

**UNITED WAY OF YORK REGION**

**LEAD PROJECT**  
**(Leading Ethnoracial Access Dialogue)**

**FINAL REPORT**

**Prepared by:**

**Kappel Ramji Consulting Group**

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## Preface

As Chair of the Board of United Way of York Region, I am pleased to present the final report of *Leading the Ethnoracial Access Dialogue* (LEAD). This report describes an intensive six-month process we undertook to reach out and engage in concrete planning with three ethnoracial communities in York Region who are not currently as involved with us as we would like. We also took stock internally to answer the question: *What is it about the way we do our business that may prevent communities from getting as involved as we would like?*

The three communities we engaged with as our first step are the three fastest growing ethnoracial communities in the region – the South Asian, Chinese and African Caribbean Communities. Approximately 90 individuals from these three communities contributed their time and perspectives to the process. We are very grateful for this. What they had to say was not always positive or flattering to United Way of York Region. This led to some observations and recommendations in this report that are difficult for us to hear. However, we recognize that the views of these community representatives are critical in helping us make concrete decisions and long range plans that will begin to change their experiences. As we continue to dialogue with more members of these communities, our understanding and analysis of their capacities, services needs and the role we can play to support them will continue to grow.

We are sharing this report with you and your organization because we think that we all have something to learn from the LEAD findings. Our region has grown quickly and dramatically over the last decade, and in some ways, we have all been caught off guard. We have not necessarily kept up with the pace of change, nor have we met all the challenges that this positive growth brings to us. We have analysed all of the recommendations made in this report and are committed to implement those we believe we are able to undertake. We know that this will be a challenging process that will not always go smoothly. To be successful we need your involvement. Together we can make a difference!

I hope that you will take the time to review this report, talk with us about your reactions and questions, and like us, use it as a guide for initiating change. As we noted in the preface to our recent publication ***Kaleidoscopic Organizations***:

*York Region stands on the brink of a wonderful opportunity – to build stunning kaleidoscopic communities by embracing diversity. Never static, always exciting, and rich beyond belief - kaleidoscopic communities have the potential to increase community capacity that exceeds expectations.*

We are continuing to move towards this vision. You are invited to join with us to make this vision a reality for all York Region residents!

Peter McNeill  
Chair, Board of Directors  
United Way of York Region  
May 5, 2003

## **Acknowledgements**

The success of LEAD results from the tireless efforts of many organizations and individuals that share United Way's commitment to the promotion of diversity and inclusivity in York Region.

Betsy Kappel and Zubeida Ramji, project consultants, facilitated the project with remarkable expertise, nurturing our partnerships with ethnic communities and developing the LEAD Report that charts the exciting path ahead. Our deepest appreciation is extended to Betsy and Zubeida for an excellent job well done!

Members of UWYR's LEAD Advisory Committee gave valuable advice and guidance. We owe them a big "thank you". Members are:

Tessa Benn-Ireland  
Simon Cheng (Staff)  
Ally Esmail  
Ranjit Kumar  
Stephen Lam  
Faduma Mohamed  
Latha Sukumar  
Susan Taylor

Special thanks are also extended to Ally Esmail and Ranjit Kumar for participating in the LEAD Working Group that managed the project's operation with the consultants and UWYR staff.

Over ninety members of the African Caribbean, Chinese and South Asian communities participated in eight focus groups. Their interest in developing creative solutions to serve their communities is inspiring. Thank You!

Last but not least, sincere appreciation is extended to the volunteer members of United Way of York Region's Board of Directors who took bold steps in implementing the project, and Simon Cheng, our Director of Community Resources, who so capably led the effort.

We are grateful to all our community partners for their vision and energy in launching this very important initiative.

Wyn Chivers  
Chief Executive Officer  
United Way of York Region  
May 5, 2003

# Executive Summary

## **BACKGROUND**

United Way of York Region (UWYR) is committed to working with the full diversity of partners in the region providing leadership, skills and resources in building a more caring, compassionate community. In recognition of the pace of growth and change across the region, UWYR has embarked on various initiatives over the last three years to ensure that all citizens of York Region have improved access to the services. In the Fall 2002, as part of UWYR's ongoing planning and priority setting process, LEAD (*Leading Ethnoracial Access Dialogue*), was launched to reach out to under-served communities in an attempt to better understand and respond to their needs and capacities for social services/support. Through this process UWYR expected to identify their capacities, emerging issues, gaps in services, priority needs and strategies to better serve them. It also expected to receive guidance for future funding priority decisions and to develop new and effective community partnerships with the growing ethnoracial communities of York Region.

## **PROCESS**

Guided by an Advisory Committee made up of internal UWYR and external community stakeholders, the LEAD Project began with brief consultations about UWYR operations. The purpose of the consultations was to determine UWYR's overall accessibility and identify barriers that might prevent the region's ethnoracial communities from actively participating in the life of the organisation. An important secondary objective was to stimulate dialogue at all levels of the organization about the changes that UWYR might need to make to become more responsive and inclusive.

In the second phase, UWYR engaged in a dialogue with representatives of the Chinese, South Asian and African Caribbean communities. These three communities were selected as the starting point because, based on the 2001 newly released Census data; they are the three largest racial minority or ethnoracial communities in the Region. Initial consultation meetings were held with a broad cross-section of key community leaders, service providers in the health and social services sectors, and faith leaders from each of the three target communities. Based on the outcome of the consultation meetings, specific strategies were developed for each community's continued involvement in the process as follows:

Chinese Community: Due to under representation of the views of the Mandarin speaking community from Mainland China in the large consultation meeting, a smaller meeting with invited representatives of that community was hosted.

South Asian Community: At the first consultation meeting, there was ample representation from service providers and social service agencies but insufficient input and presence from community leaders. Prior to a second consultation and planning meeting, intensive one on one contact was made with community leaders from all sub-groupings of the South Asian community to increase their overall involvement.

African Caribbean Community: Issues and concerns about youth and their families from the African Caribbean community were of primary importance to those community representatives who attended the first consultation. However, few youth themselves were present. Therefore, two deliberately targeted sessions were held with youth in the East and West areas of the region to hear more directly their issues and concerns prior to a second consultation and planning meeting.

Following the first round of consultations, it became clear to the Advisory Committee that members of all three target groups were very positive and encouraged by the LEAD process and UWYR's commitment to them. The needs were glaring. The most obvious one was non-existent community infrastructures for social service delivery. There were few organizations governed by and/or catering to the needs of the target communities that could be funded.

Given the extensive community issues, unmet needs and barriers to accessing services, UWYR's Board of Directors allocated \$60,000 per year, renewable for three years, to be shared by two of the target communities (i.e. South Asian and African Caribbean communities). The purpose of these funds was to support these two communities to build infrastructures that would be capable of delivering sustainable quality social services to their communities. The LEAD project was quickly recognized by the target communities, as an effective mobilizing and planning initiative.

A total of approximately 112 internal and external community representatives participated in the LEAD Project. Many people from the target communities gave significant amounts of time attending meetings during the evening and/or the weekend, demonstrating the level of concern and commitment they have about their community's well being. The process focussed on UWYR itself and its relationship with the target communities. Due to limited resources and time, direct input from UWYR member agencies or other York Regional health, social service or planning bodies was not solicited in this process. While the opinions and perceptions of focus group participants cannot be considered to represent the full spectrum of views that exist in the target communities, most were validated in other reports or studies undertaken in the region.

## **KEY FINDINGS**

The key issues identified by stakeholders are summarised here at three levels:

- ⊖ Broad System level
- ⊖ UWYR and its Member Agencies
- ⊖ Target Communities
  - └ Chinese Community
  - └ South Asian Community
  - └ African Caribbean Community

### **1. Broad System Level Issues**

Stakeholders highlighted various issues related to the inadequacy of the Human Services infrastructure in York Region.

#### ***Insufficient and physically inaccessible Human Services***

- ⊖ The few services that do exist in the region are underfunded. There are not enough resources being provided to organizations in the region to enable them to meet many of the growing needs in their catchment areas that go along with the rapid growth
- ⊖ Stakeholders perceive that the planning of services at the regional level tends to be reactive rather than proactive.

- o Serious traffic problems and lack of adequate public transportation make it difficult for residents to access programs and services that do exist.
- o Many people are still going “south” to Toronto for health and social service supports. They would prefer, however, to get the supports they need in the region, closer to home.

***Disconnect Between Perceptions and Realities About York Region Residents***

- o There is a perception that people who live in York Region are affluent and because of this have few or no social service needs.
- o While there is a growing recognition of the ethnoracial diversity of residents in York Region, inappropriate assumptions are often made about the social and economic needs of individuals/communities. One assumption is that if people are homeowners in York Region, they are well settled, have stable (and high) incomes, do not have language or cultural barriers and can readily integrate into the mainstream life of York Region. Another is that the increased ethnoracial diversity within the region is all due to recently arrived immigrants who are affluent. There is ample data that neither of these assumptions is accurate.
- o There is concern that the target communities’ experiences of racism and discrimination are not being acknowledged within the region.

***Existing Human/Social Services are not all linguistically accessible and culturally sensitive***

- o In spite of the efforts of a few service providers in the region, residents of York Region go “south” for various health and social services because many existing services are not accessible.
- o This inability to meet needs in linguistically and culturally appropriate ways is partly linked to the lack of representation of the Region’s diverse communities in the public and human service sectors.

***Charitable Status - A Missing Key for Community Organizations***

- o When citizens band together to create required supports and services for those who need them in their community, they are less and less able to get charitable status for their organizations. The lack of this status prevents these organizations from accessing United Way or other funding to support their efforts.

**2. Key Issues for UWYR and its Member Agencies**

Given the significant role that UWYR and its member agencies play within the region’s social services infrastructure, it is not surprising that various areas of improvement for them have been identified through this process. The following are the key issues raised by stakeholders who were consulted.

***Invisibility of UWYR Overall***

- o There is confusion between UWYR and United Way of Greater Toronto (UWGT). Individuals who are human/social service providers seem to be aware about the distinction between UWYR and UWGT, but other community members who may even be donors, did not know that the two United Ways are autonomous.

- ⊖ There is a blurring of UWYR's fundraising versus fund distribution priorities. There are some community members who have the understanding that in order to get funding from UWYR, they must raise money for UWYR
- ⊖ Members of the target communities do not see where UWYR funds are invested in their communities. They look around and see many unmet human/social service needs. They are not aware of what the organization is currently funding. They know that there are few or no ethnospecific services that serve their community specifically.
- ⊖ There are concerns about the geographic distribution of current members' services. Stakeholders point to the latest Census data confirms that seventy-five percent (75%) of the region's population lives south of Major MacKenzie. This is also where there are the largest concentrations of the three (3) target communities. At least 20 of the 37 UWYR member agencies have their main offices located in the northern part of the region. In spite of the fact that many of these agencies have satellite locations or programs in the southern part of the region, there is a perception that office location may be one of the reasons for the under-service of the target communities.

#### **Absence of a Policy Framework for Commitment Towards Diversity & Inclusion**

- ⊖ UWYR has not yet laid out a clear policy framework to ground and guide the changes that it and its members need to make to become fully inclusive and responsive to the region's diverse citizenry.
- ⊖ UWYR has invested time and resources in The Diversity and Inclusivity Project (DIP) as well as the development of a framework for organizational change contained in the document "*Kaleidoscopic Organizations*." This was an important initiative that was intended to keep moving towards actual change within UWYR itself and within its funded members. However, DIP's impact to date is not clear.
- ⊖ The current UWYR allocation process does not require information about the ethnoracial reach of funded services nor strategies being undertaken to address inequities. Also there is evidence that the volunteers who make up the Citizen Review Panels also require training about how to evaluate agencies' progress toward true diversity and inclusivity.
- ⊖ Therefore, UWYR is unable to demonstrate the reach of its funding into the target communities.

#### **Lack of Representation and Responsiveness of UWYR & its Member Agencies**

- ⊖ Target communities report that they are under represented in the staff and volunteers of most member agencies. They indicate that the absence of staff and volunteers who are from their communities in the funded agencies, this is a barrier to access. As a result, UWYR funded agencies are not meeting needs adequately.
- ⊖ A frequently heard argument for not meeting the needs of the ethnoracial communities is that there are already waiting lists and additional resources are not available.
- ⊖ There is under-representation of the target communities in the organizational structures of UWYR. Most internal UWYR stakeholders agree that there is much room for improvement in terms of recruiting and retaining representatives of the target communities among the staff, Board, Campaign Cabinet, and Citizen Review Panels etc.

### ***Planning for the Past vs. the Future***

- ⊖ UWYR's planning processes have not been keeping up with the rapidly changing realities of the region. In spite of UWYR's intensive involvement in various planning efforts, stakeholders cited various "short lived" types of initiatives over the past few years that have not been sustained within UWYR.
- ⊖ The newly approved LEAD Fund is an excellent beginning to building sustainable infrastructure within the target communities. It is an excellent demonstration that UWYR is serious about forging new relationships and infrastructures within the target communities.

### **3. Chinese Community Capacities & Needs/Issues**

The Chinese community already has some infrastructure in place that can access UWYR and other funds for needed programs and services. Therefore, this community has not been included in the new LEAD Fund as this fund is specifically intended to facilitate the establishment of infrastructure in communities where none exists. However, as highlighted below, there are many unmet needs in the Chinese Community in York Region, particularly in the Mandarin speaking community.

#### ***Demographics***

- ⊖ The Chinese community is the largest ethnic and visible minority group within York Region with a non-English/French mother tongue. Based on the 2001 Census, more than 85,300 York Region residents report that Chinese is their mother tongue with the largest concentrations within the municipalities of Markham (54,010) and Richmond Hill (24,782).

#### ***Basic Infrastructure Exists***

- ⊖ There are two ethnospecific and a few Chinese serving agencies among the current UWYR member agencies providing services to seniors, new immigrants and families. Given the geographic concentrations of the community, services are focused in Markham and Richmond Hill.
- ⊖ There is also a Chinese Service Provider network in place, spearheaded by one of the UWYR member agencies with more than 30 members. It receives no funding support.
- ⊖ Stakeholders report that places of worship throughout the region and in the "south" are providing many informal, volunteer driven supports and services to community members.

#### ***Community Needs/Issues Surpass the Existing Infrastructure's Capacity***

- ⊖ The existing infrastructure is not meeting all the needs that the community has. While there are significant unmet needs for the community overall, the growing number of refugees (with and without conventional refugee status) is creating many challenges for service providers due to program restrictions.
- ⊖ Numerous needs were identified in the areas of employment, language barriers, childcare, family issues, children with special needs, seniors and people with mental health issues.

### ***Emerging Needs of the Mandarin Speaking Chinese***

The full diversity of the Chinese community is not well served by the existing infrastructure. Specifically, representatives of the Mandarin community from Mainland China report that their sub target group is not able to access culturally sensitive services.

- ⊖ The Mandarin community from Mainland China is newly settling here in Canada. As such, they need practical orientation to the intricacies of the Canadian (and Western) education, health and legal systems.
- ⊖ There are also gaps in Mandarin community members' understanding of how the not-for-profit sector works in Canada.
- ⊖ Members of the Mandarin community have organized volunteer efforts to meet the needs of their community. With little or no outside financial support, volunteers provide group based education, workshops, and operate a Chinese school for which they have received a charitable number.

### ***Vision of More Responsive & Better Coordinated Services for the Chinese Community in York Region***

- ⊖ Stakeholders from the Cantonese and Mandarin speaking segments of the community share a vision of being able to access responsive services within the region. They envision a streamlined, 'one stop shopping' process for community members to be able to easily access information about culturally and linguistically appropriate services within the region
- ⊖ Stakeholders desire validation from funders that acknowledges the invaluable contribution being made by ethno-specific agencies to the health and well being of community members. While UWYR was applauded for providing leadership, stakeholders envisioned a greater proportion of core funding being designated for ethnospecific agencies/services in response to community needs.
- ⊖ Greater participation of the Chinese community within UWYR is anticipated in the future. Stakeholders spoke about creating a stronger presence during the active campaign period, linking service delivery within the community to fundraising.

## **4. South Asian Community Capacities & Needs/Issues**

Unlike the Chinese community, there is no formal, not-for-profit infrastructure dedicated to delivering Human/Social Services within the South Asian community. The newly established LEAD Fund will serve as an effective springboard for this work.

### ***Demographics***

- ⊖ The South Asian community in York Region is extremely diverse on many dimensions including language, culture, period of settlement, faith, and country of origin. Given this diversity, quantifying the size of the community or creating a demographic profile is challenging. Based on the 2001 Census data, Tamil and Punjabi show up in the top six mother tongue languages in the municipality of Markham. Punjabi is in the top six mother tongues in Vaughan as well. Since many South Asians in York Region have been settled for several decades, successive generations may now be citing English as their mother tongue. It is the second largest visible minority community in the region overall.

### ***Existing Community Infrastructures are mostly Faith-Based***

- ⊖ In the South Asian community there are many faith based volunteer service infrastructures in place. These service infrastructures are often quite sophisticated and elaborate, recruiting, training and deploying countless volunteers to meet health, social service, and recreational, social and spiritual needs of their congregants.
- ⊖ By all accounts there are a limited number of South Asian service providers represented in the region's array of human/social service agencies.
- ⊖ There is no South Asian service provider network comparable to the one in the Chinese community in place. Workers network all the time with each other to better serve their clients but there is no formal way that they come together for more dedicated planning, support and action.
- ⊖ There is no agency in the region specifically serving South Asians, and ethnospecific South Asian agencies based in Toronto have not established satellite services in the region.
- ⊖ Many community members report that they go "south " for culturally and linguistically appropriate services provided by a few South Asian agencies in Toronto. This includes services for those community members who are newly settling as well as those who may have been settled for some time.

### ***Various Unmet Needs in the Community***

- ⊖ The existing human/social services infrastructure within the region is not meeting the needs of the South Asian community.
- ⊖ Numerous needs in the areas of settlement services, health care, youth and families were identified.

### ***Future Leadership & Planning for South Asians in York Region***

- ⊖ Within the South Asian community in York Region there are several sub-target communities with strong leadership, and in this process, there was ample evidence of a will and ability to bridge the many diversities to work together. However, to date, a structure to move this planning forward does not appear to have been established within the region and stakeholders acknowledge that LEAD may well serve as that first step.
- ⊖ Stakeholders envisioned a multi-service agency model, which had a primary mandate to serve three target populations: youth, families & newcomers. Principles of partnership, integration, coordination, cultural sensitivity and language accessibility were articulated.

## **5. African Caribbean Community Capacities & Needs/Issues**

Like the South Asian community, a formally funded infrastructure for delivery of human/social services targeting the African Caribbean community does not exist within York Region.

### ***Demographics***

- ⊖ The African Caribbean Community in York Region is also very diverse. It is made up of two broad groups of members- those from the African Continent who are more newly settling and those from the Caribbean who are primarily well established here in Canada but not necessarily in the Region of York.
- ⊖ Recently released 2001 Census Data has confirmed that York Region's Black community remains the third largest visible minority group, next to the Chinese and South Asians.

There are other dimensions of diversity within the African Caribbean Community including language, faith and country of origin. As well, within the region the African Caribbean community is settled in both the East and the Western parts, quite far from one another.

### ***Existing Infrastructure Limited to Markham***

- ⊖ There is a vibrant voluntary organization in the East that is well established and provides volunteer driven programs in the areas of tutoring and other services aimed at ensuring that African Caribbean youth are successful in their academic pursuits and achieve their professional goals. This organization has not been successful to date in accessing UWYR funding. The lack of charitable status is a barrier in acquiring funding. This means that they are continually struggling to meet the community's needs and acquire the financial resources they need to remain viable.
- ⊖ Places of worship, mostly churches in the east, also provide some infrastructure for volunteer driven activities.
- ⊖ Stakeholders express concern about the limited reach of this infrastructure and how community members spread out in vast areas in the south western parts of the region have no connection to each other, to relevant services and totally lack a "sense of community".
- ⊖ By all accounts, there is minimal representation of the African Caribbean Community on UWYR funded agencies' boards, staff, or volunteers.
- ⊖ Many members of the African Caribbean community requiring services are also going "south" to access them from ethno-specific African or Caribbean agencies.

### ***Growing Community Needs/Issues***

- ⊖ Members of the African Caribbean Community report that they are regularly subjected to racism and discrimination in their interface with many of the region's health, education, banking/financial institutions, recreation and legal institutions.
- ⊖ The existing human/social service infrastructure that exists in the region is not meeting all the needs that the African Caribbean community has.
- ⊖ The issues of the youth and their families are major service needs.

### ***Organizing & Mobilizing the African Caribbean Community of York Region***

- ⊖ Stakeholders from the diverse African Caribbean Community did not have an existing way to do joint planning and development at the beginning of the LEAD process.
- ⊖ Because of the LEAD process and the new LEAD Fund, by the end of the second consultation meeting, stakeholders had organized a diverse group of leaders representing the African and Caribbean, as well as the east/west dimensions of the community to continue to plan and develop a unified strategy to respond to the needs they identified.
- ⊖ Stakeholders envision a multi-faceted model of service delivery across the region staffed by Black individuals. They see this model as a series of focal points around which members of the African Caribbean community gather to socialize, to access relevant information and to network with each other in a supportive way - so as to ease the stresses of settlement and daily living.

## **SUMMARY**

The LEAD Project has begun a community planning and development process that is welcomed by the three target communities and is timely as far as internal UWYR stakeholders are concerned. The UWYR Board has made a significant financial commitment to assisting communities build infrastructure to better meet the needs of their members. Overall, the following issues are also important to consider:

- o Each of the three communities is at a different stage of development or coming together. The Chinese community is well organized, the African Caribbean Community has put a structure in place to continue to pull stakeholders together to plan together while the South Asian Community has not yet created a mechanism to move the process forward.
- o All three are clear that they need to take responsibility for planning for the futures of their communities. This means that UWYR must be vigilant about supporting each in the way that is required and maintaining a non-competitive, equitable approach with them.
- o Currently, UWYR does not have a permanent structure in place to advise, facilitate, link and continue to advocate for and promote the needs of the three target communities.
- o The newly established LEAD Fund has to support infrastructure development in creative and flexible ways to be responsive to the target communities.
- o Supporting the establishment of infrastructure for ethnospecific services cannot exempt UWYR member agencies from becoming more responsive to target communities.
- o There is also uncertainty about how many new agencies or groups will actually be successful at getting a charitable number from Canada Customs and Revenue Agency even if UWYR aggressively advocates for change at that level. Since membership of UWYR is dependent on the applying agency having a charitable number, if this specific barrier continues to exist, there will be serious challenges facing both the target communities and UWYR alike.

UWYR has taken a bold and public step by engaging the three target communities in the LEAD consultation and planning process. The Board has shown leadership and commitment to the communities by establishing the LEAD Fund in a timely manner. A strong basis for sustained and productive working relationships with the target communities has been established and there is a lot of work to be accomplished in coming years.

Major issues in the broad policy area, related to UWYR and its member agencies as well as the target communities themselves have been highlighted. Forty-seven recommendations are made that address these issues. The recommendations chart a course for the future relationships that UWYR can build and sustain with the three target communities. They define a catalytic or leadership role that UWYR can play in the region, challenging all public and not-for-profit health and social services to transform themselves into organizations that are truly reflective and inclusive of the diversity of the region. The recommendations also point to some of the ways that UWYR needs to change how it currently operates in areas of policy and allocations of funds to ensure that members of the target and other ethnoracial communities are benefiting from the services its member agencies provide.

By implementing these recommendations to the fullest extent possible, members of the targeted as well as other ethnoracial communities and the public at large will be benefited. UWYR needs to strategically build on the groundwork that has been laid, nurturing the new relationships, continuing to reach out to other communities and truly becoming leaders of a future inclusive York Region. UWYR has demonstrated its desire and intention to implement meaningful strategies in this direction. This determination will drive the work forward. Its very relevance and future depends on forging these linkages, including communities that up until now have been on the margins, and daring to pro-actively chart a course of change for the future.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction.....	1
1.1.	Overview of York Region’s Growth & Diversity .....	1
1.2	Relevant Regional Initiatives .....	2
1.2.1	Vision 2026.....	3
1.2.2	Human Services Strategy for York Region.....	3
1.2.3	Embracing Diversity Symposium.....	3
2.0.	The LEAD Project Approach & Method .....	4
2.1	Background - Rationale for LEAD .....	4
2.3	Internal Consultations.....	5
2.2	Selection of Target Communities.....	5
2.4.	External Consultations with Targeted Communities .....	6
2.4.1.	Local Consultant Model.....	6
2.4.2.	Phased & Flexible Approach .....	6
2.4.3.	New Funding Stream.....	7
2.5.	Stakeholder Participation .....	8
2.6.	Limitations of the Method.....	7
3.0	Findings: Key Issues and Recommendations .....	9
3.1.	Broad System Level.....	9
3.1.1	Insufficient and Physically Inaccessible Human Services .....	9
3.1.2	Disconnect Between Perceptions and Realities About York Region Residents .....	10
3.1.3	Existing Human/Social Services are not all linguistically accessible and culturally sensitive .....	12
3.1.4	Charitable Status - A Missing Key for Community Organizations .....	13
3.2	Key Issues for UWYR and its Member Agencies .....	13
3.2.1	Invisibility of UWYR Overall.....	14
3.2.2	Absence of a Policy Framework for Commitment Towards Diversity & Inclusion.....	
3.2.3	Lack of Representation and Responsiveness of UWYR & its Member Agencies .....	
3.2.4	Planning for the Past vs. the Future .....	18
3.3.	Chinese Community Capacities & Needs/Issues .....	19
3.3.1.	York Region’s Chinese Community - An Overview .....	19
3.3.2	Basic Infrastructure Exists.....	19
3.3.3	Community Needs/Issues Surpass the Existing Infrastructure’s Capacity .....	21
3.3.4	Emerging Needs of the Mandarin Speaking Chinese .....	22
3.3.5	Vision of More Responsive & Better Coordinated Services for the Chinese Community in York Region .....	22
3.4	South Asian Community Capacities & Needs/Issues .....	24
3.4.1	York Region’s South Asian Community - An Overview .....	24
3.4.2	Existing Community Infrastructures are Mostly Faith-Based.....	25
3.4.3	Various Unmet Needs in the Community .....	25
3.4.4	Future Leadership & Planning for South Asians in York Region.....	26
3.5	African Caribbean Community Capacities & Needs/Issues .....	27
3.5.1	York Region’s African Caribbean Community - An Overview.....	27
3.5.2	Existing Infrastructure Limited to Markham .....	28
3.5.3	Growing Community Needs/Issues .....	29
3.5.4	Organizing & Mobilizing the African Caribbean Community of York Region .....	30
4.0	Overall Summary - Making UWYR’s Community Connections Sustainable .....	31
5.0	Conclusion.....	32
6.0	Consolidated Recommendations .....	35



## **1.0 Introduction**

United Way of York Region (UWYR) is committed to working with the full diversity of partners in the Region to provide leadership, skills and resources in building a more caring, compassionate community. In recognition of the pace of growth and change across the Region, UWYR has embarked on various initiatives over the last three years to ensure that all citizens of York Region have improved access to the services they require. During Fall 2002, as part of UWYR's ongoing planning and priority setting process, Leading Ethnoracial Access Dialogue (LEAD), was launched to reach out to under-served communities in an attempt to understand their needs and capacities for social services.

UWYR began by engaging in a dialogue with representatives of the Chinese, South Asian and African Caribbean communities in order to identify the emerging issues, gaps in services, priority needs and strategies to better serve them. Through this process UWYR expected to receive guidance for its future funding priority decisions and to develop new and effective community partnerships with the growing ethnoracial communities of York Region.

An Advisory Committee made up of internal UWYR and external community stakeholders were established to oversee the LEAD Project. Kappel Ramji Consulting Group provided external facilitation for LEAD. This is the Final Report of the LEAD Project.

### **1.1. Overview of York Region's Growth & Diversity**

York Region's population has grown 23% since 1996. It has grown faster than Toronto, Peel, Durham and the Province as a whole. The 2001 Census reports that York Region's population is 729,254, up 136,809 (or ~27,362 people per year) from the 1996 Census. [ <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/profil01/Details/details1.cfm?SEARCH=CONTAINS&ID=159&PSGC=35&SGC=3519&DataType=1&LANG=E&Province=35&PlaceName=York%20Region&CMA=&CSDNAME=York%20Regional%20Municipality&A=&TypeNameE=Census%20Division&Pprov> ] Much of the growth is occurring in the south with the municipalities of Vaughan, Markham and Richmond Hill experiencing the highest levels of growth. This growth trend is expected to continue for the next 25 years. [www.region.york.op.cit]. The population of York Region is also diversifying. According to Census 2001, the ethnoracial diversity can be assessed based on variables such as: Mother Tongue, Ethnic Background and Race/Racial Minority Group. For those who are immigrants, Country of Birth and Period of Settlement are other important elements of diversity. While most of the Census 2001 data at this level of detail has not been released for the different Regions, the Mother Tongue data was made available to the public in December 2002.

Table 1 shows the top six languages or mother tongue listings for each town in the Region. For the Region as a whole, 74.7% of the residents report that English is their mother tongue, while in Vaughan, Richmond Hill and Markham it is only about 50%. While Italian is in the top six languages for every municipality, residents with Chinese as their mother tongue are now the largest non-English speaking community within the Region, totalling about 85,336. The largest percentage changes are for those with Russian and Tamil as their mother tongue, both having increased more than 400% between 1996 and 2001. [Toronto Star, Dec 16, 2002].

**Table 1: Top Six languages; Mother Tongue Listings, According to Census 2001**  
 [Toronto Star, Dec 16, 2002]

<b>Total % of the Population and % Change Between '96 - '01 Census</b>					
<b>King</b> [Total 18, 533]		<b>Vaughan</b> [Total 182,022]		<b>Newmarket</b> [Total 65,788]	
English	78.5% [-1%]	English	51.3% [+32%]	English	84.8% [+14%]
Italian	9.57% [+11%]	Italian	22.66% [+26%]	Italian	2.00% [+36%]
German	3.24% [+22%]	Russian	3.96% [+160%]	French	1.87% [+8%]
Dutch	1.57% [+45%]	Chinese	2.96% [+6%]	Chinese	1.46% [+11%]
French	1.11% [-24%]	Punjabi	1.82% [+137%]	German	1.32% [+12%]
Polish	0.87% [+3%]	Spanish	1.81% [+104%]	Polish	1.03% [+127%]
<b>Aurora</b> [Total 40,167]		<b>Richmond Hill</b> [Total 132,030]		<b>Markham</b> [Total 208,615]	
English	85.2% [+13%]	English	51% [+12%]	English	50.03% [+4%]
Italian	2.51% [+9%]	Chinese	18.77% [+37%]	Chinese	25.89% [+43%]
French	2.2% [-84%]	Italian	5.06% [-4%]	Tamil	2.4% [+408%]
German	1.34% [-5%]	Russian	3.72% [+438%]	Italian	2.2% [-7%]
Polish	0.92% [+70%]	Persian	3.47% [+302%]	Punjabi	1.64% [+57%]
Spanish	0.89% [+122%]	Greek	1.56% [+51%]	Greek	1.45% [+38%]
<b>Georgina</b> [Total 39,536]		<b>East Gwillimbury</b> [Total 10,555]		<b>Whitchurch-Stouffville</b> [Total 22,008]	
English	92% [+13%]	English	91.7% [+4%]	English	87.4% [+10%]
French	1.49% [+21%]	German	1.39% [+2%]	Italian	2.2% [-9%]
German	1.27% [-6%]	Italian	1.11% [-7%]	German	2.13% [0%]
Italian	0.97% [+47%]	French	1.02% [-27%]	French	1.9% [+113%]
Portuguese	0.55% [+258%]	Dutch	0.82% [-23%]	Chinese	0.89% [+144%]
Polish	0.36% [+17%]	Polish	0.72% [+16%]	Greek	0.73% [+78%]

Although having a non-English mother tongue does not mean that one does not have the ability to speak English, Citizenship and Immigration Canada does keep information on newcomer language groups with the highest percentages of “no English ability at arrival” since this is one of the greatest barriers to the settlement process. During the year 2001 through to May 2002, the top six newcomer groups to the City of Toronto area that have large numbers not able to speak English included: Chinese (80%), Punjabi (50%), Russian (43%), Farsi (37%), Tamil (37%) and Spanish (34%). [Citizenship and Immigration Canada Settlement Ontario Region, Aug. 2002].

The recently released 2001 Census data showed that Chinese, South Asian and Black are the largest racial minority communities in York Region.  
 [http://www12.statcan.ca/english/profil01/Details/details1.cfm?SEARCH=CONTAINS&ID=159&PSGC=35&SGC=3519&DataType=1&LANG=E&Province=35&PlaceName=York%20Region&CMA=&CSDNAME=York%20Regional%20Municipality&A=&TypeNameE=Census%20Division&P rov]. Fifty-six percent (56%) of Markham’s population is comprised of visible minorities. Three in ten people in Markham were Chinese in 2001 and an additional thirteen (13%) percent South Asian. Forty percent (40%) of Richmond Hill’s population were visible minorities, with Chinese representing twenty-two (22%). [Statistics Canada, Jan 21, 2003, op. cit]

## **1.2 Relevant Regional Initiatives**

There are three initiatives being undertaken in the region that have relevance to UWYR's LEAD Project. Specific references from these initiatives have been cited throughout this report.

### **1.2.1 Vision 2026**

During 2001, York Regional Council undertook a process of developing an overall blueprint for York. "Vision 2026" notes the following anticipated trends over the next twenty-five (25) years: By 2026, York Region will be home to nearly 1.3 million people.

- ⊖ York Region's population will be increasingly older.
- ⊖ There will be an increased number of people in low-income categories.
- ⊖ York Region will be home to an increasing number of vulnerable residents.
- ⊖ Household forms will continue to change.
- ⊖ York Region's multi-ethnic population will continue to diversify.
- ⊖ The employment growth rate will remain slightly ahead of the population growth.
- ⊖ Job growth will be experienced in diverse sectors.
- ⊖ Technology will be increasingly significant in York Region, as elsewhere.
- ⊖ Citizens will continue to expect more and better services at the same or less cost.
- ⊖ More York Region residents will participate in their communities.
- ⊖ Governments will continue to identify new ways to show taxpayers that they are responsive and effective. [Regional Municipality of York, Apr. 2002, p. 8-9]

Within the context of a vision of "York Region: Creating Strong Caring Safe Communities", the blueprint outlines eight goals including the following three (3) which are particularly relevant to the LEAD initiative:

- ⊖ Quality Communities for a Diverse Population
- ⊖ Responding to the Needs of Our Residents
- ⊖ Infrastructure for a Growing Region. [Regional Municipality of York, Apr. 2002, op cit.]

### **1.2.2 Human Services Strategy for York Region**

In 1999, Human Resources Development Canada partnered with the regional government to plan a Human Services Strategy for York Region. An extensive consultative process was undertaken with service providers and residents that reaffirmed the values, needs and priorities for the Human Services infrastructure for York Region. An important recommendation emerging from this planning which has now been implemented, is the establishment of a Human Services Planning Coalition (HSPC) to serve as a permanent advisory, resource and planning forum for human service providers. The HSPC is to provide leadership in coordinating cross-sectoral initiatives that enhance the capacity of the Human Services sector in York Region to communicate, share information, resources and develop long term integrated planning tools. UWYR is represented on the 18 member Management Board of the HSPC. [York Region, Nov 2000].

### **1.2.3 Embracing Diversity Symposium**

In October 2001, Catholic Community Services of York Region (CCSYR), UWYR, The Regional Municipality of York and the Simcoe York District Health Council jointly convened a symposium on issues of ethnicity, access and participation in York Region. The overall purpose was to

provide a forum for a number of residents, most of whom were immigrants from ten diverse communities, to discuss issues and concerns about the transition from their homelands to Canadian society - and specifically life as experienced in York Region. Many of the issues/concerns voiced by participants during the symposium also resonate for stakeholders consulted as part of LEAD. [CCSYR, Oct 2001].

## **2.0. The LEAD Project Approach & Method**

The LEAD Project was conceptualized as a planning process to engage UWYR directly with communities to listen to their service needs as well as their capacities and to plan the most relevant and responsive ways to work together. A small Steering Group made up of representatives from UWYR's Board and Senior Management drove the process. An Advisory Committee made up of internal UWYR and external community stakeholders was also established. Guided by explicit terms of reference, the role of the Advisory Committee was to provide input and advice on the approach and methodology of the LEAD Project.

### **2.1 Background - Rationale for LEAD**

As a result of its 1998 strategic planning process, UWYR established four priorities for new and expansionary funding:

- Building Strong Communities, One Neighbourhood at a Time
- Reducing Stressors on Families & Subsequent Impact on Children and Youth
- Preventing and Addressing Domestic and Family Violence
- Supporting Ethno-Specific Initiatives in York Region

Seven (7) principles to guide the fund distribution process were re-affirmed including:

Accountability	Partnering
Inclusivity	Community Building
Sustainability	Innovation
Prevention	

While funds and resources have been invested to address the first three priorities, limited progress has been made in the area of "Supporting Ethno-Specific Initiatives in York Region". Prior to the launch of LEAD, two specific initiatives were undertaken that related to this priority: Fund Allocations Process: Since 1998, UWYR has allocated 47% of new dollars (\$250,000) for programs and services targeting the Region's ethnoracial communities. Specifically, based on their size and demographics within the larger York Region context, funding has been allocated to increase responsiveness to the needs of the Chinese and Italian communities.

Diversity and Inclusivity Project (DIP): Funded by the Trillium Foundation, UWYR spearheaded this project that resulted in a document entitled: "Kaleidoscopic Organizations", it contains tools for UWYR itself and its member agencies to use to assess the degree to which they are diverse and inclusive and discusses ways to dismantle barriers to access. In 2001, the DIP process entered the next phase in which UWYR itself and three of its funded agencies volunteered to pilot the defined approach and tools.

UWYR also implemented the Improving Performance in Agency Competency or IMPACT Fund, available to its member agencies. The primary aim of this fund is to support the strengthening of the agencies' core competencies in the areas of governance, service development as well as community relations.

By late 2001, it was evident that UWYR had not achieved the success it had anticipated in reaching its goal of greater involvement with the diverse communities in the Region. Even though there was a commitment to allocate funds to ethnoracial communities, few groups were coming forward requesting that funding. A framework for working with and allocating funds to support and respond to the needs and capacities of other smaller but growing diverse communities in the Region was still lacking. UWYR own implementation of DIP was not progressing rapidly. In recognition of these gaps and as part of its DIP process, UWYR undertook the LEAD Project with the overall objective:

***To further UWYR's ongoing needs planning and priority setting process through effective dialogue, connections and in-depth analysis about the needs and capacities of the Region's ethnoculturally diverse communities.***

## **2.2. Selection of Target Communities**

For practical and resource reasons, UWYR could not involve all the ethnoracial communities in the Region in this initiative. Thus, one of the beginning steps undertaken in the process was to select the first communities that UWYR would engage with.

Based on 1996 Census data, the three largest racial minority or ethnoracial communities in the Region are the Chinese, South Asian and African Caribbean. Anecdotal information from stakeholders consulted early on in the LEAD process has now been confirmed with recently released data that these communities remain the largest in the 2001 Census. [Statistics Canada, Jan 21, 2003]. Immigrant arrival statistics provided by Citizenship and Immigration Canada also demonstrate the Chinese and South Asian communities clearly having the highest number of new arrivals as of October 2001. (CCSYR Immigrant Arrival Statistics 1993-2001). The sheer size of the Chinese community and UWYR's lack of connection and knowledge about the issues in the South Asian and African Caribbean communities led to the decision that these three (3) be selected as the starting point for the LEAD Project.

## **2.3 Internal Consultations with Staff & Volunteers**

Brief consultations about UWYR's current operations were undertaken. Information was collected through a focus group format. It focussed on the organization's overall accessibility and existing barriers that might prevent target and other communities from actively participating in the life of the organization. This process also had an important secondary objective to stimulate dialogue at all levels of the organization about the changes that UWYR might need to make to become more responsive and inclusive. Generating a heightened awareness of the issues and potential need for change would, it was anticipated, create a readiness for implementing those changes. In all, ~25 volunteers, staff and Board members participated in this process.

In addition, primary data research was undertaken to determine the reach that current funded members of UWYR have in the target communities. The research was carried out by R.

Bhardwaj, UWYR's student placement from Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto. The analysis was based on information contained in the funding application packages, Citizen Review Panels' recommendations and comments and brochures of 20 of the current member agencies.

## **2.4. External Consultations with Targeted Communities**

There are three (3) main elements of the community consultation process that are important to discuss.

- A local consultant model for outreach and mobilization.
- A phased process, building to recommendations for UWYR to act on in 2004.
- A new funding stream agreed upon by the UWYR Board - following the first round of consultations.

### **2.4.1. Local Consultant Model**

At the heart of the external consultation strategy was the addition to the team of "Local Consultants" from each of the three target communities. The Local Consultants were individuals recruited, screened, oriented and trained to conduct the community connecting and outreach as well as data gathering that was required in culturally and linguistically sensitive or appropriate ways. The Local Consultants were screened for such skills or qualities as the segment of the community they represented, their faith, dialect, gender, region of a country they may be from originally and overall, their connection to the target community. It was important to be sure that they were sensitive to the issues of the project, and able to work in the language(s) preferred by the communities to be consulted. The Local Consultants were not translators or cultural interpreters - and as such, they had skills and knowledge that were critical to an effective process, including the broader social political analysis of community issues. Their main strengths were their links to the target community, their connections, contacts and ability to pull together residents and/or service providers and community leaders so that their voices could be heard effectively through the LEAD Project.

### **2.4.2. Phased & Flexible Approach**

In the selected target communities, a phased approach to gathering relevant information from key stakeholders and community leaders was undertaken.

First, Local Consultants made contact with key community leaders, service providers in the health and social services sectors, and faith leaders inviting them to a broad community consultation meeting. They developed lists of contacts with input from the LEAD Advisory Committee as well as by asking each person they were in contact with who else they thought should be included in the consultation.

The focus of the first consultation meeting was on the social service needs and issues the community was facing, the capacities they have to meet the needs, and possible roles that UWYR could play in assisting them to meet the needs.

Based on the outcome of the first consultation meeting, specific strategies were developed for each community's continued involvement in the process as follows:

**Chinese Community:** Due to under representation of the views of the Mandarin speaking community from Mainland China in the large consultation meeting, a smaller meeting with invited representatives of that community was hosted at UWYR and conducted in Mandarin. In all, twenty-one (21) Chinese community members were consulted.

**South Asian Community:** At the first consultation meeting, there was ample representation from service providers and social service agencies but insufficient input and presence from community leaders. Prior to a second consultation and planning meeting, intensive one on one contact was made with community leaders from all sub-groupings of the South Asian community to increase their overall involvement. In all, a total of sixteen (16) South Asian community members were consulted.

**African Caribbean Community:** Issues and concerns about youth and their families from the African Caribbean community were of primary importance to those community representatives that attended the first consultation. However, few youth themselves were present. Therefore, two (2) deliberately targeted sessions were held with youth in the East and West areas of the Region to hear more directly their issues and concerns prior to a second consultation and planning meeting. A second consultation that had more of a planning and mobilizing focus was then held with those who attended the first meeting. In all, over fifty (50) community members participated in the consultation process.

### **2.4.3. New Funding Stream**

Following the first round of consultations, it became clear to the Steering Group that members of all three target groups were very positive and encouraged by the LEAD process and UWYR's interest in assisting them to strengthen their communities. The needs were glaring and the most obvious one was non-existent community infrastructures for social service delivery. There were few organizations governed by and/or targeting the needs of the target communities that could be funded. Given the extensive community issues, unmet needs and barriers to accessing services, stakeholders provided compelling evidence for a significant role for UWYR.

Within the context of a genuine desire to be responsive to these under served communities, the Steering Group decided to take a bold step. There was consensus on the Steering Group that the balance of the LEAD process could be far more meaningful if UWYR could put forward to the communities, some concrete possible commitments that it was able to make towards the infrastructure development. This way, the next steps in the consultations could be more focussed more energizing and action could begin on an area, which was guaranteed to be a centrepiece in the final recommendations out of LEAD.

Based on a proposal from the Steering Group to the Board of Directors, \$60,000 per year, renewable for three years, to be shared by two of the target communities was approved. The purpose of these funds was to support the African Caribbean and South Asian communities to build infrastructures that would be capable of delivering sustainable quality social services to their communities. This Board decision was shared with communities in the second round of

meetings, and the desired effect was created, thrusting the LEAD Project more quickly and effectively into mobilizing and planning with the communities.

**2.5. Stakeholder Participation**

A total of ~112 internal and external community representatives participated in the LEAD Project. Many people from the target communities gave a significant amount of time, coming out to meetings during the evening and/or the weekend, demonstrating the level of concern and commitment members have about the well being of their community. Input that was gathered from all participants was thoughtful, honest and forthright. Table 2 highlights overall stakeholder participation in the process.

Table 2: LEAD Project - Stakeholder Participation

Stakeholder Group	# Participants
UWYR Board	9
UWYR Staff	6
UWYR Volunteers	10
African Caribbean Community Members	50
South Asian Community Members	16
Chinese Community Members	21
Totals	~112

**2.6 Limitations of the Method**

The following limitations of the LEAD process warrant comment: Data from the 2001 Census about the region was released in phases. Much was not published until late 2002 and early 2003, or is still not available. This made it hard to access up-to-date demographic facts about York Region today.

The findings of the primary research was limited by the fact that the kind of information needed to measure the reach of funded agencies’ services to the target communities is not currently required by UWYR. The analysis was also restricted to only the information contained in the funding application packages, Citizen Review Panels’ recommendations and comments and brochures of 20 or 54% of current member agencies.

Because the Chinese community has some social service infrastructure and a service provider network in the Region, there are documents that have been produced validating the needs and issues raised in the LEAD consultation process. The same is not true for the other two target communities, making it difficult to confirm the views and opinion expressed by participants. Every effort was made to ensure that the list of community members invited to consultations meetings reflected the diversity of the target community. Efforts were also made to include representatives of health, education and social service sectors, faith leaders, business people and other community volunteers and leaders. To a large extent this was successful. However, there were gaps. The limitation of time and resources did not allow us to engage other

community partners, e.g. local and senior levels of governments, planning bodies, human service providers, including UWYR members, and funders in the process.

In spite of all of these potential limitations to the process, the range and diversity of those that were involved was wide and deep. As well there was considerable synchronicity between communities about many of the issues impacting them. We are confident that the key themes and issues as well as the recommendations that are proposed in this report are firmly grounded in real life experience, needs and capacities of the target communities in the Region.

### **3.0 Findings: Key Issues and Recommendations**

The overall purpose of LEAD was to establish sustainable effective connections and relationships with the three target communities so that UWYR could better fulfil its mission. Through the various community consultations as well as review of pertinent documents from related initiatives, the LEAD process gathered a great deal of fact, perception and opinions. It is neither possible nor desirable to report it all in detail. Specific input from the target communities is contained in the appendices. The information has been synthesised and analysed. Wherever appropriate, issues raised by stakeholders have been further validated by relevant data from other processes.

The key issues and recommendations are reported here at three (3) levels:

- Broad System level
- UWYR and its Member Agencies
- Target Communities:
  - Chinese Community
  - South Asian Community
  - African Caribbean Community

#### **3.1. Broad System Level Issues**

When individuals from the three (3) target communities were asked to identify factors that are affecting the quality of their community members' lives, their health and well being, they frequently began by talking about issues that are broad and pertain to more than just themselves and their communities. In this process, several of the identified issues of this sort echoed findings from other planning initiatives in York Region. While UWYR cannot be expected to rectify all of these broad issues on its own, there are several key actions that it can undertake to provide leadership and mobilization to create a stronger, more caring and equitable York Region community.

##### **3.1.1 Insufficient and Physically Inaccessible Human Services**

Stakeholders highlighted various issues related to the inadequacy of the Human Services infrastructure in York Region. The few services that do exist in the Region are underfunded. There are not enough resources being provided to organizations in the Region to enable them to meet many of the growing needs in their catchment areas that go along with the rapid growth. This concern raised by stakeholders has been a long term concern within the Region and has been well documented through the Human Services Strategy process. Across the board, from acute health care, to children's services, child care, developmental services, transfer payments, public health, to police, all sectors have experienced a lower percentage than average of the provincial per capita spending [York Region, 2000, p. 7]. The Settlement

Services sector within the region has similarly lagged behind in funding from the federal government, despite the growing demand for settlement and adaptation programs, language training, affordable housing and job training. [Stouffville Tribune, Sept 26, 2002]. Many stakeholders make comparisons with Toronto's capacity that was built up during the 1970s when funding was available but the needs didn't arise in the 905 areas until the 1990s when funding cutbacks struck. [Toronto Star, Dec 16, 2002].

Planning of services at the Regional level tends to be reactive rather than proactive. People refer to the establishment of many new housing developments that have little or no common space and no readily available social support services for new residents. This again was echoed during the community consultation process for the Human Services Strategy. [York Region, May 2000].

Serious traffic problems and lack of adequate public transportation make it difficult for residents to access programs and services that do exist. This is a recurring theme that speaks to the difficulty people have getting around the region. If they have transportation, the traffic problems during peak travel times are getting worse. If they have no transportation, they are not able to easily access the supports and services that exist in the region due to the inadequacies of the public transportation system.

Many people are still going "south" for health and social service supports. Many are familiar with the range and depth of services available to people who live in Toronto ("south") and are utilizing these services to meet their needs. They would prefer, however, to get the supports they need in the region, closer to home.

**Recommendation #1:**

Continue to provide leadership in national, provincial and regional policy arenas aggressively advocating, leveraging and promoting accessible, effective, appropriate, and adequately funded human/social services for all residents of York Region

**3.1.2 Disconnect Between Perceptions and Realities About York Region Residents**

There is a perception that people who live in York Region are affluent and because of this have few or no social service needs. This common perception may be linked to the fact that the percentage of York Region families considered high income, has remained constant at 44% during the 1986-1996 period. [Regional Municipality of York, Apr 2002, p. 8]. This may have also related to a time when there were fewer people living in the region and it was viewed more as a "bedroom" community of Toronto.

The reality that is less commonly understood is the fact that over a three-year period between 1996 and 1999, the number of households with an income of less than \$30,000 grew from 22,300 to 40,000. Households below the poverty line in York Region are spending 55% of their income on necessities such as shelter, food and clothing, and as of June 3, 2002, there were 4,838 households on waiting lists for affordable housing. [Economist & Sun/Tribune, Aug 3, 2002].

While there is a growing recognition of the ethnoracial diversity of residents in York Region, inappropriate assumptions are often made about the social and economic needs of individuals/communities. Stakeholders identified various types of assumptions about their communities that are problematic.

One perception is that the main reason for the increased diversity within the Region is the continued trend of people moving out of Toronto when they could afford to purchase a home - generally either second generation of immigrant families or at least secondary migration. With this type of assumption comes the thinking that when such individuals/families move into the Region, they are well settled, have stable (and high) incomes, that they do not have any language or cultural barriers and can readily integrate into the mainstream life of York Region. Stakeholders from the target communities confirmed that this is far from the truth for many members of their communities. For many who are not newcomers or who may have even been born in Canada, there are often older family members who do not speak English and may not be acculturated. These folks, often grandparents with childcare responsibilities, can experience issues of isolation, lack of social supports and abuse. Many families have moved because they could just afford the 5% down payment on a house, with very little planning being done in terms of monthly maintenance costs. The result can be adults in the household being away from home, working long hours at more than one job, having little time with their children and being continuously caught up in trying to make ends meet.

Others have the perception that the increased ethnoracial diversity within the Region is all due to recently arrived immigrants who are affluent. The first part of this perception is validated with recent statistics showing that for the year 2001, there was an increase of almost 16% more new immigrant arrivals destined for York Region compared with the previous year. [CCSYR analysis based on data provided by Citizenship and Immigration Canada]. However, the issue of these newcomers being mostly affluent is of concern. It disregards the chain immigration effect that occurs when immigrants tend to settle where there are relatives, family or people of similar background. [Toronto Star, Dec 16, 2002]. CCSYR's experience of serving recently arrived immigrants shows that while people may have \$10,000 to \$15,000 savings when they first come to settle, fewer employment opportunities, a tight housing market and rising costs result in all of the money being used up in three (3) months. [Economist & Sun/Tribune, Aug 3, 2002].

There is concern that the target communities' experiences of racism and discrimination are not being acknowledged within the Region. Stakeholders cited various examples of racism or discrimination in their day-to-day lives or when they access the public/human services. Youth from ethnoracial communities do not feel welcomed at community centres. Homeowners from ethnoracial communities are assumed to be domestic helpers and asked by neighbours or bystanders: "Can I speak to the homeowner?" Students from ethnoracial communities are being streamed to low paying, stereotypic jobs rather than professional pursuits. Securing meaningful employment is a challenge for many. Ethno-specific agencies are challenged by their funders as to why program participants need subsidies when "their community is pretty well-off".

While such experiences of racism and discrimination also emerged as critical issues at a recent symposium within the region [CCSYR, Oct 27, 2001, p. 6-8], they do not seem to have been validated during the public consultations and opinion polling processes conducted for the Human Services Strategy in York Region. [York Region, May 2000, p.9].

All of the above disconnects can be barriers to thoughtful and strategic planning of needed social service supports.

**Recommendation #2:**

Through sustaining initiatives such as LEAD, develop capacity for a social marketing strategy that targets York Region’s decision makers and residents at large to rectify the disconnect between the perceptions about and realities of members of the diverse ethnoracial communities.

**3.1.3 Existing Human/Social Services are not all linguistically accessible and culturally sensitive**

- o In spite of the efforts of a few service providers in the Region, residents of York Region go “south” for various health and social services because many existing services are not being provided in accessible ways. Stakeholders repeatedly cite examples of not being able to communicate about their needs and issues with people who understand them not just linguistically but also socially, culturally and politically. This lack of linguistic and cultural access is experienced in many of the region’s health and mental health services, social services, seniors’ supports, family counselling as well as Public Health. There is a growing issue for York Region residents because Toronto based ethno-specific service providers are increasingly under pressure to adhere to stricter policies related to defined catchment areas. This issue is not unique to York Region residents but to people living in other 905 areas as well. [Toronto Star, Dec 16, 2002]. Back in 1993, a study noted that there were no South Asian agencies serving members from that community in York Region. [CASSA, 1993, p. 29]. Almost one decade later, the situation has remained unchanged. Aside from only two ethno-specific agencies serving the Chinese community and a few multicultural agencies providing services to diverse communities. However funded agencies focussed on the South Asian and African Caribbean communities do not exist.
- o This inability to meet needs in linguistically and culturally appropriate ways is partly linked to the lack of representation of the Region’s diverse communities in the public and human service sectors. The “face” of these sectors is still fairly Anglo-Saxon. Residents from diverse ethnoracial communities do not see themselves in staff or governing roles. This lack of representation leads them to feel that their lives and experiences are not valued or understood, causing many to be wary of attempting to access needed supports or services. Again, this sentiment has been expressed in various studies/processes over the past 10 - 15 years in the Toronto area focussing on issues of equity and access for diverse ethnoracial communities, including UWYR’s own DIP initiative in 2001. [UWYR, 2001; UWGT, 1991; CASSA, 1993].

**Recommendation #3:**

Provide leadership by modelling and promoting deliberate change processes that embrace diversity and inclusionary practices in all major regional institutions and public services such as Health Care, Education, the Regional Government etc

### **3.1.4 Charitable Status - A Missing Key for Community Organizations**

When citizens band together to create required supports and services for those who need them in their community, they are less and less able to get charitable status for their organizations. This difficulty in getting charitable status coincides with the increasing number of new ethno-specific applications to Canada Custom and Revenue Agency (CCRA). As one stakeholder reports, he was told this is a deliberate attempt to prevent “special interest” groups from gaining strong footing in Canada. The lack of this status prevents these organizations from accessing United Way or other funding to support their efforts. It causes volunteers to burn out and further marginalize communities, making them reliant on the “good will” of the existing services.

#### **Recommendation #4:**

In conjunction with United Way of Canada and the Centre for Philanthropy, advocate to Revenue Canada for the granting of charitable status to newly emerging needed ethno-specific and multicultural community organizations.

#### **Recommendation #5**

Until CCRA begins to be more fair and equitable in granting charitable numbers, support groups and organizations applying for status requires UWYR’s support through letters of support and needs to work with them to find effective alternative ways of getting the funding support they need to meet their community’s needs.

### **3.2. Key Issues for UWYR and its Member Agencies**

The LEAD Project is primarily about strengthening the relationship that UWYR and its funded member agencies have with the targeted communities. It stems from an understanding gained during the 1998 Needs Planning Initiative that appropriate services to meet the needs of diverse ethnoracial communities are not in place within the region. [COMPASS Consulting Associates, June 1998]. Given the significant role that UWYR and its member agencies play within the region’s social services infrastructure, it is not surprising that various areas of improvement have been identified through this process. The following are the key issues raised by stakeholders who were consulted.

#### **3.2.1 Invisibility of UWYR Overall**

There is confusion between UWYR and United Way of Greater Toronto (UWGT). Individuals who are Human/Social Service providers seem to be aware about the distinction between UWYR and UWGT, but other community members who may even be donors, did not know that the two United Ways are autonomous. This is not surprising since many York Region residents work in Toronto and are donating through their places of work, thinking that their contribution is being re-directed to services in their home community. People also do not necessarily view geographic boundaries in the same ways as institutional structures do so they cannot quite understand why in the “south” there is so much more available or why their donations could not be put to work in their home community.

**Recommendation #6:**

Remain vigilant about delineating the differences/uniqueness of UWYR and UWGT and how community members can ensure that their donations are designated to work in the region.

There is a blurring of UWYR's fundraising versus fund distribution priorities. There are some community members who have the understanding that in order to get funding from UWYR; they must raise money for UWYR. While those who attended the consultation meetings as part of this process have been publicly and unequivocally reassured that this is not the case, there may well be other members of the targeted ethnoracial communities who have the same impression. Staff at UWYR were not unfamiliar with this message, indicating that there may also have been some internal confusion about this as well.

**Recommendation #7:**

Ensure that the message that UWYR does not just fund services for those that contribute funds is embraced and understood in all areas of the organization and is widely known in the community as well.

Members of the target communities do not see where UWYR funds are invested in their communities. They look around and see many unmet human /social service needs. They are not aware of what the organization is currently funding. They know that there are few or no ethno-specific services that serve their community specifically. Finally, those that have been volunteering in their communities and may have applied for funding from UWYR have not all been successful at accessing it. This leads community members to believe that UWYR is quite distant and uninterested in their communities' realities and issues. Across the board, community members engaged through this LEAD process commented on how critically important it was that UWYR had taken this step to try and turn around this perception. However they also point out that this would be misleading if neither UWYR nor its member agencies have taken concrete steps to invest in or respond to needs of the target communities.

**Recommendation #8:**

Ensure that targeted communication strategies are implemented to heighten awareness about UWYR's funding role within the target communities.

**Recommendation #9:**

Ensure that in all public and internal communications and messaging, the three target communities are visible in positions of value and stature.

There are concerns about the geographic distribution of current members' services. Stakeholders point to the latest Census data that confirms seventy-five percent (75%) of the region's population lives south of Major MacKenzie. This is also where there are the largest concentrations of the three target communities. However, historically, the larger population centres have been north of this so many agencies have located their head offices in Newmarket

or Aurora. Sixty percent (60%) of the agencies surveyed in the Primary Data Research (N=20) have their main offices located in the northern part of the region. Thirty percent (30%) of these do not appear to have any satellite locations or offer satellite programs as yet. The remaining agencies either have satellite locations or offer satellite programs in the southern part of the region, sometimes in partnership with agencies located in the southern area. (Bhardwaj, 2002) The perception is that the issue of office location is one of the reasons why member agencies may not be serving target communities to the degree that they might.

**Recommendation #10:**

Ensure that all UWYR internal planning and allocations processes focus deliberately on geographic access of services so that the distribution of its funding matches the most pressing needs of the greatest number of people in the region.

**3.2.2 Absence of a Policy Framework for Commitment Towards Diversity & Inclusion**

**UWYR has not yet laid out a clear policy framework to ground and guide the changes that it and its members need to make to become fully inclusive and responsive to the region’s diverse citizenry.** In the absence of this clear policy, the messages that have been given about expectations for change can be interpreted as vague or non-committal. There is an overall impression that regardless of whether member agencies put effort into undergoing a planned diversity inclusivity change process or not, financial support from UWYR will continue.

**Diversity and Inclusivity Project (DIP)s impact to date is not clear.** UWYR has invested time and resources obtained from the Trillium Foundation in the development of a framework for organizational change contained in the document “Kaleidoscopic Organizations.” This was an important initiative that was intended to keep moving towards actual change within UWYR itself and within its funded members. Internal stakeholders report that minimal progress has been made since the release of the document. In reality, only three of the thirty-seven funded agencies are involved in a pilot process to apply DIP within their organizations. The LEAD Project is one of UWYR’s steps towards change, but there is much still to be done in terms of the internal systems and structures that remain unchanged. While as part of LEAD, comprehensive barriers analysis (such as one described in Kaleidoscopic Organization) still needs to be carried out, some internal policy issues were identified in this process that UWYR might want to start changing.

**Recommendation #11:**

Establish a clear and firm policy framework outlining expectations related to becoming an inclusive organization, that UWYR and its member agencies are committed to and obliged to adhere to.

**Recommendation #12:**

Place high priority on applying DIP to UWYR itself, providing relevant education and training opportunities for volunteers and staff of UWYR as well as from member agencies.

**Recommendation #13:**

Require all UWYR member agencies to place high priority on engaging in DIP activities, supporting some of this through the IMPACT Fund.

The current UWYR allocations process does not require information about the ethnoracial reach of services nor strategies being undertaken to address inequities. Not only does the information that is required need to be reviewed and changed, but there is evidence that the volunteers who make up the Citizen Review Panels also need to be better trained about how to evaluate agency's progress toward true diversity and inclusivity. The Primary Data Research found:

Panel members lack uniform understanding about what constitutes "strong diversity" and failed to consistently address the lack of racial and ethnic diversity within various levels of members' organizations in their recommendations.

- Those panels that included members from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds specifically spoke to issues of diverse and inclusive practice.
- Tools pointing to uniform information gathering and questioning are lacking. (Bhardwaj, 2002)

**UWYR is unable to demonstrate the reach of its funding into the target communities.** UWYR can only demonstrate the reach of its funding if its funded agencies give it information that ties the reach of services to the recipients in some way. Currently, data that could point to the how deep the reach of UWYR funded services actually are, is not required of agencies in their funding applications. The Primary Data Research found that because the importance of UWYR's priority to improve access has not been clearly articulated, program information given by agencies does not include specific measurable information related to ethnic diversity of clients, cultural and linguistic appropriateness of programming, Board membership, staff composition or community relations. UWYR forms do not currently ask for specific measurable information relating to racial and ethnic diversity from member agencies. "Diversity" as specified on the Core Competency forms is not clearly defined to include racial and ethnic diversity. (Bhardwaj, 2002)

**Recommendation #14:**

Immediately undertake an extensive review of the current allocation process including the data that agencies should be required to collect, and how members demonstrate adherence to expected standards of diversity and inclusivity set by UWYR. Also determine and clearly spell out the implications of non-compliance, including the potential for funding cuts and/or de-funding.

**Recommendation #15:**

Within the context of their mission statements, set targets with member agencies for the ethnoracial and geographic reach that is expected to be achieved with UWYR funding.

**While a critical success factor for UWYR is to increase its reach to the Region's diverse populations, not everyone within the organization is up to date on this priority.** UWYR set this priority in 1998, but in the internal focus groups for the LEAD process there were individuals from Campaign Cabinet and others who did not know about this organizational priority. The Campaign Cabinet volunteers indicated that if they had been informed, they would have been thinking differently about their replacements or account representatives since the environment they work in is also diverse and changing dramatically so they could be helpful in this area.

**Recommendation #16:**

Ensure that everyone in UWYR organization knows of and acts on the strategic priorities that are set by the Board of Directors.

**3.2.3 Lack of Representation and Responsiveness of UWYR & its Member Agencies**

**Target communities report that they are under represented in the staff and volunteers of most member agencies.** They indicate that the absence of staff and volunteers who are from their communities in the funded agencies is a barrier to access and as a result, UWYR funded agencies are not meeting needs adequately. They are not able to access linguistically, culturally or socially appropriate services from them. Some examples include the elderly not feeling comfortable accessing day programs where they might be the only person of colour and employment programs that are not serving youth from the target communities in meaningful or effective ways.

**A frequently heard argument for not meeting the needs of the ethnoracial communities is that there are already waiting lists and additional resources are not available.** While this may be true, it further illustrates the significant gap in the agencies' analysis about how systemic barriers work. There appears to be a lack of acknowledgement or recognition that members of ethnoracial communities have just as valid and pressing needs as others and should have equal opportunity to be on those waiting lists.

**There is under-representation of the target communities in the organizational structures of UWYR.** Most internal UWYR stakeholders agree that there is much room for improvement in terms of recruiting and retaining representatives of the target communities among the staff, Board, Campaign Cabinet, and Citizen Review Panels etc. Members of the target communities note that they do not see themselves represented in the images of Board and Volunteer photographs on the walls at UWYR or in the organizations promotional literature. While this is clearly an area for change, integrating members of the target communities within the fabric of the needs to be explored thoughtfully so that inappropriate expectations are not placed newly recruited staff or volunteers. That is, there are some within UWYR who seem to think that members of ethnoracial communities are in a position to speak for a whole community. They can be seen as the “magic formula” for transforming all the systems and structures that create barriers for their community. These expectations are unlike those placed on their Caucasian counterparts, and as such, create insurmountable and impossible expectations for new recruits to live up to.

**Recommendation #17:**

Continue to improve ethnoracial representation at all levels of UWYR organization.

**Recommendation #18:**

Model for those organizations that argue that they are unable to serve/ reach out to diverse communities because of waiting lists and/or lack of funds that it is not only the right thing to do but also the only way they can truly achieve their stated missions and mandates.

**Recommendation #19:**

Expect all member agencies to implement deliberate strategies to diversify their organizations at all levels including staff, volunteers, board and clients.

### **3.2.4 Planning for the Past vs. the Future**

**UWYR's planning processes have not been keeping up with the rapidly changing realities of the Region.** UWYR plays an integral part of several policy and planning bodies in the region. Some of these are central to the future of the region from a Human and Social Service as well as quality of life point of view such as the Human Services Planning Coalition and the Character Council of the region. The Region's Planning Department has specific technical services/resources that can be tapped into e.g. Geographical Mapping Systems as a tool for analysing specific data. However, the demographic shifts in the Region have been occurring for some time as was clear from the 1996 Census. Stakeholders cited various short lived types of initiatives over the past few years that have not been sustained within UWYR. In spite of UWYR's intensive involvement in various planning efforts, they perceive that the main reason given for this is a lack of clear commitment from senior leadership and the absence of a broad based, deliberate organizational plan for change with built in accountability mechanisms. It is good that UWYR is now pro-actively beginning to plan for change that will transform itself into a more diverse and inclusive organization. But it needs to also ensure that it anticipates other changes occurring in the region and is at the forefront of proactive future planning.

#### **Recommendation #20:**

Ensure that UWYR's planning processes are timely/current and flexible to anticipate and keep pace with the rapidly changing realities of the region that there is regular monitoring and evaluation activities to increase accountability, and that pertinent planning resources available through other bodies in the region are capitalised.

**The newly approved LEAD Fund is an excellent beginning to building sustainable infrastructure within the target communities.** It is an excellent demonstration that UWYR is serious about forging new relationships and infrastructures within the target communities. The challenge will be to ensure that other smaller communities do not feel further marginalized because they are not members of the first group that will benefit from this new initiative.

#### **Recommendation #21:**

Provide information and education for broader community constituencies about how to become engaged in UWYR and other human service infrastructures as well as the political structures of the region so they can become active participants.

### **3.3. Chinese Community Capacities & Needs/Issues**

The Chinese community already has some infrastructure in place that can access UWYR and other funds for needed programs and services. Therefore, this community has not been included in the new LEAD Fund because the fund is intended to facilitate the establishment of infrastructure in communities where none exists. However, as highlighted below, there are many unmet needs in the Chinese Community in York Region. The following key findings and recommendations are intended to address these issues. Together they point to ways that the service infrastructure that exists in the region can be strengthened and the specific needs of the newly settling Mandarin community from Mainland China can be more effectively met.

#### **3.3.1. York Region's Chinese Community - An Overview**

**The Chinese community is the largest ethnic and visible minority group within York Region with a non-English/French mother tongue.** Based on the 2001 Census, more than 85,300 York Region residents report that Chinese is their mother tongue. The largest

concentrations exist within the municipalities of Markham (54,010) and Richmond Hill (24,782). [Toronto Star, Dec 16, 2002]. Further breakdown of this figure between those who speak Cantonese, Mandarin or other Chinese dialects is not available. While there was a large influx of Chinese immigrants to Canada from Hong Kong between the census in 1991 and 1996, stakeholders note significant changes within the community, with now a growing number of recent arrivals from Mainland China and Taiwan. Immigrant arrival statistics for those whose primary destination was York Region during 1997 - 2001 show that 2756 new immigrants came from Hong Kong, 1706 from China and 327 from Taiwan. [CCSYR, n.d.]. This does not reflect the secondary migration that typically occurs when new immigrants might first settle in Toronto but then move into York Region. For a period of 17 months during 2001 - 2002, permanent residents (over age 17) destined for Toronto included 24,985 newly arrived Chinese-speaking individuals. [Citizenship and Immigration Canada Settlement Ontario Region, Aug. 2002]. Another shift noted by stakeholders is an increasing number of individuals arriving as refugees as opposed to with new immigrant status.

Socio-economic data specific to the Chinese community of York Region was not available at the time of writing this report.

### ***3.3.2 Basic Infrastructure Exists***

**There is some existing infrastructure within the Chinese community.** There are two ethno-specific and a few Chinese serving agencies among the current UWYR member agencies providing services to seniors, new immigrants and families. Given the geographic concentrations of the community, services are focussed in Markham and Richmond Hill. Stakeholders express concern that the reactive nature of the Region's planning means that services in areas like Markham become overburdened with having to cater to those in other newly developing sub-divisions as well.

**There is also a Chinese Service Provider network in place, spearheaded by one of UWYR member agencies.** The Chinese Social Service Network of York Region (CSSN) was established in 1994 and its current membership of 30 members or more are employed in a range of Human/Social Services sectors, including: Settlement, Violence Against Women, Seniors/Geriatric Care, Education, Health, Child & Youth and Family Services. The network comes together regularly to:

- < Provide networking opportunities
- < Exchange information on services
- < Share best practices in serving clients
- < Promote collaboration and mutual support
- < Discuss common issues/concerns affecting service delivery
- < Bridge gaps between ethno-specific and mainstream communities
- < Undertake joint projects/activities
- < Promote, develop and co-ordinate services. (CCSYR, n.d.)

Currently there is no funding support to sustain the planning and development work that the CSSN undertakes. The CSSN members have overlapping interests or membership in related networking activities in the Toronto area and at National levels.

**Stakeholders report that places of worship throughout the Region and in the “south” are providing many informal, volunteer driven supports and services to community**

**members.** There has been uneven success forging sustainable relationships between the formal Human/Social Services infrastructure and these informal supports.

**Recommendation #22:**

Explore with other key players (e.g. Public Health, Regional Municipality) ways to support and/or fund the Chinese Social Service Network' s planning, special projects, linkages to the mainstream agencies and partnership development functions.

**Recommendation #23:**

Promote the existing UWYR IMPACT Fund to Chinese serving agencies to increase their reach to under-served sub target groups and for capacity building partnerships with informal, faith based, volunteer driven supports and services.

**3.3.3 Community Needs/Issues Surpass the Existing Infrastructure's Capacity**

**The existing infrastructure is not meeting all the community needs.** While there are significant unmet needs for the community overall, the growing number of refugees (with and without conventional refugee status) is creating many challenges for service providers due to program restrictions. For most refugees, English language training can be facilitated somewhat - but employment support as a necessary first step for settlement, is hindered due to their immigration status - leaving many underserved.

**Major service needs that were identified by stakeholders include:**

- **Employment:** Members of the Chinese community are experiencing difficulties getting employment that is meaningful and related to their training and expertise. This is due in many cases to barriers for foreign-trained professionals who are not able to gain access to regulated employment without becoming re-accredited. Existing employment services within the region do not have the capacity to facilitate access for such individuals. The result is that professionals are relegated to positions paying minimum wage and requiring long hours of work. Those people who run their own businesses work extremely long hours 7 days a week. Those from Mainland China also do not completely understand Canadian laws and or business practices and feel as though they may be being cheated because of this.
- **Language Barriers:** Many members of the Chinese community are not fluent in either of the official languages, making it difficult to attain employment in environments where English is the language of work. The language barriers also make it hard for community members to access existing mainstream supports and services. Providing “support” through AT & T or translation services is just not effective.
- **Childcare:** The lack of affordable childcare within the region causes many employable adults, especially women, to be caught in the cycle of not being able to work or enrol in job training programs.
- **Family Issues:** These issues relate to the impact of “astronaut “ families where one parent may be earning the family income in the country of origin; parenting and intergenerational issues between parents and their children who are being socialised into Western ways in school; marital problems that are kept secret until it is often too late to salvage the relationship.
- **Special Needs Children:** There are practically no services for children with special needs within the Chinese community. Paediatricians and psychiatrists who deal with children are rare or not available within the region, leaving many families without the

- relevant medical supports.
- **Seniors:** Many Chinese seniors feel isolated and bored. They are described as feeling “crippled” because of lack of transportation and “mute” because of the language barriers. They often have the responsibility for taking care of the grandchildren and are living in York Region not by choice but because their adult children have decided to live here. While they feel they are making a contribution by providing childcare, they are often lonely and unhappy.
- **Mental Health Issues:** The issues and needs cited above often lead to depression, addictions, gambling, anxiety and other behaviours which do not contribute to an easy integration into the community life.

These needs are validated by reports produced by the community, specifically CCSYR , *Community Development Focussing on Community Capacity Building: Application for Funding for New Program from United Way of York Region*. [n.d.] and Carefirst et al, *The Way Ahead: Proposals to Strengthen Social Services for the Chinese/Mandarin Community*. [2002].

**Recommendation #24:**

Advocate for more and responsive services for the Chinese Community by establishing a mechanism for ongoing dialogue between community stakeholders, UWYR, its member agencies and other funders/policy makers about their existing and emerging needs/issues.

**3.3.4 Emerging Needs of the Mandarin Speaking Chinese**

**The full diversity of the Chinese community is not well served by the existing infrastructure.** While the majority of the Chinese within York Region are Cantonese speaking from Hong Kong, the number of Mandarin speaking people is growing. Most are from Mainland China, and to a lesser degree, from Taiwan. Several agencies have staff available who are able to speak Mandarin, but for the Mandarin speaking community this is not adequate. Specifically, representatives of the Mandarin community from Mainland China report that their sub target group is not able to access culturally sensitive services. Those who are not from Mainland China lack the necessary social, cultural and political understanding to appropriately meet their social service needs.

**The Mandarin community from Mainland China is more newly settling here in Canada.** As such, they need practical orientation to the intricacies of the Canadian (and Western) education, health and legal systems. They also are experiencing all of the other service needs that Cantonese-speaking community members are facing.

**There are gaps in Mandarin community members’ understanding of how the not-for-profit sector works here in Canada.** Coming from years of exposure to a Communist political system, there are many aspects of the not-for-profit sector that are new and unfamiliar to them.

**Members of the Mandarin community have organized volunteer efforts to meet the needs of their community.** With little or no outside financial support volunteers provide

group based education, workshops, and operate a Chinese school for which they have received a charitable number. They use space in restaurants, churches and schools to provide the services, and depend on donations to help pay for space, flyers etc. Members of this community involved in this process feel as though they are always asking for help and were pleased to be asked for their input and ideas in the LEAD Project - to be able to give something back.

**Recommendation #25:**

Expect all UWYR member agencies serving the Chinese community to ensure they are serving the Mandarin community not just linguistically but also culturally.

**Recommendation #26:**

In cooperation with UWYR members and other public institutions develop a social service mentoring model that educates the community about the role of the not-for-profit sector in Canada.

**3.3.5 Vision of More Responsive & Better Coordinated Services for the Chinese Community in York Region**

**Stakeholders from the Cantonese and Mandarin speaking segments of the community share a vision of being able to access responsive services within the region.** They envision a streamlined, “one stop shopping” process for community members to be able too easily access information about culturally and linguistically appropriate services within the region. Given the very limited budgets that agencies have for marketing and advertising, UWYR could facilitate a strategy for promoting community awareness about services. An example of this would be to create links on UWYR website that access information in Chinese about services within the region.

**Stakeholders desire validation from funders that acknowledges the invaluable contribution being made by ethno-specific agencies** to the health and well being of community members. They would like to see government providing core funding for the various programs needed by the community, as opposed to having to spend time and energy in fundraising activities. They believe that areas of government, like the Ministry of Health, have to establish a firm commitment or policy for funding ethno-specific programs/services. While UWYR was applauded for providing leadership in this way, stakeholders envision a greater proportion of core funding being designated for ethno-specific agencies/services in response to community needs.

**Greater participation of the Chinese community within UWYR is anticipated in the future.** Stakeholders spoke about creating a stronger presence during the active campaign period, linking service delivery within the community to fundraising, as well as greater involvement of professional resource persons in various volunteer roles at UWYR.

**Recommendation #27:**

Given the validation/support received by community stakeholders, move forward with planning the implementation of the '211' Information Line, ensuring that appropriate focus testing steps are undertaken with the target communities.

**Recommendation #28:**

Continue the dialogue with the community about the role(s) UWYR can play to support/increase reach of services to the full diversity of the Chinese Community of York Region.

### **3.4 South Asian Community Capacities & Needs/Issues**

Specific issues and themes that were raised by stakeholders from the South Asian community are highlighted below, along with recommendations. While some synchronicity between the issues and recommendations within the South Asian, Chinese and African Caribbean communities exists, we have chosen to emphasize and value the uniqueness and importance placed on issues in each community by repeating similar views so that UWYR will be in a position to follow up with each community in special, tailored ways.

Unlike the Chinese community, there is no formal, not-for-profit infrastructure delivering human/social services within the South Asian community. Like the African Caribbean community, the approach that UWYR needs to take with the South Asian community is to support and facilitate infrastructure development and increased service access. The newly established LEAD Fund will serve as an effective springboard for this work.

#### **3.4.1 York Region's South Asian Community - An Overview**

**The South Asian community in York Region is extremely diverse on many dimensions including language, culture, period of settlement, faith, and country of origin.** Given this diversity, quantifying the size of the community or creating a demographic profile is challenging. Based on the 2001 Census data, Tamil and Punjabi show up in the top six mother tongue languages in the municipalities of Markham. Punjabi is in the top six mother tongues in Vaughan as well. [Toronto Star, Dec 16,2002]. Since many South Asians in York Region have been settled for several decades, successive generations may now cite English as their mother tongue. [Toronto Star, op cit.]. However, stakeholders concur with immigration data that there is a growing number of South Asians who are newly settling. Some may be settling in York region through secondary migration, but for many others York Region is their primary destination when they arrive to Canada. Immigrant arrival statistics for 1993-2001 reveal that 2024 individuals destined for York Region lived in India prior to coming to Canada; 595 were from Sri Lanka and 923 from Pakistan. [CCSYR, n.d.]. 1996 Census data for countries of birth for all immigrants residing in York Region indicated that more than 14,000 were from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka. [CCSYR, n.d.] . This figure does not include South Asians who may have migrated from East, Central or South Africa, the Caribbean, Guyana, Britain, Europe or the United States. During a 17-month period in 2001-2002, five (5) South Asian languages were among the top twelve mother tongues spoken by new arrivals destined for Toronto. This amounted to more than 23,200 new immigrants to the City of Toronto who speak Urdu, Tamil, Punjabi, Gujarati or Hindi. Among these, Punjabi and Tamil were in the top six language groups with no ability to speak English upon arrival. [Citizenship and Immigration Canada Settlement Ontario Region, Aug. 2002].

Socio-economic data specific to the South Asian community of York Region was not available at the time of writing this report.

### **3.4.2 Existing Community Infrastructures are mostly Faith-Based**

**In the South Asian Community there are many faith based volunteer service infrastructures in place.** These service infrastructures are often quite sophisticated and elaborate, recruiting, training and deploying countless volunteers to meet health, social service, and recreational, social and spiritual needs of their congregants. Some faith based volunteer services have also forged partnerships with external services to enhance or support their efforts.

**By all accounts there is a limited number of South Asian service providers represented in the region’s array of human/social service agencies.** This may be because for the most part, the migration of the South Asian community to the region has occurred in the last 10-15 years. It also may be linked to the general under-representation of the diversity of York Region in most public institutions and social service that has already been noted. The South Asian workers who are situated in the region report that they are overwhelmed by the service needs they are trying to meet.

**There is no South Asian service provider network comparable to the one in the Chinese community in place.** Workers network all the time with each other to better serve their clients, but there is no formal way that they come together for more dedicated planning, support and action. Consequently, there are also no region specific studies or data to validate the needs and issues that emerged in this process available. The Coalition of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA), based in Toronto, is an important forum for service providers from York Region to come to, and connect with, other South Asians on common issues affecting the community throughout the GTA.

**There is no agency in the region specifically serving South Asians, and ethno-specific South Asian agencies based in Toronto have not established satellite services in the region.** Within the York Region District School Board there are two recently established initiatives that are focussing on issues of South Asian youth in the school system. There are also South Asian workers in several mainstream or multicultural agencies providing services in the region. Stakeholders consulted in this process included service providers from education, health, social Services, settlement and employment/training sectors.

**Many community members report that they go “south “ for culturally and linguistically appropriate services** provided by a few South Asian agencies in Toronto. This includes services for those community members who are newly settling, as well as those who may have been settled for some time. Stakeholders were clear that people from the South Asian community need to see that they are reflected in organizations in order for them to feel comfortable or welcome to access service.

<b>Recommendation #29:</b>
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Through the LEAD Fund, facilitate the establishment of an ethno-specific infrastructure that can obtain funding to deliver needed services to the South Asian Community.

**Recommendation #30:**

Become involved in relevant target community ethno-specific initiatives that are targeting key community needs such as York District School Board initiatives re South Asian youth.

**Recommendation #31:**

Support the establishment of a South Asian service provider network to do planning, special projects, partnership building and joint problem solving.

**3.4.3 Various Unmet Needs in the Community**

**The existing human/social services infrastructure within the region is not meeting the needs of the South Asian community.** Because the community is incredibly diverse, there is not a single point of view or voice that can represent an entire community's perspectives. In spite of this diversity, however, there are many shared or common issues and concerns across the diverse perspectives. These commonalities need to become the basis or focal point for joint action.

**Major service needs that were identified include:**

- **Youth:** Many youth are not adjusting well to life in the region. There is an increase of gang involvement, drug use, and criminal activity and police intervention. There are gaps in youth mentoring programs, including no South Asian Big Brother/ Big Sister type programs. These issues lead to parenting and other intergenerational tensions.
- **Families:** Families in the South Asian community are facing stresses related to daily living including low income/poverty, lack of affordable childcare and housing, family conflict/ violence, depression and rising rates of suicide. Many of these issues are reflected at school in children's behaviour and/or progress. Older adults or seniors are often isolated and have no social outlets.
- **Settlement Services:** Those members of the community who are newly settling are being paralyzed in low paying jobs with little support for training. Additionally, foreign-trained professionals are not able to access regulated employment. Accessing language classes for newcomers is made difficult because of the region's transportation issues.
- **Health Care:** Newcomers are also not accessing timely health care due to OHIP eligibility restrictions and the absence of Community Health Centres in the region. As well, some newly settling community members are suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome as a result of experiences in war torn countries of origin. These and other mental health issues affecting South Asians are not well understood as a result the current mainstream services are unable to be responsive and ethno-specific programs for the community are absent.

There has been considerable planning and development work done by CASSA in Toronto that validates the needs that have been identified as common throughout the GTA in the South Asian community. [CASSA, 1993].

**Recommendation #32:**

Immediately ensure that existing UWYR member agencies increase their reach and effectiveness in serving the diverse South Asian community through increasing accountability and consequences, if necessary, in UWYR's allocation process.

#### **3.4.4 Future Leadership & Planning for South Asians in York Region**

**Within the South Asian community in York Region there are several sub-target communities with strong leadership, and in this process, there was ample evidence of a will and ability to bridge the many diversities to work together.** Stakeholders envision the need for a comprehensive long range plan for building the needed culturally and linguistically appropriate service sector that cross the various diversities within the South Asian community. However, to date, a structure to move this planning forward does not appear to have been established within the region and stakeholders acknowledge that LEAD may well serve as that first step. CASSA could also be a helpful resource in such planning and development activity.

**Stakeholders envision a mullet-service agency model with a primary mandate to serve three (3) target populations: Youth, Families & Newcomers.** Principles of partnership, integration, co-ordination, cultural sensitivity and language accessibility were articulated. Emphasis on the faith connection through close partnership with places of worship such as Temples, Mandirs, Masjids, Jamatkhana, Gurdwaras and Churches were described as critical entry points to gain access to members of the South Asian community.

#### **Recommendation #33:**

Create deliberate opportunities and facilitate ways in which the diverse stakeholders from the South Asian community can continue the organizing that has been initiated through the LEAD process.

#### **Recommendation #34:**

Provide education to members of the three target and other communities about how to establish a viable, sustainable service or agency infrastructure within the Canadian not-for-profit sector.

#### **Recommendation #35:**

Consider the feasibility of targeting South Asian Heritage Month (May) as an opportune time for some aspect of a public "launch" of the LEAD Fund.

### **3.5 African Caribbean Community Capacities & Needs/Issues**

Specific issues and themes that were raised by stakeholders from the African Caribbean community are highlighted below, along with recommendations. Like the South Asian community, a formally funded infrastructure for delivery of human/social services targeting the African Caribbean community does not exist within York Region. Both of these communities will be eligible to access funds from the first round of the LEAD Fund. The recommendations focus on ways to enhance the community's abilities to take ownership for planning and developing effective and meaningful responses to needs by building on existing strengths and capacities.

#### **3.5.1 York Region's African Caribbean Community - An Overview**

**The African Caribbean Community in York Region is very diverse.** It is made up of two

broad groups of members- those from the African Continent who are more newly settling and those from the Caribbean, who are primarily well established here in Canada, but not necessarily in the Region of York. Since the majority of those from the Caribbean would cite English as their mother tongue, census data for language is only pertinent for those migrating from Africa. While the 2001 Census data for the top six mother tongues for York Region does not point to any of the African languages, immigrant arrival statistics during the period 2001-2002 destined to Toronto indicate that Arabic was the fourth largest language group. [Citizenship and Immigration Canada Settlement Ontario Region, Aug. 2002]. Statistics from 2001 Census confirms that York Region's Black community remains the third largest visible minority group, next to the Chinese and South Asians. [Statistics Canada, Jan 21, 2003] Between 1993 and 2001, 338 new immigrants from Jamaica were destined for York Region and 196 were from Trinidad. [CCSYR, n.d.] Census data for 1996 showed that over 16,000 York Region residents were immigrants born in Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, South Africa, Tanzania or Kenya. [CCSYR, n.d.] Immigrants from Somalia now residing in York Region, are likely be reflected in the census data for 2001 to be released in early 2003.

Socio-economic data specific to the African Caribbean community of York Region was not available at the time of writing this report.

**There are other dimensions of diversity within the African Caribbean Community including language, faith, and country of origin.** As well, within the Region, the African Caribbean community is settled in both the east and the western areas, quite far from one another.

### ***3.5.2 Existing Infrastructure Limited to Markham***

**There is a vibrant voluntary organization in the east that is well established.** It provides volunteer driven programs in the areas of tutoring for African Caribbean youth, university scholarships and other services aimed at ensuring that youth are successful in their academic pursuits and achieve their professional goals. This organization has not been successful to date in accessing UWYR funding. One reason may be that it lacks charitable status. This means that they are continually struggling to meet the community's needs and acquire the financial resources they need to remain viable.

**Places of worship, mostly churches in the east, also provide some infrastructure for volunteer driven activities.** Services and supports to congregants from poor and low-income families are regularly delivered through these venues.

**Stakeholders express concern about the limited reach of this infrastructure,** and how community members spread out in vast areas in the south-western parts of the region have no connection to each other, to relevant services and totally lack a "sense of community".

**By all accounts, there is minimal representation of the African Caribbean Community on UWYR funded agencies' Boards, Staff, or Volunteers.** In fact, through this process, only two service providers were identified and involved in the region as a whole - one from a UWYR agency and one from the YRDSB. All the rest were volunteers.

**Many members of the African Caribbean community requiring services are going**

“south” to access them from ethno-specific African or Caribbean agencies. This is in large part due to the fact that they wish to receive services in linguistically and/or culturally sensitive ways that the current array of services in the region can’t accommodate. Stakeholders report that the staff or people who work with their youth, are most often not from their community which hampers the youth from opening up to them.

**Recommendation #36:**

Through the LEAD Fund facilitate the establishment of an ethno-specific infrastructure that can obtain funding to deliver needed services to the African Caribbean Community.

**Recommendation #37:**

Explore the feasibility of establishing a service provider network of African Caribbean workers to do planning, special projects, partnership building and joint problem solving.

**3.5.3 Growing Community Needs/Issues**

**Members of the African Caribbean Community report that they are regularly subjected to racism and discrimination** in their interface with many of the region’s health, education, banking/financial institutions, recreation and legal institutions. The concerns about the exposure to subtle racism that youth in the region’s education system experience were most pronounced. Here they speak about poor performance, steering Black youth to go to colleges instead of universities and to enter non-professional careers, and Guidance Counsellors who are not sensitive to the issues facing their youth.

**The existing human/social service infrastructure that exists in the region is not meeting all the needs that the African Caribbean community has.** There is a lot of diversity within the community, ranging from settlement issues and language barriers for the more recently arrived members from the African Continent, to basic/core issues of equitable and accessible services for those from the Caribbean. In spite of this diversity, however, there are many shared or common issues and concerns across the diverse perspectives.

**Major service needs that were identified include:**

- **Youth:** African Caribbean youth are dropping out of school and facing racism and discrimination not only at school, but also feeling unwelcome at local community recreation centres. In the west, youth are isolated and mostly at home because of long distances to social and recreational programs. There are reports that policing in the region is not equitable, treating Black youth differently from others. These experiences are frustrating youth, in some cases leading to aggressive behaviour. The community fears that they are losing bright young people due to systemic barriers they encounter.
- **Families:** The African Caribbean community stakeholders also stress that the issues youth face are not just because they are victims of systemic barriers. Youth are also having difficulties because of family issues. These include single moms with part time jobs and no benefits, so that their kids are suffering from dental and other untreated health problems that lead to shame and anger; violence and abuse in homes; parents don’t know how the system works against them and cannot always advocate on their own behalf; parents are so involved in working to pay for their new

homes and material things, that they are not able to pay enough attention to their children's experiences; not all families know and understand how parenting in Canada may be the same or different than their experiences growing up.

**Recommendation #38:**

Collaborate with the offices/staff responsible for race relations of various regional service organizations so that there is support/advocacy for deliberate changes towards increasing reach and effectiveness of programs/services for the diverse African Caribbean community. Advocate for best practice approaches in creating greater accountability and sanctions if necessary.

**3.5.4 Organizing & Mobilizing the African Caribbean Community of York Region**

**Stakeholders from the diverse African Caribbean Community did not have an existing way to do joint planning and development at the beginning of the LEAD process.** Given the very small number of African Caribbean service providers employed within the human/social services in the region, much has depended on the commitment, energy and initiative of volunteers from the community. Formal or deliberate needs planning for the diverse sub-target groups within the community, has not been possible due to a lack of resources. Therefore, the needs that have been identified by stakeholders through the LEAD, cannot be validated through other reports or special projects.

**UWYR's LEAD process and the new LEAD Fund have been an impetus for stakeholders from the African Caribbean community to form a Working Group/Committee.** By the end of the second consultation meeting during the LEAD initiative, stakeholders had organized a diverse group of leaders representing the African and Caribbean, as well as the East/West dimensions of the community, to continue to plan and develop a unified strategy to respond to the needs they identified.

**Stakeholders envision a multi-faceted model of service delivery across the region staffed by Black individuals.** They see this model as a series of focal points around which members of the African Caribbean community gather to socialize, to access relevant information and to network with each other in a supportive way - so as to ease the stresses of settlement and daily living within the region. Stakeholders expressed a sense of urgency or priority revolving around needs/issues of youth and their families. The by-product of a greater sense of community and belonging was an underlying theme for this future vision.

**Recommendation #39 :**

Support community organizing that has been initiated for infrastructure development in the African Caribbean community by providing concrete/logistical assistance to the newly established Working Group/Committee

**Recommendation #40:**

Hold a meeting with representatives from the African Caribbean community to review the draft LEAD Fund. Extending the invitation to stakeholders from the South Asian community as well will serve as another way of engaging with the communities jointly and gathering important information about how the LEAD Fund intervention can be responsive to the infrastructure development needs of the two communities.

**Recommendation #41:**

Consider the feasibility of targeting Black History Month (February) as an opportune time for a public “launch” of the LEAD Fund.

**4.0 OVERALL SUMMARY - MAKING UWYR’S COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS SUSTAINABLE**

The LEAD Project has begun a community planning and development process that is welcomed by the three target communities and timely as far as internal UWYR stakeholders are concerned. The UWYR Board has made a significant financial commitment to assisting communities as they build infrastructure to better meet the needs of their members. This process needs to be nurtured and sustained.

**Each of the three communities is at a different stage of development or coming together.**

The Chinese community is well organized, the African Caribbean Community has put a structure in place to continue to pull stakeholders together to plan together, while the South Asian Community has not yet created a mechanism to move the process forward.

**All three are clear that they need to take responsibility for planning for the futures of their communities.** This means that UWYR must be vigilant about supporting each in the way that is required and, maintaining a non-competitive, equitable approach with them.

**Recommendation #42:**

Immediately secure/reaffirm strong commitment from UWYR’s Board of Directors for nurturing and sustaining the relationships with each community beyond the establishment and implementation of the LEAD Fund.

**Recommendation #43:**

Ensure that UWYR’s Board of Directors commits the resources required to adequately support and sustain the community connections that have been established through the LEAD Project.

- ♣ **Currently, UWYR does not have a permanent structure in place to advise, facilitate, link and continue to advocate for and promote the needs of the three target communities.** The LEAD Project has provided an opportunity to bring together a diverse group to act as an Advisory body for the time limit of the project.
- ♣ **The newly established LEAD Fund has to support infrastructure development in creative and flexible ways to be responsive to the target communities.** Over the next several months, details of how this fund will be allocated to the African Caribbean and South

Asian communities will be worked out. The spring of 2003 is being targeted for the roll out

of the new Fund.

**Recommendation #44:**

Transform the existing LEAD Advisory Committee into a LEAD Implementation Committee of the Board, with representation from the three target communities and all areas of UWYR. The primary mandate should be to oversee the implementation of recommendations from this Report and to serve as the overall accountability structure for LEAD.

**Recommendation #45:**

Establish a LEAD Fund Subcommittee of the Fund Distribution Committee, with representatives from the three target communities to oversee the development and implementation of LEAD Fund. In addition to getting advice from the Fund Distribution Committee, this Subcommittee can also get advice/input from LEAD Implementation Committee.

- ♣ **Supporting the establishment of infrastructure for ethno-specific services cannot exempt UWYR member agencies from becoming more responsive to target communities.** Clearly, there are not only going to be greater needs than the future/new agencies will be able to address, but also those community members will also expect choices about where and how they access services.

**Recommendation #46:**

Ensure that UWYR's Board of Directors commits the resources required to aggressively implement DIP internally and to support members to also implement the process. This could be accomplished through successful funding applications to such funders as Heritage Canada.

- ♣ **There is also uncertainty about how many new agencies or groups will actually be successful at getting a charitable number from CCRA even if UWYR aggressively advocates for change at that level.** Since membership in UWYR is dependent on the applying agency having a charitable number if this specific barrier continues to exist, there will be serious challenges facing both the target communities and UWYR.

**Recommendation #47:**

Ensure that contact with three target communities is sustained and nurtured so that they are successful in applying for and receiving core funding support from UWYR and other funding sources.

## **5.0. CONCLUSION**

UWYR has undertaken a bold and public step to jump-start its DIP work by engaging the three target communities in the LEAD consultation and planning process. The Board has shown leadership and commitment to the communities by establishing the LEAD Fund prior to the completion of the project. A strong basis for sustained and productive working relationships with the target communities has been established. Much more work needs to be done.

Major issues in the broad policy area, related to UWYR and its member agencies, as well as the target communities themselves, have been highlighted. Forty-seven recommendations are

made that address these issues. Together, these issues and recommendations chart a course for the future relationships that UWYR can build and sustain with the three target communities. They also point to ways that UWYR could engage in the future with other ethnoracial communities. By acting on these recommendations to the fullest extent possible, members of the targeted, as well as other ethnoracial communities and the public at large will be benefited.

There is some uncertainty about the ability UWYR will have over the next 5 years to admit numerous new members to its “family” of member agencies. Admission of new members to UWYR depends heavily on the success of the current and future fundraising campaigns. Fortunately, members of the three target groups are already asking how they can become involved in the fundraising activities of UWYR, creating new potential markets for exploration. The potential for changing the face and future of UWYR has been enhanced by the LEAD process to date. UWYR needs to strategically build on the groundwork that has been laid, nurturing the new relationships, continuing to reach out to other communities and truly becoming leaders of a future inclusive York Region.

Some of the keys to successful change include:

- ♣ A clear definition of the principles of Diversity and Inclusivity.
- ♣ A Mission, Values Statement, and Diversity and Inclusivity policy statement/ framework that embraces this definition.
- ♣ Strong committed leadership for change at the top of the organization.
- ♣ A Change Implementation team that includes representation from all areas of the organization and the community.
- ♣ A planned, participatory and transparent change processes.
- ♣ A do-able, detailed change implementation plan with clear goals, objectives and targets for change.
- ♣ Regular open reporting on progress and continuing challenges to key constituents.
- ♣ Strong, sincere, open sustained involvement and relationships with the three initial and any subsequent target communities

UWYR has demonstrated its desire and intention to change. This determination is an important strength that will drive the work forward. Its very relevance and future depends on forging these linkages, including communities that up until now, have been on the margins and daring to pro-actively chart a course of change for the future.

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## CONSOLIDATED RECOMMENDATIONS

### ***BROADER SYSTEM LEVEL***

#### **Recommendation #1:**

Continue to provide leadership in national, provincial and regional policy arenas, aggressively advocating, leveraging and promoting accessible, effective, appropriate, and adequately funded human/social services for all residents of York Region.

#### **Recommendation #2:**

Through sustaining initiatives such as LEAD, develop capacity for a social marketing strategy that targets York Region's decision makers and residents at large to rectify the disconnect between the perceptions about and realities of members of the diverse ethnoracial communities.

#### **Recommendation #3:**

Provide leadership by modelling and promoting deliberate change processes that embrace diversity and inclusionary practices in all major regional institutions and public services, such as health care, education, and the Regional Government etc.

#### **Recommendation #4:**

In conjunction with United Way of Canada and the Centre for Philanthropy, advocate Revenue Canada for the granting of charitable status to newly emerging needed ethno-specific and multicultural community organizations.

#### **Recommendation #5:**

Until CCRA begins to be more fair and equitable in granting charitable numbers, support groups and organizations applying for status requires UWYR support through letters of support and to work with them to find effective alternative ways of getting the funding support they need to meet their community's needs.

### ***UNITED WAY AND ITS MEMBER AGENCIES***

#### **Recommendation #6:**

Remain vigilant about delineating the differences/uniqueness of UWYR and UWGT and how community members can ensure that their donations are designated to work in the Region.

#### **Recommendation #7:**

Ensure that the message that UWYR does not just fund services for those that contribute funds, is embraced and understood in all areas of the organization and is widely known in the community as well.

#### **Recommendation #8:**

Ensure that targeted communication strategies are implemented to heighten awareness about UWYR's funding role within the target communities.

#### **Recommendation #9:**

Ensure that in all public and internal communications and messaging, the three (3) target communities are visible in positions of value and stature.

**Recommendation #10:**

Ensure that all UWYR internal planning and allocations processes focus deliberately on geographic access of services, so that the distribution of its funding matches the most pressing needs of the greatest number of people in the Region.

**Recommendation #11:**

Establish a clear and firm policy framework outlining expectations related to becoming an inclusive organization, that UWYR and its member agencies are committed to and obliged to adhere to.

**Recommendation #12:**

Place high priority on applying DIP to UWYR itself, providing relevant education and training opportunities for volunteers and staff of UWYR as well as from member agencies.

**Recommendation #13:**

Require all UWYR member agencies to place high priority on engaging in DIP activities, supporting some of this through the IMPACT Fund.

**Recommendation #14:**

Immediately undertake an extensive review of the current allocation process, including the data that agencies should be required to collect, and how members demonstrate adherence to expect standards of diversity and inclusivity set by UWYR. Also, determine and clearly spell out the implications of non-compliance, including the potential for funding cuts and/or de-funding.

**Recommendation #15:**

Within the context of their mission statements, set targets with member agencies for the ethn racial and geographic reach that is expected to be achieved with UWYR funding.

**Recommendation #16:**

Ensure that everyone in the UWYR organization knows of, and acts on, the strategic priorities that are periodically set by the Board of Directors.

**Recommendation #17:**

Continue to improve ethn racial representation at all levels of UWYR organization.

**Recommendation #18:**

Model for those that argue that they are unable to serve or reach out to diverse communities because of waiting list and/or lack of funds, that it is not only the right thing to do, but also the only way they can truly achieve their stated mission and mandate.

**Recommendation #19:**

Expect all member agencies to implement deliberate strategies to diversify their organizations at all levels including staff, volunteers, board and clients.

**Recommendation #20:**

Ensure that UWYR's planning processes are timely/current and flexible to anticipate and keep pace with the rapidly changing realities of the Region; that there is regular monitoring and evaluation activities to increase accountability, and that pertinent planning resources available through other bodies in the Region are capitalized.

**Recommendation #21:**

Provide information and education for broader community constituencies about how to become engaged in UWYR and other human service infrastructures as well as the political structures of the Region so they can become active participants.

***CHINESE COMMUNITY***

**Recommendation #22:**

Explore with other key players (e.g. Public Health, Regional Municipality) ways to support and/or fund the Chinese Social Service Network' s planning, special projects, linkages to the mainstream agencies and partnership development functions.

**Recommendation #23:**

Promote the existing UWYR IMPACT Fund to Chinese serving agencies to increase their reach to under-served sub target groups and for capacity building partnerships with informal, faith based, volunteer driven supports and services.

**Recommendation #24:**

Advocate for more and responsive services for the Chinese Community by establishing a mechanism for ongoing dialogue between community stakeholders, UWYR, its member agencies and other funders/policy makers about their existing and emerging needs/issues.

**Recommendation #25:**

Expect all UWYR member agencies serving the Chinese community to ensure they are serving the Mandarin community, not just linguistically, but also culturally.

**Recommendation #26:**

With UWYR members and other public institutions develop a social service mentoring model that educates the community about the role of the not-for-profit sector in Canada.

**Recommendation #27:**

Given the validation/support received by community stakeholders, move forward with planning the implementation of the '211' Information Line, ensuring that appropriate focus testing steps are undertaken with the target communities.

**Recommendation #28:**

Continue the dialogue with the community about the role(s) UWYR can play to support/increase reach of services to the full diversity of the Chinese Community of York Region.

***SOUTH ASIAN COMMUNITY***

**Recommendation #29:**

Through the LEAD Fund, facilitate the establishment of an ethno-specific infrastructure that can

obtain funding to deliver needed services to the South Asian Community.

**Recommendation #30:**

Become involved in relevant target community ethno-specific initiatives that are targeting key community needs, such as York District School Board's initiatives regarding South Asian youth.

**Recommendation #31:**

Support the establishment of a South Asian service provider network to do planning, special projects, partnership building and joint problem solving.

**Recommendation #32 :**

Immediately ensure that existing UWYR member agencies increase their reach and effectiveness in serving the diverse South Asian community through increasing accountability and sanctions, if necessary, in UWYR's allocation process.

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***AFRICAN CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY***

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**Recommendation #41:**

Consider the feasibility of targeting Black History Month (February) as an opportune time for a public “launch” of the LEAD Fund.

***OVERALL SUSTAINABILITY OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS***

**Recommendation #42:**

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**Recommendation #43:**

Ensure that UWYR’s Board of Directors commits the resources required to adequately support and sustain the community connections that have been established through the LEAD Project.

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Ensure that contact with three (3) target communities is sustained and nurtured so that they are successful in applying for and receiving core funding support from UWYR and other funding sources.