project manager, researching and writing the project proposal and rationale (including the community assessment and literature review), and working directly with the youth in the project implementation phase.

### Accroche Program Coordinator

The coordinator plans and implements the whole youth program. He runs the after-school homework program and the nutrition workshops, and coordinates volunteer schedules and volunteer-run activities. He also meets with youth, parents, school teachers, guidance counsellors, and other youth workers in HM to discuss specific cases and to build projects and activities for the youth in the program. His implication in the financial capability project involved helping the project manager in planning financial education workshops, supervise field trips and activities, and establishing contacts in HM with experience in youth financial education and entrepreneurship. Partway through the implementation phase of the project, there was a change of personnel for this position. The director for the 2009-2010 school year left the program in June 2010 and a new program director was hired in August 2010. The 2009-2010 director contributed to the community assessment and participated in project implementation in a supporting role. Whereas she came from a teaching background, the new director, hired in August 2010, came from more of a business background and became much more involved in the project in a supervisory role.



### **HM Community Development Director**

The community development director provided a lot of project support in mentoring and training the project manager and youth program coordinator. She provided a lot of contacts from her large network of organisations and workers in HM. She also participated directly in project implementation in a supervisory role. She was an important voice in the implementation planning team and contributed to project activities, monitoring, and evaluation.

### **Volunteers**

Because this pilot project was quite small-scale (six youth participated) and because the project manager, program coordinator, and community development director were all involved in its implementation, there was no need for a large number of volunteers. Throughout the project, one volunteer had ongoing participation in its implementation, providing support and supervision during the microenterprise phase.

## 5.5 Implementation Plan

Most of the project was implemented between September 2010 and January 2011. A pilot version of the microenterprise project was implemented in April and May 2010; its success led to a bigger version of the same scheme later that year. Both the MicroMax Challenge and the Choco-HochMa activities consisted of making and selling chocolates for different occasions (Mother's Day and Christmas, respectively). The workshops included budget-making, financial and educational goal-setting, awareness-raising on financial institutions in the area, and knowledge building on financial products (e.g. savings accounts, credit cards). The money games, scavenger hunts, and field trips all contributed to this knowledge and skill building. Involving youth in project evaluation was important to participant buy-in, leadership development among the youth, and the participatory nature of CED.

**Table 5. Project Implementation Gantt Chart**

Activities	Apr 2010	May 2010	Jun 2010	Jul 2010	Aug 2010	Sept 2010	Oct 2010	Nov 2010	Dec 2010	Jan 2011	Feb 2011	Outputs
MicroMax			<b>Summer holiday: schools and youth center closed</b>									Set/achieve fin. goal
Workshops												Financial education, knowledge building
Microenterprise: Choco-HochMa												Set/achieve financial goal; decision making

Money games; scavenger hunt										Budgeting, financial systems, consumption
Field trips										Services & systems, bank accounts
Peer and project evaluation										Decision making, self- appraisal

## 5.6 Project Budget

The Table below outlines the budget for the project. It includes real costs and cost sharing. Because this project was a pilot, the real costs were quite low. The host organisations contributed a lot in terms of cost sharing, especially when it came to human resources and project facilities.

**Table 6. Project Budget**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Cost share</b>
Consultant: project research, design and co-implementation	3,000	N/A
Program director salary & Community organiser salary	N/A	15,000
Project volunteers	0	0
Staff and volunteer training	500	N/A
Organisations and speakers for field trips and workshops	N/A	Unknown
Microenterprise project start-up costs	500	100
Travel & Vehicle costs	500	N/A
Management & Admin Support	500	N/A
Project building	N/A	5,000
Computer and Internet use	N/A	500
	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Cost share</b>
<b>Total Project Budget</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>	<b>\$20,600</b>

## Budget Rationale

**Human resources:** The project was led by a team of three people: the Programme Accroche HM director (henceforth referred to as “director”), the CDI HM community organiser, and the author of this report, who was hired by CDI to conduct the community assessment and project design and to co-implement the project with the director and community organiser (henceforth referred to as “consultant”). The director and community organiser both receive their salary from CDI; this project was included as one of their responsibilities and none of the costs associated to their salaries was burdened to the project budget. The project consultant was hired to carry out the research and preliminary project as part of her graduate work in Community Economic Development at Southern New Hampshire University. Volunteers were also utilised for more marginal aspects of the project, such as youth supervision and chaperones for field trips. Other people participating in the implementation of the project included workshop and field trip presenters, who offered their time and expertise at no charge to the project.

**Microenterprise project costs:** As part of the learning-by-doing model of the project, a small microenterprise project was undertaken by the youth. The project was the production and sale of hand-made chocolates, first for Mother’s Day and, on a bigger scale, for the Christmas season. The Mother’s Day project start-up costs were supplied by a small grant (\$100) from Opportunity International, as part of a fundraising challenge for their microfinance program in Columbia. The Christmas project start-up costs were then needed from donors, the youth themselves, and “investors” (interested parties whom the youth approached for small, no-interest loans). There was no additional cost to use the kitchen in the youth centre for the chocolate production, as the EdE director was very enthusiastic about the project.

**Administrative and infrastructural support:** Other costs associated with the project were travel and vehicle costs, including transporting youth on field trips and bringing chocolate inputs to the youth centre for the microenterprise project; management and administrative support, including CDI administrative work and use of the CDI resources such as the

photocopy machine; the project building, which is a cost share as EdE did not charge the Programme Accroche for use of the youth centre space; and, computers and Internet use, which is also a cost share, as Programme Accroche did not putting any of the costs of these on the financial capability project budget.

## 6. Monitoring Plan

The monitoring of this project was mainly carried out by the project manager. The table below outlines the main outputs that were monitored to track the success of the project.

**Table 7. Monitoring Plan**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Performance indicators</b>	<b>Data Source</b>	<b>Frequency of data collection</b>	<b>Person responsible</b>
Partnerships with organizations and individuals	# of partnerships Nature of partnership	Reports	Once	Project manager
Microenterprise project	# of participants	Attendance records	At every meeting	Project manager and microenterprise treasurer
	Profits accumulated	Ledger	At end of phase	
Financial education workshops	# of young people attended	Attendance records	After every planned activity is completed	Project manager and youth program coordinator
	# of activities completed	Activity reports		
Field trips	#s attended # of field trips	Attendance records	After every field trip	Project manager and staff

Monitoring was carried out to track project achievements, set-backs, and changes, and to assess the progress towards short-term outcomes. Monitoring reports were compiled on a monthly basis. Refer to Appendix B for all monthly monitoring reports.

## 6.1 Project Outputs

The outputs expected to achieve short-term outcomes included establishing partnerships with organisations and individuals that would participate in giving workshops and hosting field trips; implementing a microenterprise project with the participants, to help participants generate some revenue, learn financial skills and knowledge, and learn the value of financial knowledge and perseverance; involving participants in financial education workshops; and bringing participants on field trips to enable experiential learning and expanding participants' knowledge of services in their environment.

## 6.2 Monitoring Tools

The primary tool used to monitor project success was a monthly monitoring report, compiled and submitted to the project supervisor at the end of every month. Monitoring reports included the name and date of every activity or event that contributed to project implementation; for each activity, the monitoring form reported the status, timeliness, and attainment of outputs for each activity. Monitoring reports also kept track of any delays or changes in the project, including what action was taken to catch up or to adapt to changes. Because much of the monitoring consisted of measuring participation, attendance sheets were an important data source. Also, during partnership meetings and workshop activities, notes were taken by one of the staff members present, to keep track of discussions and topics addressed.

## 6.3 Indicators and Data Collection

The success of each activity was monitored as the project happened based on predetermined indicators. These indicators measured how many youth participated in or attended each activity in the project, how many activities were implemented over the course of the project, how many partnerships were established to enable the implementation of the project, and how much profit the microenterprise generated.



Most of the data was gathered by the project manager and other program staff as events or activities happened and data was entered as soon as possible into the monthly reports. The microenterprise revenue, however, was monitored by a project participant, who volunteered and was supervised as the project's treasurer. This in itself also contributed to project outcomes by teaching the participant financial knowledge and confidence and enabling her to practice financial skills in a real-life setting.

When the evaluation took place at the end of February 2011, the monthly monitoring reports, activity notes, and attendance sheets were all compiled to produce a clear picture of the achievements of the project.

## 7. Evaluation Plan

The goal of the project evaluation was to get a good picture, both in quantitative and qualitative terms, of how well the activities contributed to the short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes.

### 7.1 Expected Outcomes

Short-term outcomes were evaluated mainly based on the compiled monthly monitoring reports: how many youth participated on a regular basis, how many youth stayed in the program throughout its implementation, how many youth participated in all aspects of the program (i.e. the microenterprise project, the financial education workshops, and the opening of a matched savings account).

Intermediate outcomes were evaluated by interviewing the participants individually or in pairs. Although intermediate outcomes could not be measured completely at this point in the project, the project management team still wanted to get a sense of how effectively the project was moving towards the accomplishment this outcome; that is, youth financial capability.

The long-term outcome expected of this project is to see youth plan for the future in order to achieve the longer-term outcome of breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty in their families. The long-term outcome could not be fully evaluated at the time of the project evaluation. It could be partially evaluated by observing the number of participants staying in school and setting longer- and longer-term financial objectives in the context of the project. As the project continues, the number of retained participants in both the project and the Accroche program (i.e. until they have completed high school) will help evaluate the achievement of the intermediate and long-term outcomes. The following table outlines the project evaluation, which was conducted in February 2011.

**Table 8. Evaluation Plan**

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Data Gathering Method(s)</b>	<b>Source(s)</b>	<b>Time-frame</b>
<b>Long-term outcome:</b> Youth plan for the future	# of youth stay in school # of youth who gain part-time employment	Survey	Participants	Yearly
<b>Intermediate outcome:</b> Youth demonstrate financial capability	# of youth who can articulate their knowledge of financial matters # of youth participate in matched savings account	In-depth interviews and FDGs; bank records	Participants; staff and volunteers; banking institution	Quarterly
<b>Short-term outcome:</b> Youth increase in knowledge; increase in awareness of the value of financial knowledge; and access resources	# of youth participate in financial education workshops and field trips # of youth open bank account	Attendance records, record of completion; bank records	Participants; banking institution	Monthly

## 7.2 Data Gathering Methods and Tools

Because achieving short-term outcomes included ongoing participation, mentoring, and education, it was important not only to track attendance to individual activities, but to look for continuous participation and project completion by participants. In order to evaluate short-term outcomes achievement, each participant's attendance records were compiled, as well as proof of their participation in bank outings and bank accounts, and whether they completed the project through to the end. Based on monthly monitoring reports and the other tools listed above, an initial evaluation of each participant's progress could be outlined.

In order to get a clearer picture of short-term outcome attainment, and to assess intermediate outcomes, more in-depth methods were needed. Individual interviews were conducted with each project participant to assess their knowledge and invite their feedback on the project. Interviews were also conducted with the project implementation team, which included the CDI community organiser for Hochelaga-Maisonneuve and the Programme Accroche program director, with input from the project manager (the author). Feedback was also requested from the director of Les Enfants de l'espoir and the youth microentrepreneurship workshop facilitator from a partnering organisation.

## 8. Project Sustainability

Sustainability is an integral component of Community Economic Development (CED); it is one of the three core values of the CED model, along with participation and equity.<sup>6</sup> Increased community participation and equity (seen in the equitable distribution of resources) both contribute to the long-term sustainability of a project or movement. For example, “Evidence indicates that long-term economic and sustainable environmental success comes about when people’s ideas and knowledge are valued and power is given to them to make decisions” (Peace Corps, 2002, p. 54). Fostering participation and partnering strategically to promote equity are both important elements in this project’s plan for long-term sustainability.

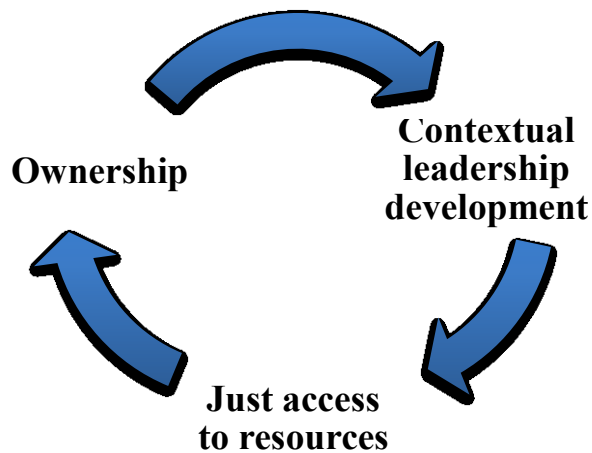
### 8.1 Sustainability Elements

#### Social Sustainability

Social sustainability is arguably what makes a project CED. CED is not about delivering services or solutions for poverty, but about empowering people to participate in and lead community-based responses to economic inequalities and poverty. One Canadian model for sustainable community development includes three joint components, as described in the following figure.

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<sup>6</sup> See Appendix 1 for the CED theoretical model.



**Figure 14. Smith's Operational Components of Community Development**

Source: (Smith, 2008, p. 27).

Smith (2008) proposes three operational components of sustainable metropolitan community development in the Canadian urban context.<sup>7</sup> These components are, as seen above, ownership, contextual leadership development, and just access to resources.

- **Ownership:** In Smith's view, ownership and empowerment are two sides of the same coin; one cannot be achieved without the other. Ownership of community transformation, in essence, is when people "are empowered to appraise their situation, to participate in the process of transformation by identifying issues, crafting solutions, making decisions, implementing project, and evaluation results" (Smith, 2008, p. 27). In other words, the community participates in development at every level and, ideally, leads change for itself.
- **Contextual leadership development:** having local leaders and organisers in the community on board, especially from an early stage in the development process, is very important because the high amount of influence they have on the community. Local leadership can be both formal and informal (Ibid).

<sup>7</sup>

Smith (2008) also proposes two foundational components that work alongside the operational components. The first foundational component is practicing an intentional presence in the community, listening with the community about her aspirations, limitations, assets, and solutions; the second is reconciliation of all of life, emphasizing healing and repairing broken relationships, both personal and systemic (p. 26).

- Just access to resources: Poverty often stems from systemic or institutional inequality, or inequitable distribution of resources. A crucial aspect of sustainable community economic development is “seeking means of re-distributing wealth and creating a sustainable economic base that allows the community to determine its own destiny” (Ibid, p. 28).

### **Institutional Sustainability**

Institutional sustainability is crucial to the maintenance and long-term success of a project. Having strong policies and procedures, as well as a dedicated and well-trained staff, promotes institutional stability. Some of the contributing factors to institutional sustainability are:

- The development and maintenance of vision, mission, and values, which are at the base of all the programs and activities an organisation initiates;
- Technical competence of personnel, both in hiring new staff and investing in capacity building of existing staff;
- Consistently implemented evaluation systems, including periodic performance reviews;
- Flexibility and an ability to adapt to changing internal and external environments, while maintaining the commitment to organisation’s mission (CEDPA, n.d., p. 92).

### **Financial Sustainability**

Financial sustainability is often the biggest immediate concern for organisations working in CED, because most of them are non-profit organisations. A healthy organisation has a combination of different sources of funding to promote institutional stability. Some aspects of financial sustainability and funding sources include charging service fees; approaching donors, including individual donors, government branches, and private

foundations; receiving in-kind donations or services from other organisations or individuals; obtaining support for corporate sponsors (CEDPA, n.d.).

### **Replication plan**

Another way of ensuring the sustainability of CED in a given area is to invest in replication of successful projects. Partnering with good programs and passionate people can save organisations time, money, and other resources by encouraging an environment of collaboration. Too often organisations reinvent the wheel because they feel they do not have the time, or are just misinformed or unwilling to research what is being done by others, what others have already found to work or not work in a certain program or geographic area. On the other hand, organisations that have an effective program often do not know how to share their ideas, tools, and lessons learned with others in the field. Knowing how to replicate and share these ideas is, in fact, an important tool in CED sustainability.

## **8.2 Sustainability Plan**

### **Social sustainability**

Because empowerment and ownership are essential to project sustainability, participation by the target population was very important throughout the financial capability project planning and implementation, and will continue to be sought as the project goes forward. Participants were engaged in project planning, through community assessment interviews, in decision-making throughout the process of the project, and in the evaluation of the project. It was evident by the time the evaluation was conducted that the youth felt this project was their own, that they were the owners and decision-makers, not the project implementation team. The biggest task to foster ongoing participation as the project continues is for the project implementation team to go from leading to listening. The youth still need a lot of mentoring and support to achieve their goals and ultimately become financial capable and pursue economic autonomy; as community economic



development practitioners, it is the job of their supervisors to walk alongside them as they make their own decisions, without imposing constraints to their development.

Community buy-in is also crucial to project sustainability. Community leaders were consulted throughout the community needs assessment and the project proposal. It is especially important to keep parents informed about the progress their children are making in the project, and to try involving them in the child's journey. It is also important to work with CDI's main partner, Les Enfants de l'Espoir, and keep their leadership in the loop about project developments, challenges, and progress. Thus far EdE has been incredibly supportive of the project and will work more closely with project development in the future (see Replication Plan below for this sustainability component).

Technical capacity training is one way to invest in local leadership development. Enhancing the financial skills and knowledge of project participants can lead to further technical teaching, and we hope to see some of them become leaders in their neighbourhood. By providing a replication model, other organisations in the area can also glean from our experience and lessons learned, to implement what works, and avoid challenges we encountered and mistakes we made. Two organisations in the neighbourhood have already approached CDI to hear about the project and how it can be done in the context of their programs (more in Replication Plan section below).

Enabling the just access to resources also contributes project and community sustainability. This is why the project sought to establish collaborative relationships with financial institutions and services in the neighbourhood. The youth employment center is involved in the microentrepreneurship component of the project, but is completely supportive of the project model, which combines microentrepreneurship and financial education. The workshop facilitator from the youth employment center comes approximately once per month to work with youth on specific skills development. The local credit union is also involved in the project, and has agreed to be more involved as the project moves forward. Representatives have expressed much interest in the model, have facilitated the opening of accounts for the youth, and participated in an evaluation

video being produced on the project for the purposes of project replication. Although the credit union did not approve a small grant proposal for the project for this year, it has offered the services of its personnel to lead financial education workshops at our location and has invited us to reapply for funding in the future.

### **Institutional sustainability**

CDI has the institutional capacity to sustain the financial capability project. CDI was founded in 1967 and, especially in the last decade, has become more involved in community development, both in practice in Montreal, and in the theoretical discussion of Christian community development in Canada's urban areas. CDI takes a holistic approach to community transformation through the use of 12 "Key Indicators of a Transformed City. Two indicators in particular can be met in part by successfully enhancing financial capability among youth:

- Equality (equity) in economics, social policy, language acquisition possibilities, infrastructure, housing, public transportation, and education;
- Multiple institutional opportunities for the most vulnerable to reconnect joyfully with a city that cares for all its populations.<sup>8</sup>

CDI promotes excellence and technical competency in its personnel. CDI hires educated staff and provides many opportunities for staff to increase their knowledge and experience relevant to their work. Before beginning any community development initiative, CDI invests in community research through the use of exegesis and neighbourhood transects. CDI also seeks to avoid reinventing the wheel or setting up projects without community buy-in and significant collaboration with other organisations and agencies. CDI pursues excellence on an institutional level through rigorous policies, evaluation systems, and in implementing change. Specifically related to children and youth, CDI has extensive child protection policies and practices and aims to be transparent in their programming with youth.

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<sup>8</sup> See Appendix H for full diagram.

### Financial sustainability

CDI's donor base is made up of a combination of different sources. Individual donors, many of whom are long-time donors, make up 48% of their total revenue, while grants from private foundations account for 36% of revenue; 13% of revenue is for specific service contracts with external partners, and 3% is from estate legacies. CDI is a registered charity with Revenue Canada and gets their financial records audited every year. As a non-profit organisation, CDI is financially stable.

A large part of the financial capability project is the microenterprise activity. Start-up costs and supply purchases can be quite high; however, these costs are given in the form of a no-interest loan to the project participants, who pay their debt at the end of every cycle.

In-kind services from other organisations are very important to the financial sustainability of this project. CDI's partnership with EdE has been very beneficial to both organisations; among other benefits, EdE has provided program space for CDI Accroche Programme rent-free, and this will remain the agreement indefinitely. This also includes use of the center's kitchen, where the Choco-HochMa production takes place once per week. The youth employment center, which provides microenterprise workshops for project participants, does so free of charge, as partnering with youth microenterprise projects around the neighbourhood is part of their mandate. The credit union will also provide financial education workshops free of charge, and will consider supporting the project financially in the future.

Finally, a significant component of project sustainability for the next year is a pending grant from a group of nine Canadian foundations that will award grants for the July 2011-July 2012 year to organisations who partner with others to achieve greater outcomes. CDI's partnership with EdE has attracted attention and will be able, if the grant is awarded, not only to fully fund the youth financial capability project for the next year, but

also to expand it to a parents group that meets at EdE (see Replication Plan for more details).

### **Replication plan**

As stated above, CDI's pending grant for the financial capability project will be able to expand the project to EdE's mothers' group that meets three times per week at the EdE center. Through a microenterprise activity (not the same one as the youth project), the project will seek to enhance adults' financial capability and help them apply business skills and knowledge to their personal finances. The project manager will work with the mothers' group coordinator to engage the mothers' in a small entrepreneurial activity. Workshops will be contextualised to the mothers' needs and offer opportunities to make a little extra money for them and their families.

As stated above, two organisations have expressed interest in learning about the financial capability project. The project manager has received requests to come give workshops on financial capability. CDI has also started a dialogue with another organisation that engages youth in a service cooperative in the neighbourhood. The project implementation team is seeking to learn more about youth microentrepreneurship opportunities through this organisation; while perhaps the other organisation can glean some ideas on how to incorporate financial education into their cooperative model.

On a larger scale, CDI has received a contract from a national Canadian partner to build a curriculum for youth financial competency based on the experiences and expertise acquired during the implementation of the financial capability project. The contract includes background research, 6-8 learning modules, a rationale for the microentrepreneurship piece (including a review of existing youth microenterprise programs), and a learning video of the evaluation of the project to include in implementation packs. This curriculum will be promoted to several partner organisations of this national donor across the country.

In addition, the author plans to submit presentation proposals as well as articles describing the implementation and evaluation of the project to various conferences and journals in North America.

## 9. Project Results

The evaluation in February 2011 of the financial capability project in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve produced interesting and generally positive results of the project. As the implementation of the project was not even a year along at the time of the evaluation, it is important to note that the project will continue past this initial evaluation. As such, the outcomes evaluated were mainly short-term outcomes; intermediate and long-term outcomes may be evaluated more adequately further along in the project.

Following the evaluation plan, data was collected from the monthly monitoring reports kept up to date throughout the project, as well as from interviews with the project implementation team, project partner representatives from the community, and project participants themselves. One participant's father was also interviewed to get a more complete picture of the project's impact on participants. This section will address each short-term term outcome, as well as certain aspects of the intermediate outcome, using both descriptive statistics and results of the aforementioned interviews.

### 9.1 Descriptive Statistics

The table below encapsulates the quantitative data gathered during the project evaluation. The project retained 85.7% of the youth who began the project.<sup>9</sup> The statistics are calculated out of the number of youth who participated in the project from beginning to end; that is, six participants. The project group was made up equally of boys and girls, with ages ranging from 13 to 17, with an average age of 15.2.

All the participants attended the financial education workshops and averaged a 77.7% attendance rate to the microentrepreneurship workshops. The microentrepreneurship workshops attendance was affected by the absence of two participants for two of the three workshops given; scheduling conflicts preventing them from attending and, for the future

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<sup>9</sup> The project had seven youth at the beginning; one girl moved away and stopped attending the youth program altogether.

of the project, the workshop schedule was thus changed to accommodate their availabilities.

The table below shows that when it came time to open personal savings accounts, 100% of participants opened an account and deposited a portion of their microenterprise earnings into their account. The objective for this indicator was that each participant would deposit at least 30% of his or her microenterprise earnings into the account; the participants averaged deposits of 81.2% of earnings, with half of the participants depositing 100% of their earnings.

**Table 9. Project Evaluation Quantitative Results**

	<b>Participant</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>% FinEd w/s attendance</b>	<b>% ME w/s attendance</b>	<b>% opened savings account</b>	<b>% ME profits deposited</b>	<b>% participated evaluation</b>
	<b>1</b>	F	17	100	100	100	50	100
	<b>2</b>	F	16	100	100	100	100	100
	<b>3</b>	F	16	100	100	100	100	100
	<b>4</b>	M	15	100	100	100	90	100
	<b>5</b>	M	14	100	33	100	100	100
	<b>6</b>	M	13	100	33	100	50	100
<b>mean</b>	n/a	<b>50/50</b>	<b>15.17</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>77.67</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>81.67</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>median</b>	n/a	n/a	15.5	100	100	100	95	100
<b>mode</b>	n/a	n/a	16	100	100	100	100	100
<b>SD</b>	n/a	n/a	1.47	0	51.64	0	24.83	0
<b>min</b>	n/a	n/a	13	100	0	100	50	100
<b>max</b>	n/a	n/a	17	100	100	100	100	100
<b>Range</b>	n/a	n/a	4	0	100	0	50	0

**Legend:**

FinEd: financial education

ME: microenterprise

w/s: workshop

SD: standard deviation

N.B. Participants are designated by number to protect their privacy.



## 9.2 Outcome Attainment

### *Short-term Outcomes*

- 1. Increased knowledge and skills in financial literacy*
- 2. Increased awareness of the value of financial knowledge*
- 3. Access to resources and venues for financial skills*

### Activities

In order to achieve these three interrelated short-term outcomes, participants were engaged in financial education workshops, a microenterprise activity, as well as interaction with the local credit union and the neighbourhood youth employment centre.<sup>10</sup> The financial education workshops included discussions and activities around the issues of savings, credit cards, and financial goal setting. The microenterprise activity consisted of a small hand-made chocolate company; the participants made and packaged chocolates to sell for special occasions throughout the year. The credit union enabled the participants to open personal savings accounts, which was an important component of the financial education piece of the project. The youth employment centre partnered with the project to offer microentrepreneurship workshops and support for the microenterprise activity.

The first phase of the microenterprise activity was a small trial for Mother's Day 2010, starting with a micro-loan of \$100 from a Canadian non-profit organisation.<sup>11</sup> This first microenterprise trial made \$437 in revenue; the experience was very positive for project participants and they decided to continue with this "business" when school started again in fall 2010. During fall 2010, the microenterprise became the primary activity of the project as the participants became more and more involved in the planning and decision-

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<sup>10</sup> The Youth Employment Center is a program of CDEST, the development corporation of the East of Montreal.

<sup>11</sup> Opportunity International (OI) Canada had a nationwide contest to engage young entrepreneurs in raising funds for one of their overseas projects. Contest participants received a small loan of a \$100 and had to multiply it and return the loan and all profits to OI, who would then use the funds raised to make small business loans to low-income entrepreneurs in Columbia.

making of the business. They chose a name for their enterprise and produced a large amount of inventory for the Christmas season. Target holidays for production in 2011 include Easter and Mother's Day.

After expenses were paid for the Christmas chocolate production, the project profits were \$600, which was distributed evenly among the participants, as per their own decision regarding how profits were shared. However, their receiving their share of the profits was dependent on some conditions, which were clearly communicated to them throughout the project. In order to receive their share of the profits, participants had to attend financial education workshops as well as participate in a goal setting exercise.

Financial education and microentrepreneurship workshops focused on both issues of personal finances and business knowledge and skills. They played a trivia game on credit cards, had discussions on budgeting, credit, and savings; they learned about microenterprise basics, division of labour to increase production, and sales techniques.

In order to facilitate linking learning to the real world, the project included a financial goal setting component. Each participant had to set a financial goal and sign a contract that they would save for that goal.<sup>12</sup> The contract also stipulated that whatever amount of money the participant decided to put towards their goal (of their total microenterprise earnings for the Christmas sales), the host organisation would match that amount 100%; if the participant was able to keep that total until their goal deadline, the host organisation would match it again at that time. To facilitate goal achievement, and to help build confidence and responsibility regarding money management among the participants, each participant was encouraged to open a personal savings account through the local credit union.

The participants learned the process of opening an account: filling out and signing application forms, producing adequate references and pieces of identification, paying the one-time credit union membership fee, and making their first deposit. It was important to

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<sup>12</sup> See Appendix G for the contract template used.

the project that each participant go in person the credit union to open their account and interact with bank personnel so they would start to feel comfortable frequenting this type of institution in their neighbourhood.

## Outputs

Throughout the project, the youth involved were encouraged to take an active role in the decision-making processes. As they became more confident, and as their skills and knowledge increased, they made more and more decisions about the project on their own, as a group or individually. One major decision was to come up with a name for their growing microenterprise. In the first microenterprise phase, for Mother's Day 2010, the name MicroMax was applied to the project because that was the name of the Opportunity International challenge from which the first micro loan came to start the business. After the success of that phase, the youth expressed clear interest in continuing with this business idea, and they all agreed they wanted to come up with their own name for the microenterprise. After much debating, the name "Choco-HochMa" was agreed upon. This decision was clearly articulated to be based on the desire to communicate where the product, and the producers, came from (HochMa is a shortened version of Hochelaga-Maisonneuve) and that the youth were proud of this.

It was clear from the participant interviews that the project component that had the most impact was the microenterprise activity. The most frequent answer to the question of whether they wished to continue the microenterprise and why was that "it was fun." Other stakeholders also observed how much participants were impacted by the microenterprise project. One program volunteer not associated specifically to the financial capability project said of the participants' attitude towards Choco-HochMa, "I have never seen teenagers so motivated about something before." A participant's parent who was interviewed for the evaluation, when asked whether he thought his son would be interested in continuing his involvement in the project, exclaimed, "If you shut this down, my son will come and keep the doors open himself!"

When asked what they learned from the project, answers specifically related to short-term outcomes included:

- How to budget;
- How to plan ahead, and the importance of planning ahead to attain project success;
- How to open and use a bank account;
- The value of saving “long term.”

It was clear from the participant interviews that each of the youth had learned some financial skills and knowledge, and valued these skills; however, every participant did not learn every skill intended, nor did they all learn skills to the same extent. It is also clear that learning these skills and how to put them into practice takes a lot of time and a lot of repetition. The project implementation team observed having to repeat the same information over and over and accompany the participants many times over in putting these skills into practice before they were able to do it on their own.

It often helped to have youth actually observe a task to understand fully what it implied. For example, although the financial contracts clearly explained that any microenterprise profits deposited into personal accounts would be matched at 100%, and this fact was also verbally communicated many times, it was only upon seeing the cash exchange hands that one participant understood that he was actually getting double what he was depositing into his account. The youth also expressed more understanding of the costs of their business when we sat down at the end of the Christmas phase and they saw their profits diminish to pay back the money spent on purchasing supplies and inputs.

This repetition and accompaniment was also crucial in enabling youth to access financial resources and institutions in their neighbourhood. Accessing the financial know-how and microentrepreneurial advice of the youth employment center was not difficult for participants because a representative of the organisation came to our center to give the workshops, which were organised by the project implementation team. The participants could be more involved in this process both by involving one or more of them in liaising

with the youth employment center to schedule meetings and also to have the group decide which topics of microentrepreneurship they wish to explore during these workshops.

Enhancing participants' involvement and access to the local credit union was more difficult. Even though the bank branch was only a 10 minute walk, or 4 minutes bus ride away, it was very difficult to get the youth to go there, even with a project supervisor. In the end, all six participants went to the credit union, opened their bank accounts, and deposited their microenterprise profits; however, many of them wanted the project implementation team to do it for them, without their direct involvement. Informing parents of this process, and getting parental consent for each youth to open their own personal account and participate in the financial goal setting activity proved helpful in achieving this project component. Half the program participants already had some sort of account in their name already, but were all controlled and co-signed by their parents; by explaining to the parents that part of the objective of the project was to teach their child how to manage their own finances through direct account ownership, parents then encouraged the youth to participate in this project activity.

After these trips to the bank to open accounts, participants were encouraged to add to their savings accounts of their own money (e.g. allowance from parents, birthday money from relatives). The project supervisors quickly realised that even this would need repetition and youth would need to be physically accompanied to the bank branch to make these deposits, as the youth would not go on their own. Even for withdrawals from their own accounts, all the participants were very nervous about going by themselves, and needed to be accompanied for those transactions as well.

The workshop facilitator from the youth employment center was also interviewed for the project evaluation. Her observations of the project from a more peripheral perspective were very positive. Although she had much experience observing and participating in youth microentrepreneurship projects, she said she was very impressed at the level of youth involvement in the decision-making level of the project, their incredibly high motivation and pride in the project, as well as their commitment to the success of the

“business.” She also said she had not seen a project that linked youth microentrepreneurship with financial education and that it made a lot of sense to combine both approaches to enhance youth financial capability.

In conclusion, each short-term outcome was achieved in some way by each participant. It will take more time for these skills to become habit in their lives, and to apply lessons learned about entrepreneurship to their personal lives. In other words, it is unclear to what extent financial knowledge and skills have been internalized by participants and it is most probable that more time and accompaniment are needed to enable a true change in behaviour, both presently and for later-life outcomes.

### Unanticipated Outputs

Although not explicitly stated in the logic model outputs or outcomes, the project assumed participants would learn some soft skills that would help them plan for the future and become economically autonomous. When asked what the most important things they learned from the microenterprise project were, each one of the participants, in individual interviews, said that they learned team work. This was not an easy lesson for the group, as there had been problems with such issues as division of labour and punctuality among the group during the production phase of the project; nonetheless, each participant stated team work as an important lesson they learned from the activity.

Two participants stated that patience was an important lesson they took away from the project. Related to team work, they said they learned to be patient with other team members, patient in learning the chocolate production process, and, perhaps most pertinent to the desired project outcomes, patient in waiting to glean the profits of their hard work. As stated in the Community Needs Assessment, the idea of delayed gratification is difficult to promote among youth, whether they come from low- or high-income families and neighbourhoods. Learning patience in this sense means learning to value saving and delaying gratification.

Another value observed in youth by the project implementation team, although not overtly stated by the youth themselves, was the generosity they displayed towards each other and towards others less fortunate than them. The first microenterprise phase, with the micro loan from Opportunity International, was a fundraising challenge for one of OI's projects in Columbia; all funds raised with the loan had to be given to OI, along with the original loan amount. Even though the participants did not profit personally, or even as a group, from this first activity, they were very open to it, and proud to be participating in a project that would benefit the poor in another country. In fact, their first "mission statement," which they posted on their group's Facebook page, was "We are an after-school youth program that starts micro businesses to help the poor."

When it came time to do a second microenterprise phase, they were surprised to learn that they would receive the profits of the project, and decided to donate 10% of their earnings to a project in a developing country. They chose to donate to a project in Haiti after their Christmas production and sale; one participant explained during the evaluation, "Well, even though the earthquake [in January 2010] happened a year ago, and so many people have forgotten and moved onto other things, we didn't want to forget."

The group was also generous with one another. The hours worked and products sold by each participant were recorded by the project manager and the treasurer. However, when asked how they wanted to divide the microenterprise earnings, they unanimously decided to split the earnings equally among the group members, because, in the words of one participant, "Even if some put in less time or others sold fewer chocolates, we were all as committed to the project, and when we were there, we were really there."

### 9.3 Lessons Learned

This project will continue with the same participants for at least one more year; therefore, lessons learned will be integrated into the project right away. The main lesson learned from project implementation is that the financial education has to be integrated into the microenterprise project. Financial workshops on their own were not interesting enough to

engage participants in learning; however, they were so motivated to succeed in their microenterprise that any skills learning they did in that context was better and more easily grasped. Thus, for the future of the project, discussions about budgeting, saving, spending, or other financial issues will be done with regards to their growing chocolate business. Their personal financial goal setting is also an important aspect of the project going forward, as this will enable them to put their business financial skills and knowledge into practice in their own personal lives.

Engaging youth in microentrepreneurship contributes both to financial capability project outcomes as well as indirect life lessons. First of all, financial education alone does not necessarily lead to healthy financial practices and may, in fact, have a negative impact because knowledge without opportunities make low-income students lose confidence and feel powerless to act on their newly acquired knowledge. Integrating a microenterprise activity into the project is a way to help youth see money at work in the real world and practice financial skills they acquire. Also, by integrating financial education into the microenterprise activities, participants will observe their learning in action immediately through their business. Practitioners working with youth often say that they need to learn in concrete and practical ways. If they feel they are in a classroom setting, or that they will be called upon to answer theoretical questions, they will quickly lose interest or quit due to lack of confidence in their learning ability. Teaching financial education through microentrepreneurship not only brings learning to life, through real tasks they must accomplish to see their business flourish, but is also a way to talk about personal finances indirectly, so that youth do not feel threatened by having their own personal financial situation or knowledge exposed.

Secondly, similarly to the shortcomings of financial education on its own, savings alone can also negatively affect low-income youth. They will often get discouraged and discontinue their participation in a savings program because they do not have access to money with which they can contribute to their savings. Especially for youth who live in proximity to or go to school with higher-income youth, who receive more financial assistance and gifts from parents and relatives, it is very difficult to adhere to a program



when they see themselves at a clear disadvantage. The revenue-generating aspect of building financial capability among low-income youth is thus of utmost importance, for project adherence, building self-esteem through income earning and saving, and teaching youth about real money in the real world.

Third, microentrepreneurship also teaches youth important soft skills they will need later in life. By creating something together and having a common goal, youth will learn teamwork, sometimes a rare skill in an individualistic society. There are also a number of job readiness skills learned through microentrepreneurship, such as punctuality, personal presentation in professional environments, interview skills, and sales techniques. Learning business skills as adolescents can also promote entrepreneurship as a possible career path for more independent and ambitious youth. A very important aspect of engaging youth microentrepreneurship is that by producing something they are proud of, their self-esteem grows and they begin to believe in themselves and be capable of foreseeing a better future and to truly hope for the future.

Another lesson learned was just how important repetition and accompaniment were to achieving short-term outcomes. Lessons need to be incredibly clear cut, well-communicated, and repeated in ways that youth will understand and absorb. This also means ongoing mentoring throughout each week to encourage, advise, and support youth, especially when they are in a position of leadership or decision-making. The more they are told of and consulted on the intricacies of the project, the more support they need so they can achieve their goals without getting discouraged or overwhelmed. It will also take time to enable them to become capable to handle their personal bank accounts and frequent their local credit union by themselves. Hopefully, as the project continues, and the project implementation team continue to mentor and accompany the participants, their level of confidence will increase and they will be able to accomplish tasks, make decisions, and make bank transactions without so much supervision. It is then that they will achieve financial capability.

## 10. Conclusions and Recommendations

### 10.1 Intermediate and Long-Term Outcome Attainment

#### *Intermediate outcome: Youth demonstrate financial capability*

Based on the indicators set to measure the intermediate outcome, youth are on the right path to be able to demonstrate financial capability. All participants participated in matched savings accounts, including goal setting and agreeing to a “financial contract” to achieve their personal financial goals. While this outcome was a way to measure a combination of short-term outcomes, a second indicator, youth articulating their knowledge of financial matters, was meant to give a better overall picture of the youth’s financial capability. By the end of the project, youth were repeating some lessons learned about their microenterprise and planning accordingly. For example, when discussing the next Choco-HochMa cycle, many participants stated that it was important to keep 20% of their current cycle’s profits to reinvest in the next cycle. This was a direct lesson from one of their workshops with the youth employment center facilitator.

However, another indicator should be added to the two stated above, based on the project evaluation and observations of the participants’ progress towards financial capability. Although youth did participate in matched savings accounts, a further indicator of their capabilities would be that they (a) make deposits into their accounts without the matching funds, and (b) physically go to their bank to make transactions on their own. Articulating knowledge of financial matters would thus be coupled with the practice of using financial services and saving for the future. Based on the two primary indicators, and this new indicator of financial capability, the intermediate outcome has not yet been fully achieved by participants; however, it is clear that the project is setting youth on the right path toward achieving this outcome.

***Long-term outcome: Youth plan for the future***

The indicators for long-term outcomes have not yet been evaluated because it is too soon in the project to see this kind of impact. It is the aim of the implementation team for the participants to stay involved in the project until they graduate from high school, and thus from the Accroche Programme. The two indicators set to measure long-term outcomes were that youth stay in school (and therefore complete high school) and youth gain part-time employment while in school (this could include summer jobs or part-time work during the school year). Another indicator that goes along with the latter indicator would be that youth save some of their income for the future and set longer and longer-term goals, including larger life goals. For example, instead of saving for personal consumption purchases, youth would save towards paying for post-secondary education.

Furthermore, if youth achieve the long-term outcome of planning for the future, it cannot be viewed as a result solely of the financial capability project. As participants in the Accroche Program, all the project participants attend the program at least three afternoons per week, during which time they receive tutoring and homework help, get one-on-one mentoring and set academic and social goals, and participate in other workshops, such as nutrition and arts and crafts. Enhancing their financial capability is a large piece of the puzzle, but the broader context in which they participate in the financial capability project is crucial to their success, both in the project and in later-life outcomes.

**10.2 Personal Reflections**

Throughout the implementation of this project, it was interesting and eye-opening to see the theoretical basis of the project come to life. For example, we witnessed financial exclusion of youth by a financial institution; although they offered youth specific products, they did not present these products to the project participants. Additionally, it was very difficult to arrange for the participants to meet with a bank representative to

open their accounts; bank hours were 10:00 to 4:00, Monday to Friday, with the exception of Thursday evening, which was very difficult to work around because all the participants were in school until at least 3:30 every day, not giving enough to get to the bank. The bank was willing to send representatives to the center to meet with youth, however with the same schedule restrictions as above, thus making a site visit virtually impossible.

We also observed the dynamics of intergenerational transmission of poverty in the families of project participants. One parent often belittled her child, who was in fact one of the most dedicated and successful project participants; it was clear, though, that her refusal to believe her child could achieve leadership and success was more a projection of her own feelings of failure and low self-esteem. It is also difficult to get parents' buy-in in the academic success of their children; there is generally a fear of scrutinizing one's own life and failures, and so parents sometimes justify their own by devaluing the schooling of their children.

The project participants, to varying degrees, gained greater self-confidence throughout the implementation of the project. They took increasing amounts of risk, and asserted more and more independence. However, their self-confidence is still precarious. Continuity, stability, and maintaining a relationship on trust continue to be major needs in their lives, and they often expect adults around them to let them down. The mentorship and accompaniment aspects of the project cannot be overemphasized.

### 10.3 Recommendations

Based on the project results, outcome attainment thus far, and personal observations of the project and its participants, recommendations for the project as it moves forward are:

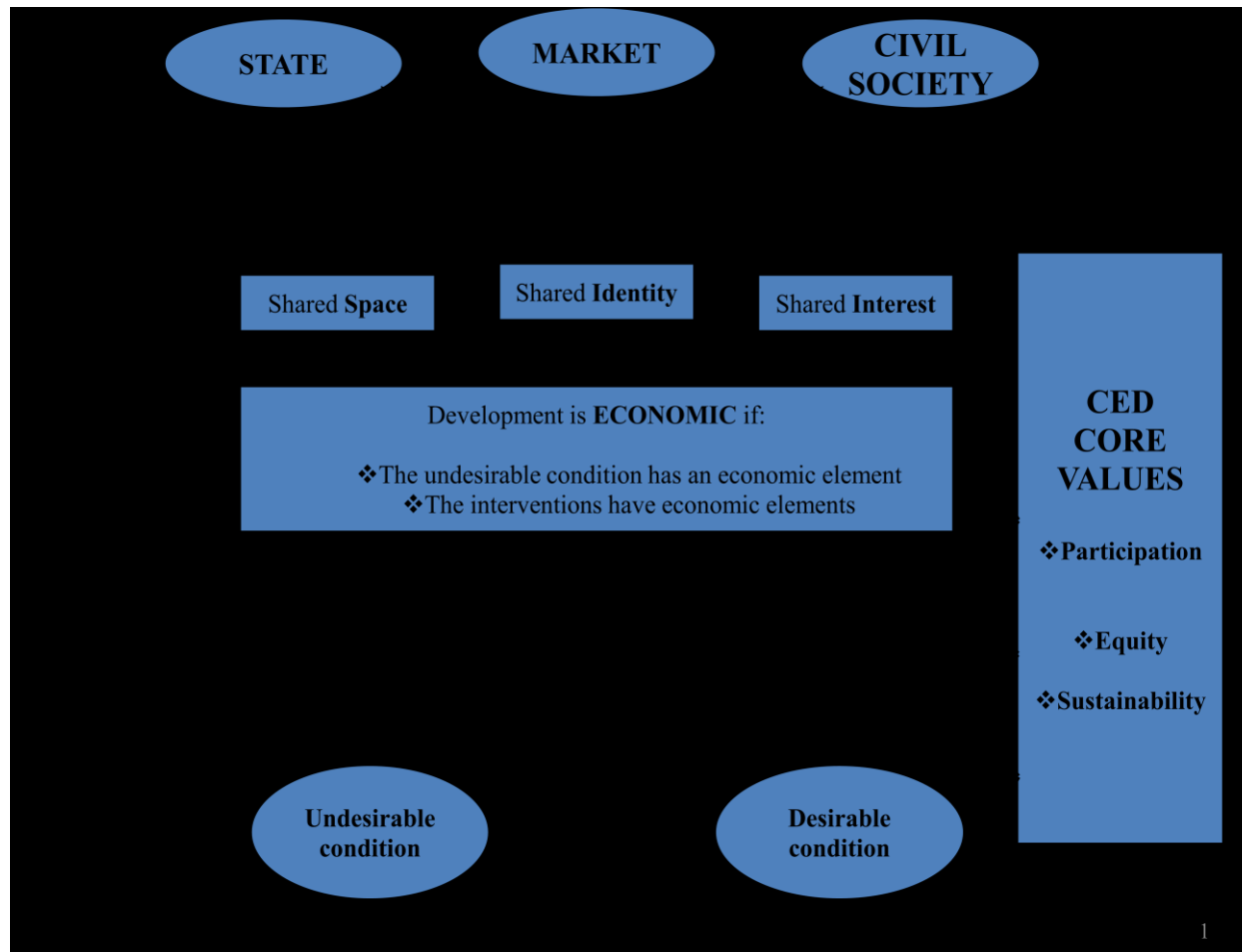
- Incorporate more of the financial education workshops and learning into the context of the microenterprise activity;

- Emphasize savings and longer-term personal financial goals;
- Link this project in with academic and personal goals in the broader context of the Accroche Program;
- Continue to involve youth in bigger decision-making processes, while giving them direction and support.

## 11. Appendices

A. Theory of Community Economic Development .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
B. Monitoring Reports.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
C. Stakeholder Interview Notes .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
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G. Financial Contract Template .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
H. Key Indicators of a Transformed City.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

### A. Theory of Community Economic Development



Source: School of Community Economic Development, Southern New Hampshire University, 2009

## B. Monitoring Reports

### August and September 2010

ACTIVITIES	DATES	STATUS	TIMELIN- NESS	EXPLANA- TION FOR DELAY	ALTERNA- TIVE ACTION	ATTAIN-MENT OF OUTPUT
Hire program director	Start: July'10 End: Aug'10	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: Met
Project management team planning meetings	Start: Aug'10 End: Dec'10	Partially completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: Bi-weekly meeting To date: Met
Schedule and prep for September field trips	Start: Aug'10 End: Aug'10	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: Met
Program volunteer meeting	Date: Sept. 9, 2010	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: Met
Field trip: Chocolate shop	Date: Sept. 24, 2010	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: 10 youth Result: 12 youth
Set up partnerships with individuals and organizations for workshops and field trips	Start: Sept'10 End: Oct'10	Partially completed	Slightly behind schedule	Project manager out of town for 3 weeks	Program director will do some legwork; manager will catch up on	Target: 5 partnerships To date: 2 partnerships



					arrival, may delay some activities	
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### October 2010

ACTIVITIES	DATES	STATUS	TIMELIN- NESS	EXPLANA- TION FOR DELAY	ALTERNA- TIVE ACTION	ATTAIN- MENT OF OUTPUT
Project management team planning meetings	Start: Aug'10 End: Dec'10	Suspended	As planned	Project manager & Community coordinator away for 3 weeks	Meetings to resume in November	Target: Bi-weekly To date: Suspended until November
Set up partnerships with individuals and organizations for workshops and field trips	Start: Sept'10 End: Oct'10	Partially completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: 5 partnerships To date: 4 partnerships
Planning meeting with youth: chocolate microenterprise project	Date: Oct. 1, 2010	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: 10 youth to attend Result: 7 youth attended

Workshop: credit unions in Quebec (with granddaughter of Caisse Populaire founder)	Date: Oct. 7, 2010	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: 10 youth to attend Result: 6 youth attended
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### November 2010

ACTIVITIES	DATES	STATUS	TIMELIN- NESS	EXPLANATION FOR DELAY	ALTERNATIVE ACTION	ATTAIN-MENT OF OUTPUT
Project management team planning meetings	Start: Aug'10 End: Dec'10	Partially completed	Back on track	N/A	N/A	Target: Bi-weekly meetings To date: Met
Meeting with Carrefour Jeunesse Emploi for possible partnership	Date: Nov. 3, 2010	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: partnership agreement To date: Met
Planning with youth: name of microenterprise, product flavours, draft letter to bank	Start: Nov. 4, 2010 End: Nov. 10, 2010	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: project ready to start To date: Met

Recruit additional volunteer for project support	Deadline: chocolate project start	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: sufficient staff/volunteer support To date: Met
Choco-HochMa project: chocolate production and sale	Start: Nov. 12, 2010 End: Xmas 2010	Partially completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: 8 youth participate; recover costs & make profit To date: 7 youth participate, costs recovered

### December 2010

ACTIVITIES	DATES	STATUS	TIMELIN- NESS	EXPLANA- TION FOR DELAY	ALTERNA- TIVE ACTION	ATTAIN- MENT OF OUTPUT
Project management team planning meetings	Start: Aug'10 End: Dec'10	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: Bi-weekly meetings To date: Met
Choco-HochMa project: chocolate production and sale	Start: Nov. 12, 2010 End: Xmas 2010	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: 8 youth participate; recover costs & make profit To date: 7 youth

						participate, costs recovered + profit
Workshop: individual goal- setting	Dates: Dec. 2010 (1); Jan. 2011 (2)	Partially completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: all participants think about and set long-term goals
Prepare for financial education workshops in January and February 2011	Start: Dec'10 End: Jan. 14, 2011	Partially completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: plan 2 workshops and 1 field trip To date: 1 workshop planned

### January 2011

ACTIVITIES	DATES	STATUS	TIMELIN- NESS	EXPLANA- TION FOR DELAY	ALTERNA- TIVE ACTION	ATTAINMENT OF OUTPUT
Prepare for financial education workshops in January and February 2011	Start: Dec'10 End: Jan. 14, 2011	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: plan 2 workshops and 1 field trip To date: Met

Choco-HochMa project: wrap-up meeting and profit share conditions	Date: Jan. 19, 2011	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: all participants attend To date: 4/7 attended <sup>13</sup>
Workshop: individual goal-setting	Dates: Dec. 2010 (1); Jan. 2011 (2)	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: all participants set financial goal and sign commitment contract
Meeting with Caisse populaire Desjardins (bank) for possible partnership	Date: Jan. 26, 2011	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Result: program support (workshop facilitation) and possible funding
Financial education workshops 1: savings and credits cards	Date: Jan. 27, 2011	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: all participants attend To date: 4/6 attended <sup>14</sup>
Financial education make-up workshop for absent participants	Date: Jan. 31, 2011	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: 2/2 participants make up workshop To date: Met

<sup>13</sup> One participant dropped out of the program because of her family moved to a different neighbourhood; the number of participants will henceforth be calculated out of a total of 6.

<sup>14</sup> Two of the six participants were absent due to sickness, and attended a make-up workshop the next week (see following line item).

Parents of participants contacted for project update and permission for youth savings accounts	Dates: Jan. 26-31, 2011	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: all parents contacted and permission given To date: Met
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### February 2011

ACTIVITIES	DATES	STATUS	TIMELINNESS	EXPLANATION FOR DELAY	ALTERNATIVE ACTION	ATTAINMENT OF OUTPUT
Financial education workshops: savings, credits cards, personal finances & entrepreneurship	Dates: Jan. 27 (1) & Feb. 2 (2), 2011	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: 6/6 youth attend To date: 4/6 attended
Credit union representative meets with youth to introduce banking structure, services, and benefits	Date: Feb. 9, 2011	Incomplete	Delayed	Miscommunication with rep about location of workshop	Intro done during account set-up appointments	Target: 6/6 youth attend To date: Event cancelled
Youth opened savings accounts at local credit union	Start date: Feb. 3, 2011 End date:	Completed	Delayed	3/6 participants absent day of trip to bank	Went to bank the next week	Target: 6/6 youth open accounts To date: Met

	Feb. 17, 2011					
Youth deposited a portion of Choco-HochMa profits into savings accounts and receive 100% match	Start date: Feb. 10, 2011 End date: Feb. 24, 2011	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: youth deposit average of 30% of profit portion To date: deposits averaged 82%
Participatory project evaluation: youth paid to do videotaped interviews	Start: Feb. 14, 2011 End: Feb. 25, 2011	Completed	As planned	N/A	N/A	Target: 6/6 youth participate To date: Met

## C. Stakeholder Interview Notes

### *Person interviewed: Manon Bonin, director*

*Organisation:* Les Enfants de l'espoir ("Children of Hope") – a nonprofit whose mission is to help families in an area where the socioeconomic environment adversely affects childhood development

*Date:* October 21, 2009.

### *Experience in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve:*

- Born in the neighbourhood, lived there 37 years before moving to different part of Montréal
- Helped found and became the president of a housing coop in the area (managed 32 units)
- Spent nine years as the director of Pop Mobile, a program of Chic Resto Pop

### *What is your hope for the families who benefit from Les Enfants de l'espoir?*

- My hope is in the children
- However, "We have to work with the parents"
- Anecdote: Chic Resto Pop has a job training program for women. Some were able to take advantage of the training and got out of poverty; however, most of the women stayed on social assistance after the training, kept attending other trainings, but weren't motivated to get off social assistance. The employability programs are not holistic; they don't look at the whole picture of a woman's life, they just focus of giving the training.
- We must invest in the children and instruct the parents.

### *What are the main assets that families have?*

- "Débrouillardise" – resourcefulness
- Families help each other out
- "If someone is stuck, others will help them out."

### *What factors may limit the hope for families?*

- Lack of parents' implication; parents must be behind their children
- Children don't have a good model in their parents



- Parents have lost the priority of education (“it’s too much to handle”)
- Generational social assistance
- Frequent relocations (inability to plan for rent) = frequently changing schools = instability

*What types of solutions will help to overcome these obstacles?*

- Specific, customised intervention programs
- The parents must be willing
- Professional, well-educated intervention workers
- Individual care and attention for families and children

Les Enfants de l’espoir offered a financial education course to parents in their program; only 4 out of 50 families signed up and the course had to be cancelled.

*Why do you think families weren’t motivated to take the course?*

- Parents told the worker they didn’t need the course
- Families have so many problems they cannot think of the future, they are too caught up in today
- “They don’t see the light at the end of the tunnel, so they don’t even want to look at the tunnel.”

*Do you think financial education would work better if it was less formal?*

- Yes, but go through the teenagers in the program to gain access to the families
- Focus on getting teens ready for adulthood, because they’re not getting it at home; e.g. credit cards, bank accounts, working, budgeting

***Person Interviewed: Jeanelle Bouffard, director***

*Organisation:* Cap St. Barnabé, mission to improve impoverished people’s health in the area of nutrition

*Date:* October 22, 2009.

*What are your hopes for the families in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve?*

- Families are not the poorest demographic in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve

- They have more means and resources at their disposal
- More hope for families than for individuals no longer living in families
- Statistic: last year, Cap St. Barnabé provided emergency aid (i.e. free food baskets and other necessities) 3,671 times; 278 of those were families and 347 of those were single parent families, the rest were all individuals.
- Dream for Community Economic Development: micro-credit cooperative – a group of no more than 20 that invest in a collective economy fund (e.g. \$5/month), micro-savings for micro-credit, learn together how to manage funds, borrow at low or no interest, preventing borrowing from loan sharks

*What factors may limit the hope for families?*

- Culture of hyper-consumerism; families always want more, instant gratification, don't want to deprive themselves or their children of material goods
- Lack of discipline, lack of organisation
- Inability to budget: "It is not normal that there's not money left after the expenses."
- Families get three cheques: social assistance, family allowance (provincial), family allowance (federal); the family can decide to get provincial allowance once every three months, but they can't make it last that long.
- Children don't have a good model in their parents
- People don't want to change, or can't change, don't know where to start, are scared
- Fighting between organisations: relief vs. development

*What types of solutions do you think could overcome these obstacles?*

- There needs to be a change of mentality, of behaviour; learn how to make good choices, how to prioritise; families need to deprive themselves of certain things to prevent going into debt
- Goes beyond just teaching how to budget, but discussing what important - priorities
- Organisations: need to coordinate together and align our visions
- Focus should be helping families develop autonomy

Cap St-Barnabé has an emergency food service, offered a maximum of four times per year to any one client. Each time they come in for this service, they are interviewed to provide an evaluation of their financial situation and for follow-up. If they come back multiple times, intervention workers try to informally counsel them and see what the underlying problem is. They focus on empathy and compassion when talking to clients, important not to judge. Ongoing difficulty is often tied to debt and addiction problems.

*Opinion of Moisson Montréal “Bonne Boite Bonne Bouf” program:*

- People have to have the money to pay for it every time, requires planning ahead; have to look at the family’s overall budget and capacities
- People tend to throw away fruits and vegetables; fruits and veggies are not priority
- Many families mainly buy meat; buy lots at one time when they receive their monthly cheque
- Economic crisis has caused decrease in food donations to organisations that provide meals
- Food baskets take away the dignity and agency of people receiving them, imposes of them what to eat

*Person interviewed: Denise Hervé, coordinator*

*Organisation:* Programme Accroche “Entr’Ados”, Christian Direction/Centre Accroche project for youth aged 12-17 years in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve; part of Les Enfants de l’espoir

*Date:* October 26, 2009.

*What are your hopes for the youth involved in Programme Accroche?*

- That youth do not repeat their parents’ behaviour
- That youth know their own power and potential
- That they would learn the importance of education and schooling

*What are their main assets?*

- Haven’t yet adopted the pattern of their parents

- There is still the possibility of creating good habits
- They have hope for the future

*What factors may limit the hope these youth?*

- They are not aware of economic reality
- Parents don't see their own needs, are afraid that we'll see their lack of judgment
- Youth have "pensée magique", they live in the present, they don't know the value of money
- Not very realistic about their dreams, assume things will work themselves out, but don't see the link between decisions now and outcomes later, don't see the link between education and the economy
- We have to keep in account of invisible problems in their family situation, such as drugs and addictions

*What solutions may help to overcome these obstacles?*

- We need to help them get motivated through creativity and imagination
- Fun activities that have an educational component
- Helping them see the future realistically while keeping hope

***Person interviewed: Jean-François Plouffe, socio-community development advisor***

*Organisation: CDEST (Development Corporation for the East (of Montréal))*

*Date: November 4, 2009.*

*Current job description with CDEST:*

- Sectoral round table support (neighbourhood networks, means for local development, neighbourhood revitalisation)
- Community organisation support (technical, expertise, organisational, governance)
- Support for individuals launching new projects

*Can you describe the financial system in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve?*

- Beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, the neighbourhood was very prosperous
- Decline started with crisis in 1929

- Historically banks were institutions of proximity
- Fewer and fewer physical branches since 1960s because the area very poor and declining in those years; everything was closing in the 60s for economic reasons
- Introduction of many community organisations instead to save the neighbourhood from total marginalisation; situation got slowly better until the housing crisis in 1990s
- 2000+ housing construction boom; new “mixed” housing instead of gentrification
- In the 1980s banks were being replaced with ATM machines; banks disappear and are replaced with Caisses Populaire (credit unions) – again introduced as proximity institutions in the different parishes
- By the 1990s banks leave the parish system and fuse into 2 branches
- Financial services are very centralised
- 20 years ago, not many people had bank accounts, but nowadays with direct deposit social assistance and pay checks, most do
- Some banks refuse accounts from people with low income (ex.: you need a fixed address and pieces of government ID, things which many poor people do not have)

*What are some obstacles to financial capacity?*

- Loan sharks, predatory lending
- Drug addictions more dangerous now because of accessibility and low price of illegal substances
- Video-poker: proven that video-poker machines in bars in poor areas pay out much less and less often than in casinos – used as a “moyen d’évasion”
- Prostitution on Ste-Catherine Street by marginalised population trying to make ends meet
- MP’s office will have more information on these problems and this population

*What are families’ attitudes and behaviours towards finances and economics?*

- The old ideal was for full, life-span employment; this is not realistic anymore, but people tend to think it is still the norm or that it is possible

- Unemployment less common (6-7%) than earlier in the area's history, though many are in transition between different jobs, due to fluidity of job market
- People who do not work are much less employable, they have many barriers to employment
- People who do work are pulling themselves little by little out of poverty (ex.: newly renovated apartment buildings are being bought by former renters)
- There are many single parent families in the neighbourhood; many young parents see children as instant gratification, which creates unstable families (ex.: many children with different fathers)
- A study in scholastic maturity revealed that children in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve are more "debrouillard", have better social capacity than the norm
- There is a culture of poverty, a lack of hope for the betterment of their lives; many families spend freely when they first receive their social assistance
- In recent years (since 1996) people on social assistance are allowed to earn extra revenue (\$300/month)

*What do you think of building the financial capacity of youth?*

- CDEST has a micro-credit lending program and start-up support
- Royal Bank used to have "Savoir en Banque" for under-banked people; doesn't know if it still exists
- Other micro-credit coops: ACEF, Caisse Pop
- The main difficulty: recruitment. Younger people don't want to save money, older people think it's too late to start
- It's important to have small successes right at the beginning, to build confidence and introduce them positively into a culture of saving. Because low income people have been exploited they do not easily trust, they are suspicious; successes will build the trust
- Education MUST be attached to the concrete, the practical
- Find partners who will match teen's contribution to their account

*Person interviewed: Anne St-Pierre, director*

*Organisation: Carrefour Jeunesse Emploi (Youth Employment Centre)*

*Date: November 4, 2009.*

*If you could change one thing in the neighbourhood, what would it be?*

- Prejudices: that people would lose the prejudice of incapability, of taking life into their own hands; that youth would be promoted as having the power to act
- We have lost the parish mentality and teenagers have no demographic weight, no power as a group, no voice, no support; it is a group that does not interest people or institutions
- We need to offer a constructive visibility to youth; we need to change the grounds from which we view youth, to give them status, to promote them in the community, to support them
- Many youth have taken on the role of a parent, they are responsible for so much in the household, but are not seen as adults; we need to help and support them in this role
- Many youth are put in a position to fill a family void (“deficiency”)
- There is no warning system for youth who are not attending school; therefore, no one knows they are struggling or at risk until it is too late
- We need to help youth develop checks (“brakes”) in their consumption, this could help reduce their bad decisions; they need the capability to think critically about money
- We do not protect youth in this economy, there needs to be structures to protect them, so they can develop their own checks
- “Value of empowerment opposes the value of capitalism.”
- Jean Piaget, cognitive psychologist, psychogenetic theory: elaborated theory of collective knowledge; our capacity to learn is the same as it has always been, but our environment is much more complex than it was even a century ago. There is a lot of pressure on youth to adapt to a more complex environment, and if they don’t, they are deemed slower and are more at risk.

- Any economic cooperative must aim to improve the community as a whole. A student credit union (e.g. through a school) brings the idea from abstract to concrete. Not all environments allow youth to develop to their full potential.
- “We have to meet youth in their environment with the dream of full citizenship.”
- “We have to dream for youth.” But, we must be conscious of the family context (part of meeting youth in their own context); they must go through the separation from family well to escape poverty. They must learn to manage well the distance they will take from their family’s lifestyle.
- It is a very vulnerable place, and youth are encouraged by some community workers to leave and forget their families (who represent the “wrong” lifestyle); on the other hand, parents want to prevent them from leaving the lifestyle because they represent continued government support (as a dependent). Children often have a monetary value in poor communities. “Teenagers who start working upset the culture of social assistance in the family.”
- Preparing youth for employability:
  - Promote motivation
  - Show them the world; be very concrete – it’s right here in front of you!
  - Ask the tough questions: “Where are you going?” or “Do you want to be incapable of achieving your dreams?”
  - Bring the experience to their level, solicit their senses, experiential learning
  - Bring them into interface with the community
  - Encourage informal mentorship, have many adults surrounding the youth; youth need people to admire and in turn to be recognised; they need individual attention
  - They need to be together, to relate to one another, but in the framework of working towards success



## **D. Focus Group Discussion Notes**

### **Meeting for parents of camp (summer 2009) participants <sup>15</sup>**

Leaders: Sandy (community development coordinator), Nicolas (camp director), Julia (research intern)

Parents present: H, C, M, K, M, J

Summary of proceedings:

1. Short recap of and feedback on camp
  - a. Children loved it
  - b. Each child got a lot of individual attentions and coaching; different from other camps
2. Information and changes for 2010 Camp
3. Suggestions and questions
  - a. Fundraising
  - b. Marketing
4. Development of parents committee for planning of 2010 Camp
  - a. Many volunteers, a lot of interest
  - b. Many volunteer because they think it will get them a discount on camp registration

Questions on community assessment:

5. What is the best aspect of life in this neighbourhood?
  - a. Everyone know everyone, many people are involved (volunteering, mutual aid)
  - b. A lot of help available, good community
  - c. People of heart, community organisations
  - d. Almost everything is accessible by foot, and by walking we meet a lot of people
  - e. It's like living in a small village
6. If there was one thing you could change in the neighbourhood, what would it be?
  - a. Cleanliness

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<sup>15</sup>

In the summer of 2009, CDI put on an arts and music camp for children in the neighbourhood.

- b. I wish there were Dr. Julien's everywhere in the area! <sup>16</sup>
- c. More variety of fresh foods at affordable costs
- d. There is a high drop-out rate; wish there were more organisations that help parents help their own children, help people take education more seriously
- e. Children are allowed to stay out way too late, sometimes on their own until 11:00p.m.

### Focus group discussion: Les Enfants de l'espoir staff

Leaders : Sandy (community development coordinator); Julia (research intern)

Participants: Manon (director), Lise (co-director), Denise (Accroche coordinator), six staff

1. What are your hopes for the families who participate in Les Enfants de l'espoir?
  - I'm counting on the youth to change their perception of lifestyle.
  - Giving families a sense of belonging: maintaining a routine, a stable lifestyle
  - They need more one-on-one and for us to teach them how to work well
    - Sharing with them the importance of schooling
    - Helping them understand that acting in the right is beneficial
  - Making them understand that education = \$
2. What are these families' assets when it comes to managing their finances?
  - They have the desire, but are lacking the commitment to put into practice what they learn.
  - Their children are their treasures; they love their children.
  - "Débrouillardise" – not always in the right way, but they are trying.
3. What are the main challenges/obstacles?
  - They feel threatened by the system, the school, etc.; the trust factor is important.
  - Difficult to encourage hard work; even if they believe in education they are not modeling well to their children ("I was alright, so why does my kid need more education than I did?")

<sup>16</sup> Dr. Julien is a very well-known social paediatrician in the area; he is highly respected and is often seen as the neighbourhood's saviour, because when he takes on a patient, he takes on their whole family and provides a holistic monitoring of their health and well-being.

- Bad memories of school put parents on the defensive; they are sick of having children be criticised by the teachers
4. Obstacles related to finances:
- Parents are still in their dreams; they give so much to their children that they put themselves in financial peril.
  - Even if they succeed, they often take one step forward and two steps back (if they manage to make a little more money one month, they reward themselves by spending it all and then some)
  - Priorities are not in the right place
  - Christmas period is more difficult, hyper-consumerism
  - They reward a little with too much
  - Outside influence: the government is calling society to consumption
  - They do not want to change how they organisation what they have (They say, “I know how to budget.” And “I’m not stupid!”)
5. What do you think of a micro-credit project in the area?
- Good idea for teaching about finances
  - Parents’ involvement is not sure
  - Build the capacity first
  - Idea for fundraising: used clothing sale – also helps participants learn all the ins and outs of fundraising
  - Start with small successes and then work towards bigger projects

**E. Youth Interview Results**

Age	12	12	13	13	14	14	14	15	15	15	16
Gender	M	M	M	M	F	F	M	F	F	F	F
Do you receive pocket money?											
- When I need it		x			x	x			x	x	
- Every week				x							
- When I do chores	x		x			x	x	x			
- When I go out with friends	x	x	x						x		
- I don't											x
Do you have a bank account?											
- No	x					x		x		x	
- Yes, checking				x			x		x		x
- Yes, savings			x								x
- I don't know		x			x						
Do you ever grocery shop with a parent?											
- Every week		x									
- 2-3 times/month			x								
- From time to time	x			x	x	x			x	x	x
- Never							x	x			

*When asked where they saw themselves in 10-15 years, answers included:*

- Married, with two children; university professor in mathematics

- Living in an apartment with my girlfriend; going to see parents from time to time; either still studying or working in my field
- Stay in Montréal; doctor like my Mom
- Taxi driver (it pays, not too stressful); living with a roommate
- Working in the family business, living in my own apartment]
- Same as always; not working yet; don't know if I'll still be studying
- Veterinarian, pilot or forensic scientist
- Police officer, living in my own house
- Living in an apartment on my own; working as a cook
- Living on my own, doctor
- Living in an apartment on my own; working as a veterinarian
- Living in New York City with a big dog, studying to be an actress and director

*When asked which strengths they needed to achieve these dreams, answers included:*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Do all my studies properly, keep going in school (high school, CEGEP, university, internships) | • Encouragement                                      |
| • Perseverance (5)   | • Read a lot   |
| • Courage  | • Need to pass math and French to graduate           |
| • Hard work (3)  | • Concentration                                      |
| • Intelligence   | • Work out (need to be built to be a police officer) |
| • Finish school, get my diploma  | • Patience   |
| • “Faut pas que je lâche” – I can't give up (2)  | • Hope (2)   |
| • Help from others (3)   | • Strength to continue                               |
| • Qualities I learned from my parents  | • Putting money aside                                |
|  | • Leadership   |

*When asked who could help them achieve their dreams, answers included:*

- |                |              |
|----------------|--------------|
| • Teachers (2) | • Mother (2) |
|----------------|--------------|

- Parents (3)
- Sister (2)
- Friends (2)
- Family (2)
- Adults
- Grandmother
- Aunt
- God
- Drama coach
- Godmother

*Youth were asked what they would do if someone gave them \$100 to spend on themselves.*

*Answers included:*

- Hockey stick
- New PSP game
- Save it in my piggy bank
- Put it in the bank (2)
- Save it for my studies (2)
- School expenses
- Donation to SPCA
- Clothes
- Christmas presents for friends
- Shoes
- Clothes

*Youth were also asked what they would do if someone gave them \$5,000 to spend on their family. Answers included:*

- Paying for a babysitter so Mom can go back to work
- Share it with family; decide together to spend it on something useful
- Buy things when we're lacking (food, clothes)
- Would discuss how to use it with Mom and Grandma
- Would buy everyone in the family a gift, put the rest in the bank
- Food and improvements to the house
- Help my grandma, she needs help
- Help to move the family to Sherbrooke to be closer to Grandpa
- Move to a bigger apartment
- Move, buy a new house
- Put money into the family business
- Give it to my parents to improve the house and for [handicapped brother]

*When asked if they would change one thing on the neighbourhood, answers included:*

- Less pollution – garbage, graffiti, etc. (5)
- Less racism
- Drug problem
- More parks, better parks; skating rink in the winter
- Homeless, beggars
- Want to move out of the neighbourhood, into the country onto a farm
- Gangs, bullying

## F. Community Validation Results

Once most of the community research had been done, three primary stakeholders in the community were asked for feedback based on the executive summary of the research report that was sent to them.

The three stakeholders who evaluated the community assessment are:

Manon Bonin, director of Children of Hope

Michel Monette, community leader and parent of two youth in Programme Accroche

Denise Hervé, coordinator of Programme Accroche

Here is a summary of their feedback:



### Positive elements:

- “The community profile is accurate.”
- “The project idea is very promising. With proper funding and effort we can influence the next generation and those who will follow in order to change the economic face of this community without having to resort to gentrification.”
- “As this is a community that looks to mutual aid, this idea will contribute to enriching this capability. Also, teenagers truly need concrete and significant projects that will give them a sense of feeling important in their community. The idea it to give them power over their future.”
- Bringing the culture of virtual money into the concrete will help youth understand banks and finances.
- When youth live successes, they will be able to be proud of what they accomplish.



### Negative elements (or things consider changing):

- Don’t agree that there is no collaboration between social service agencies; they work together on certain projects. There is a lot of communication between organisations that are part of the area’s partnerships.
- Not certain parents will want to become involved. Particularly for the pilot project group, they don’t have the capacity to imagine how such a project would work.





Things to keep in mind (warnings):

- The spirit of community can be either a strength or a roadblock to change.
- Don't do formal training workshops, this makes people nervous and they won't participate; take the time to win the trust of the youth and their families, "Allez par la bande!"
- Remain conscious of the limitations because it is such a new model.
- Anything engaging youth must be fun and involve computers to get their attention.
- Youth lack self-confidence and are afraid of being ridiculed and of failure.

**G. Financial Contract Template**

# CHOCO-HOCHMA

# CONTRAT FINANCIER

Nom: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mon objectif financier:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date d'échéance:

\_\_\_\_\_

1. Le/la participant(e) ouvrira un compte d'épargne à la Caisse populaire Desjardins et pourra y déposer une partie (ou le tout) de sa part des profits du projet Choco-HochMa (volet décembre 2010).
2. Si le/la participant(e) s'engage à garder ce montant dans son compte jusqu'à l'échéance de son objectif financier, DCI déposera le même montant dans son compte (le/la participant(e) devra garder ce montant dans le compte jusqu'à l'échéance aussi).
3. À l'échéance de l'objectif, si le montant au-dessus (premier montant déposer par le/la participant(e) + même montant déposer par DCI) est encore dans le compte, DCI déposera encore le même montant que le montant original déposer par le/la participant(e).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature du/de la participant(e)\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature de la responsable Choco-HochMa\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature du directeur Entr'Ados

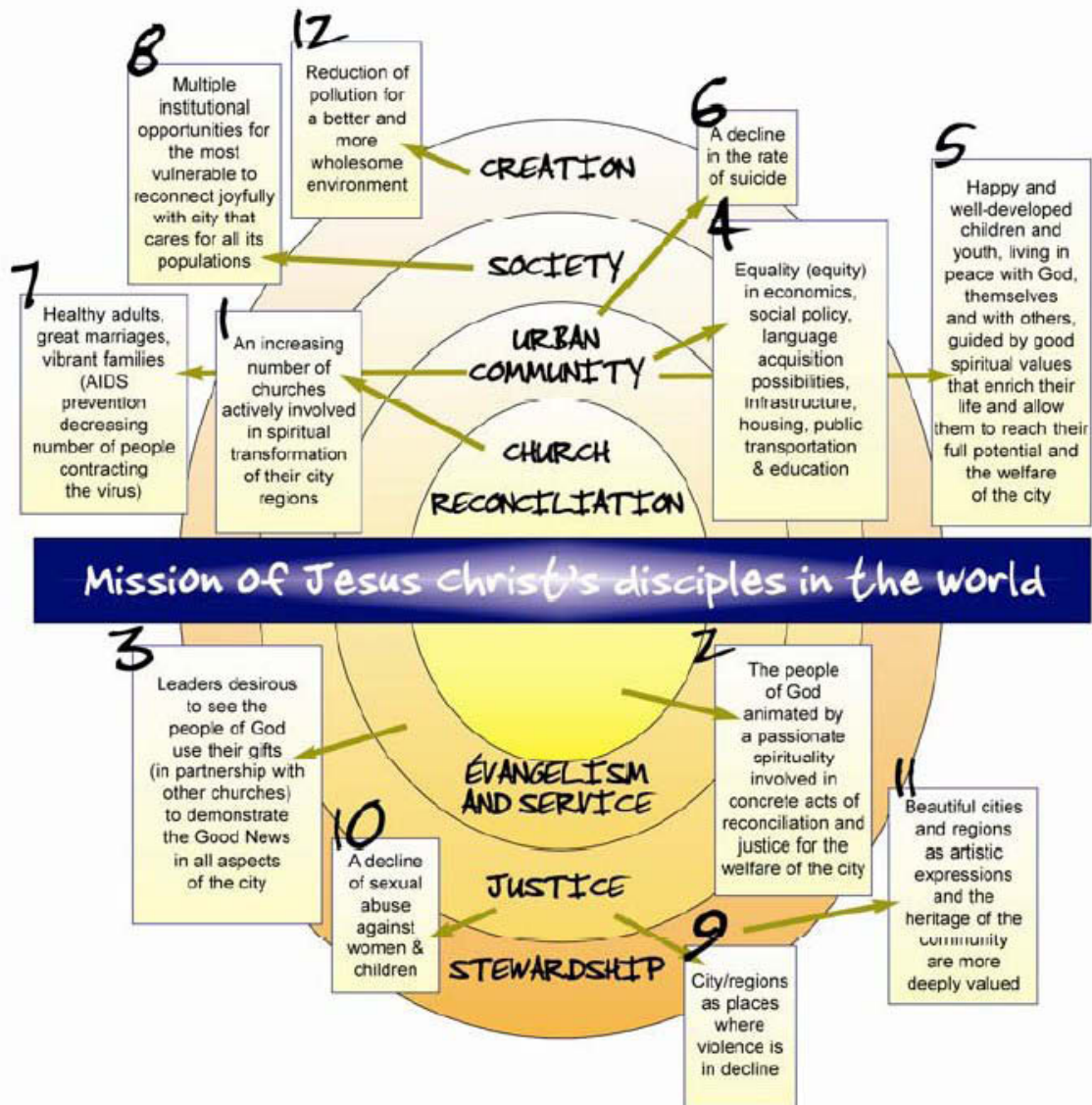
DCI: Direction Chrétienne inc. (organisme parrain d'Entr'Ados)

## H. Key Indicators of a Transformed City

### Key Indicators of a Transformed city

What would a city look like that has been transformed by Jesus Christ and his kingdom values?

Christian Direction has chosen these 12 indicators for the cities of Québec and La Francophonie that inspire our vision for a transformed city.



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