*Governing Urban Diversity:*
*Creating Social Cohesion, Social Mobility and Economic Performance in Today's Hyper-diversified Cities*

# Governance Arrangements and Initiatives in Toronto, Canada

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## *Contents*

# 1   Introduction

Toronto follows a pluralist/all-inclusive approach to diversity with dominant discourses such as 'equal access for everyone', 'accessible and flexible community spaces for everyone', and 'opportunities for everyone'. Policy instruments are designed to address individual uniqueness, by recognizing the complexity of individual identities (gender, disability, age) in the city beyond the newcomer/immigrant identities. Identification of individual needs and addressing diversity often happen at the local community level whereby a variety of programmes and initiatives are put into place to respond to the needs and provide services to diverse publics.

The aim of this report is *to describe and analyse a selected sample of initiatives in the Jane-Finch community in Toronto that focus on using diversity in a positive way and aim at one or multiple of the following three main goals: social cohesion, social mobility, economic performance.* The main research questions of the report are as follows:

1. How is diversity conceptualised within the governance arrangement?
2. Which are the main factors influencing success or failure of the governance arrangements?
3. Can we identify new ideas for innovative policies and governance concepts?

Here, success and failure factors are perceived as factors that influenced the initiative's ability to reach their primary goals. Governance initiatives are grouped on the basis of their primary goals that reflect their influence on social cohesion, social mobility, and economic performance of diverse groups. Our case study area is identified as Jane-Finch, a highly diverse neighbourhood not only in terms of ethnic diversity, but also of age, economic background, and gender, located in the northwest end of the city which has one of the highest proportions of youth, sole-supported families, refugees and immigrants, people without a high-school diploma, low-income earners, and public housing tenants of any community in Toronto. It is, in many respects, a good example of a hyper-diverse neighbourhood. We selected certain initiatives on the primarily based on the recommendations of the policy makers at the federal and city level (as well as of our Policy Platform members), reflecting to the targets of social cohesion, social mobility, and economic performance. According to our analysis, Black Creek Farm, Aging at Home, Black Creek SNAP, Jane-Finch Action Against Poverty (JFAAP), The Spot are targeting the social cohesion; Women Moving Forward, PEACH and COSTI specialized housing programme are targeting social mobility; and The Learning Enrichment Foundation (LEF) and Youth Enterprise Network (YEN) are targeting economic performance. It should be mentioned that Jane and Finch Community and Family Centre (JFCFC) is one of the primary source of some of the initiatives we analysed (Aging at Home, JFAAP, The Spot, Women Moving Forward). As the primary community Centre in Jane-Finch, JFCFC is a very well-established organisation and its role is highly important in the success of the initiatives as it functions as an umbrella organisation providing support to the otherwise independent initiatives.

Fieldwork was conducted between 26 March and 5 April 2014 in Toronto with a set of activities including face to face interviews with 13 participants, observations, field trip to Jane-Finch neighbourhood, and a round table with the participation of number of interviewees and policy platform members (see Appendix for the list of the interviewed persons and the list of the participants of the round table). Prior to the field work standard info sheets were prepared for each initiative to provide categorized information that is acquired through internet and other sources, as well as to answer parts of the research questions.

## 2    Governance arrangements

### 2.1    Arrangements targeting social cohesion

**Black Creek Farm**

*Strategy, focus and organisation*
The Black Creek Community Farm (BCCF) is a community-based urban farming project located on a seven-acre site. The site is situated on Toronto Conservation Region Authority (TRCA) land at the northern border of the community (between Jane-Finch neighbourhood and York University). The project officially started in 2012 by the farm-based charity Everdale, which has been involved in growing food and providing food and farming education to children, youth, and aspiring farmers for 15 years. In the same year there had been a change in the mandate of TRCA regarding using their properties in the region (thousands of acres of green space which had for long been protecting the watersheds) for food production and community engagement. Thus, they had opened up the property on which the farm is currently located for proposals. Having been present in the community for a long time, Everdale was successful in building on its collaborative network to put out the winning proposal.

The farm's *primary goal* is '*to be an urban farm that engages, educates, and empowers diverse communities through the growing and sharing of food' as indicated on the programme website'* (Everdale, 2013). The objectives of the initiative are two-fold: First, trying to promote food security, agricultural education and awareness while being able to provide high quality food at accessible prices. **Second**, using the farm as a development project to engage community members in all sorts of activities around food production. Moreover, there is a strong focus within the BCCF to getting staffed and supported by community residents and harvesting fresh, healthy food that will feed the local community. Given that the farm is still at a very early stage of its establishment, many of the current efforts are still mainly geared towards food production. However there is a range of programmes currently being shaped within the initiative. Examples include an extensive internship programme, which would provide around 6 to 10 local residents with food-based career training. The programme will include three days on the farm, one day in the classroom dedicated to career building skills and then another day rotating between other food businesses in the city. In addition, the farm hosts a series of workshops and a work share programme in which community residents receive free vegetables in exchange for a certain number of volunteer hours.

Given the special characteristics of Jane-Finch and the concentration of first-generation migrants many of whom have experiences with farming and food production, there is significant appreciation and demand for high-quality fresh produce in the community. As explained by our respondent:

> "*There's a lot of engagement to be made simply by being here with open gates and by growing the kinds of crops that people are more familiar with in their home countries*".

Thus, by paying attention to the characteristics of the community and the type of demand arising from it, the farm has been able to bring different members of the community together. Community engagement thereby remains a highlighted objective within the farm. While the programme does seem to positively influence the social mobility (through career-building workshops and skill trainings) and economic performance of its target audience (via creating meaningful local employment opportunities and recruiting locally), the most significant impact of the initiative is to foster social cohesion.

The *target audience* is defined as residents of the Black Creek community. The project has three additional partner organisations namely FoodShare, a city wide food access organisation; Afri-Can Food Basket, a charity engaging the community in the garden for food security and growing culturally relevant produce; and Fresh City Farms, a local food business. The farm is further supported and guided by a number of other key organisations: York University's Faculty of Environmental Studies, Ryerson University's Centre for Studies in Food Security, World Crops Project, and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. BCCF additionally relies on private foundation, programme-specific city and governmental grants for financial support.

*Perception and use of the concept of diversity*

> *"Food is the linkage between different histories"*

Our respondent rightfully claims that diverse types of food unites people. In fact, one of the major areas wherein the striking diversity in the community in terms of cultural, ethnic and economic backgrounds best resonates is the planning of what crops are being grown and sold at the farm.

> *"We're growing things that I've never heard of!"* contends the farm manager. *"We see tour groups come with people from rural China and they can identify some of the things that we thought were weed! And also ladies from Pakistan are doing the same thing […] there's a guy who lives on the 8th floor of that building [across the street] who's been watching us grow callaloo[1] all year. I've never grown callaloo so we were growing it incorrectly and he came over and told us how wrong we are doing this!"*

The farm also hosts frequent workshops based on storytelling through agro-ecology and native and cultural plants of relevance to people in the community, thus creating a space for these diverse stories and histories to interact. Such space further stimulates cross-cultural and inter-generational contact in the community. Age, ethnicity, culture, socio-economic and labour backgrounds are the main categories of diversity addressed within the initiative. Moreover, there is a strong commitment within the initiative to point out to the systematic racism and systematic discrimination in the neighbourhood by doing anti-discrimination and anti-racism training for the staff. Thus positive reinforcement of a really inclusive and equitable diverse neighbourhood while not shying away from the negative realities that need to be addressed are strong mandates within the programme.

*Main factors influencing success or failure*

There are some *success factors* for the BCCF project, as well as some factors that create *barriers* for it. One of the most important *external success factors* is the primary role of food itself as a basic need and how fundamental it is to creating a healthy community. The main *internal success factor* that was influential to the farm establishing its grounds in the neighbourhood is access to existing collaborative resources.

> *"The ground work has already been done by a lot of other community organisations"*, explains the farm manager*, "so it is easier for us to reach out and connect with people that are already invested in improving their community, to get them to buy into this project and help us shape it"*.

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[1] A Caribbean vegetable

Another *internal success factor* is that the farm is very much rooted in the community, from the selection of the type of its produce to the hiring of its staff. Two *external factors* that create barriers for the initiative include the absence of an umbrella organisation coordinating the diverse initiatives in the Jane and Finch community (which leads to competitions and communication problems between different agencies); and lack of funding for staff and administration (while it is relatively easy to receive grants for buying a pizza oven for a community pizza event, it is difficult to find funding for the person who organises the event or the one who writes the grant). Furthermore, balancing the financial liability of the farm and difficulties for community members to access the farm (given its far off location at the northern edge of the neighbourhood) are *the internal factors* that create barriers for the initiative.

*Conclusion*

The BCCF is a community-based urban farming initiative that successfully engages, educates, and empowers diverse people by growing and sharing food. The initiative contributes to *encounter* of diverse people by paying attention to making the space a resource for the community and to facilitating intersectionality (heterogeneity and inclusion by considering the complex identities of people) via creating spaces of cross-cultural and inter-generational interaction; to *recognition* by producing culturally-relevant food; and to *redistribution* by providing meaningful employment opportunities. There is a clear effort within the initiative to tap into the resources and knowledge that exist within the community (as inherent outcomes of its striking diversity) Thus, *tailoring the farm's programming to the neighbourhood* through awareness of and respect and appreciation for the diversity of the existing demand for the type of produce is an *innovative approach* which sets BCCF apart from many other urban farming projects. The future plans of the farm mainly concern volume production and improving food security for the community via providing healthy and affordable food for community, while securing financial self-sufficiency and effective engagement of the community are important first steps that need to be taken within the next few years.

**Aging at Home**

*Strategy, focus and organisation*

Aging at home is a seniors' programme within the JFCFC being delivered through weekly group sessions. The initiative was founded by the Ministry of Health through Local Health Integrated Networks[2] (LHINs) in 2009 and is led by the JFCFC. The programme was created in response to prior research findings showcasing high rates of early admittance of seniors to long-term care on the one hand, and lack of services and activities available to seniors in the community on the other.

The *primary goal* of the initiative according to our respondent is to *"support seniors from diverse ethno-cultural backgrounds in living independently in their homes for as long as possible"*. It has established adult day programmes in which seniors meet on a weekly basis and connect with one another and their community. There are ten programmes in total offered within Aging at Home in eight different locations to ensure accessibility and proximity to seniors' homes. Participants are further provided with TTC[3] tokens to commute to the sites. The programmes include Cambodian Group, three multi-cultural groups, Latin-American Group, Hindi/Urdu Group, Vietnamese Group, Guyanese Group, Punjabi Group, and Young at Heart Group (Spanish and English). The groups are offered in six languages: Cambodian, Vietnamese, Spanish, Hindi/Urdu, Punjabi and

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[2] Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) is a network of 14 not-for-profit corporations collaborate with local health providers and community members to plan, integrate and fund local health services.
[3] Toronto Transit Company

English and altogether serve seniors from the Asian, South-Asian, Spanish, Caribbean and East African.

The defined *target audience* of the initiative is seniors in Jane-Finch neighbourhood of 55 years of age and above. There is a range of activities organised within groups including games, life skills training, outdoor and recreational activities, workshops, arts and crafts, and community information sessions. Each group has a monthly calendar, which is designed in direct consultation with the participants. It is expected that through part-taking in these activities the seniors will establish social ties and be less isolated, get access to health care information and services, reduce the number of their doctor or hospital visits and the length and frequency of their hospitalization, and exercise better self-care.

Aging at Home is implemented in partnership with San Romanoway Revitalization, Elspeth Heyworth Centre for Women, and Northwood Neighbourhood Services. The programme receives full funding from the Federal government through the Ministry of Health. It has 12 staff members in total including a programme manager and 11 members, who are involved in organising and running the 10 groups.

While the programme positively influences the social mobility of seniors via providing trainings and workshops regarding self-sufficiency, and managing of finances, its most important impact has been made in relation to social cohesion. According to the findings of the JFCFC survey of 2010, the strengthening of social ties was identified as the most important outcome of the programme upon the participants' lives. Many seniors contended that they felt happier, less isolated and more connected to their community since they joined Aging at Home. Many seniors have been able to create and maintain strong and close friendships within their groups. In addition, parts of the programme activities focus upon informing seniors of and connecting them to other available services in Jane-Finch neighbourhood and by thus means have helped them gain stronger connections to their community.

*Perception and use of the concept of diversity*
Aging at Home pays explicit attention to the existing ethnic and linguistic diversity among seniors in the Jane-Finch community via the provision of language-specific programmes. Moreover, there are frequent events and workshops organised whereby different groups are brought together to respect and appreciate the diversity of Jane Finch community, and further facilitate *cross-cultural interactions* and connections. As mentioned before the programme includes both mono-cultural and multi-cultural groups. The former groups are created to serve seniors (who have difficulties speaking English) in their own language while the latter address a wider audience and focus on creating cross-cultural interactions. Our respondents highlighted the importance of these activities for recognising diversity:

> *"Usually when we have an activity everyone dresses in their ethnic clothing. It is so colourful! When we plan activities, we ask them to present their own cultural dance, song and everything. And if for instance Punjabis dance their own dance, everybody else wants to participate. You can really see the understanding of diversity within the group is positive."*

In addition to ethnic and cultural diversity, the group-specific programmes within the initiative address categories such as age, socio-economic status, and physical disability.

*Main factors influencing success or failure*

Over the years the initiative has been received very well by the seniors in Jane-Finch neighbourhood given that it addresses the very dire need for senior services, which were previously lacking in the community. One of the *external* success factors of the programme has been the stability in its funding provided by the Federal government. Unlike most other current initiatives in the area, Aging at Home has not faced cuts in its budget within the past years. That has been mostly due to its specifically defined target of serving seniors, which is generally an area that has not suffered recent cutbacks. The most important *internal success* factor is the cultural and lingual diversity among the staff members, which have provided the programme with the unique opportunity to reach out to a number of diverse ethno-cultural groups. However, there are still very high demands within the community for creating new language groups but that has not been feasible due to lack of additional funding made available to the programme, which can be seen as the primary barrier for success.

*Conclusion*

Aging at Home provides a good example for how successful community-based initiatives in the Jane-Finch area can be if they are well-established financially. While the programme is designed to address a very specific group of the population, it still cuts across different components of diversity by providing accessible and inclusive spaces of cross-cultural interaction for seniors. In that respect it increases the *encounters* in the community. The participatory approach towards planning the group activities has allowed for the programmes to cater the needs of the community while keeping the seniors engaged in the programme over the years. It also creates *recognition* of the needs of elderly people in the wider Jane-Finch via the activities planned for the participants to get them more involved in the community. There are however, a number of ethno-cultural groups that are left out of the services offered by Aging at Home due to language barriers. While the programme does hope to expand to incorporate new ethno-cultural groups, based on the current funding possibilities the prospects regarding the feasibility of such plan remain rather low in the short run.

**Black Creek SNAP**

*Strategy, focus and organisation*

The Black Creek Sustainable Neighbourhood Retrofit Action Plan (SNAP) is an initiative launched by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and developed in collaboration with Black Creek residents to transform the neighbourhood into a green, self-sufficient and healthy community. SNAPs are innovative pilot programmes led by TRCA, which aims to accelerate the implementation of environmental improvements and urban renewal at the neighbourhood scale with locally tailored solutions. There are currently five SNAP neighbourhoods in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), each featuring unique initiatives to inspire residents, businesses and governments to take action. Before each SNAP is designed, the TRCA conducts a technical analysis as well as a very careful social analysis in order to understand the physical and societal characteristics of the area. Around 5 years ago Black Creek neighbourhood wherein the TRCA office had been located for many years, was selected as a SNAP area. The reasons behind this selection were multi-fold: The neighbourhood had a history of flooding; much of the neighbourhood had been built in the 1960s and 70s so it did not meet current energy and water conservation standards; it was one of Toronto's Priority Neighbourhoods, so issues such as lack of access to employment, income, safety and food security were highly pertinent to residents in the area.

The *primary goals* of the initiative are both environmental and social. The integrated Action Plan of the Black Creek SNAP addresses local needs for improved environmental health, climate change

adaptation, enhanced food security by increasing local food production opportunities, and greater job skills training and employment. One of the main components of the Black Creek SNAP is the 'Harvest The Rain' programme, which is essentially a residential renovation programme that focuses upon retrofitting single-family homes in the Black Creek area to be more sustainable. This is achieved through adopting retrofit measures as well as behavioural changes within households. Harvest The Rain programme offers a range of events and activities such as garden tours of demonstration homes (wherein volunteer homes in the area open their doors and their back yards to the rest of the community), community barbeques and gatherings, referring clients to other service providers in the community urban agricultural events and programmes, beautification and creation of public amenities, and creating balcony gardens in high-rise apartment buildings.

While Black Creek SNAP programme may seem very technical (focusing on environmental aspects of sustainability) at first glance, evidences for its tremendous social impact upon the community are not hard to trace. Our respondent highlighted the importance of this social aspect:

> *"The beauty of this programme – that is not normally done, is that we also do a very careful social analysis to try to understand who lives in the community and what their motives are, their barriers, their culture. And then we decide on programmes that aim at achieving our environmental and social objectives, but are customised for the specific characteristics of that particular community."*

In the Jane-Finch neighbourhood, as our respondents explained, there is a divide between single-family home-owners (who are more established) and apartment building tenants (many of whom are in transition and thereby remain in the area for only short periods). SNAP has impacted social cohesion in the community by bridging this gap. Earlier in the report it was mentioned that the presence of a large immigrant population many of whom have a background in agriculture has resulted in high appreciation and demand for fresh local produce in the neighbourhood. On the one hand many of the tenants in the high-rise apartment buildings do not have access to land on which they can grow; on the other hand, there are a number of single-family with back gardens which are not used by the homeowners (many of them are elderly or lack agricultural knowledge and tools). Harvest The Rain programme has tapped into this resource by starting collaborations between high-rises and homes wherein homeowners open their gardens to their neighbours for farming. The programme also addresses employment issues in the area by focusing on local job creation and hiring from the community.

The *target audience* of the Black Creek SNAP programme is the entire Jane-Finch community. Other stakeholders involved in the initiative include a range of local landowners and community organisations[4]. The Black Creek SNAP receives funding from multiple sources, namely the City (around 25%), private foundations and corporations (such as the Royal Bank). The project is led by TRCA in collaboration with City of Toronto, JFCFC, and Black Creek Conservation Project.

*Perception and use of the concept of diversity*
One of the ways in which the Black Creek SNAP addresses diversity is via facilitating cultural and knowledge exchange through the Harvest the Rain programme. Connecting the residential towers

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[4] Toronto Hydro, Black Creek Clean Energy Coalition, Afri-Can FoodBasket, ACORN, San Romano Way Revitalization, Association, Yorkwoods Library, Driftwood Community Centre, LINC Centre, Reaching Up Homework Club.

to the single-family homes has enabled a great deal of inter-generational, inter-ethnic and cross-cultural interactions among community members.

> *"Some of the main goals of the programme have been connecting different generations and different cultures. Skills sharing, donating harvest, etc. There are so many different points of contact and reasons for people to be able to connect."*

explained one respondent. Our observation is that the diversity of the neighbourhood is very well recognized within the programme and the understanding of the concept is generally positive, as there is a lot of focus upon the existing potentials (regarding interest, knowledge and skills) in the community. Age, ethnicity, and culture are the main categories of diversity highlighted within the project.

*Main factors influencing success or failure*

The Black Creek SNAP is still a relatively new programme. While it is difficult to measure the degree of its success or failure with regards to its primary long-term goal of promoting sustainability in the area, there are a few characteristics that can be highlighted as factors contributing to or limiting its positive impact upon the community. In terms of *external factors* that contribute to the positive impact our respondents highlighted that the initiative is run by a very well-established organisation which has enabled the programme to enjoy stable funding and access to a rich collaborative resource. Involvement of the residents is one of the *internal success factors* for the Black Creek SNAP. There is great attention paid to developing and implementing the plans in cooperation with community residents. Given the organisation, scale and target of the Black Creek SNAP, it is very common for programmes as such to be designed and delivered in a top-down manner. However the conducting of the social analysis together with hiring of staff and mediators from the community has allowed the programme to tap into valuable resources in the neighbourhood and address issues that are of high importance to local residents.

In terms of *external negative factors* there is a high number of organisations active in the area whose actions are overlapping and uncoordinated and that limits and complicates collaborations within a large-scale project such as SNAP. Furthermore, whereas there is a secured budget for the programme, funding is nonetheless very limited which undermines the future expansion of the programme (especially with regards to its social components). Some of the *internal negative factors* are as follows; firstly, there is a high number of temporary or transitioning households in the neighbourhood who are less established in the community, thus it is difficult to get them involved. Secondly, the gang structures and turfs in Jane-Finch make it difficult to connect different parts of the community and create a coherent programme for the whole area. Limited accessibility to residential towers also hinders the impact and feasibility of the programme.

*Conclusion*

The Black Creek SNAP provides unique insights into how larger-scaled traditionally more top-down projects can be tailored to local realities and bottom-up needs. The initiative has created encounters and recognition among diverse households, and to a limited extent also contributed to the redistribution of limited resources, particularly via initiating collaborations between single-family homeowners and high-rise residents in Harvest the Rain. Perhaps the most innovative and fundamental component of this initiative is the understanding that achieving sustainability in the community requires setting and working towards not just environmental but also social goals. There are many ways in which the initiative aspires to grow in the future (size, outreach, and tools) but there also remains a great commitment among staff to continue to involve the community in designing long and short-term plans as the project develops through time.

**The Spot**

*Strategy, focus and organisation*

The Spot (Where YOU(th) Wanna Be), is the programme targeting young people in Jane-Finch neighbourhood. It is part of the JFCFC and is located in the Yorkgate Mall, which is a shopping centre serving to the Jane-Finch neighbourhood. The programme is essentially a drop-in centre offering after-school programming and access to information on issues identified by youth. It's more importantly '*a safe and welcoming place for young people to just chill*' (**Jane-Finch Community and Family Centre, 2009**). In 2004, a group within JFCFC entitled Young Leaders of the Inner City, in partnership with the Griffin Centre, which is a Jane-Finch based, non-profit, mental health agency, conducted a community survey assessment in order to identify the needs of the youth in Jane-Finch community. The findings of the study revealed that the most important issues as identified by the youth are: First, lack of a space for youth; and second, interactive programming and services to engage youth on a profound level. The Spot was created in response to such needs. The programme officially started in 2006 when it received its well-known space by community youth in the York Gate Mall. While providing a safe space for youth has remained at the core of Spot's programming as the over-arching goal, the focus of the activities has shifted from drugs and alcohol abuse prevention (in the early days) to settlement and youth programmes today.

The *primary goal* of the programme is to prevent violence and drug misuse as well as to promote healthy lifestyle choices for youth. This is done through social, educational, art and recreational programming, newcomer youth settlement, after-school programmes, leadership and mentoring programmes, drop-ins, outings, volunteer and employment opportunities. The programmes are further committed to increasing and building the leadership skills of youth, thus there is a strong focus on the social mobility of youth within SPOT.

The Spot is a very popular destination among the youth of Jane and Finch. The vibrant graffiti-covered unit at the York Gate Mall is always busy and the atmosphere is very relaxed and welcoming. The space has been very successful in terms of providing a safe hangout for the youth to gather. However, it is not just the space that has contributed to the impact of the youth centre on social cohesion in the community as the centre also provides a variety of programmes which help youth connect with one another and build strong social ties. A very interesting example is the Host programme wherein someone who either was a newcomer to Toronto previously or who has an interest in supporting others settling in the country, is paired up with someone who is new to the country.

> *"So, they were hosting that person. And it was not like they were taking them into their house, but they would take them to the mall or to the movies and copy-shop or school, just little things you know. Just to trying to help them. Yes. And to discuss like what they are going through."*

Our respondent further explained that the Host programme has resulted in the creation of strong and long-term friendships among youth from different backgrounds over the years. The social centre has further a very strong focus on economic development. For instance there is a strong mandate to hire staff of the centre from the community to help youth earn a salary while gaining employment experience. In addition the centre organises resume-writing workshops, summer job programmes, youth leadership programmes and referrals of youth to different employment agencies in the community.

The *target audience* of the Spot is defined as youth in Jane-Finch neighbourhood between the ages of 13-30 years of age. In addition to the JFCFC, other partner organisation working with the Spot include the Black Creek Community Health Centre and the Jane Street Hub. The staff at the Spot

is comprised of two programme managers, four full-time and four part-time members. The sources of funding of the programme are Citizenship and Immigration Canada (around 60%), and United Way of Toronto (private foundation). The Spot further makes use of partnership funds, which provide the programme with part-time staff on temporary basis.

*Perception and use of the concept of diversity*

The Spot serves a very diverse young audience including many newcomer youth. Our respondent identified addressing diversity as a major goal within the youth centre. Creating an *inclusive* space is an important goal in line with serving a diverse audience at the Spot. The programme manager was also assertive that the diversity within the audience also tends to change from time to time:

> *"When we first opened we had a lot more girls than boys, different groups of people. This last two years, black males […] So, even with the demographics of our space change, we have to change who is here depending on their needs".*

Diversity is thus perceived positively at the Spot as it is considered to contribute to the vibrancy and appeal of the space. The space and the programmes are kept very flexible in order to make sure they respond to the different needs and preferences of the diverse audience. The categories of diversity addressed by the centre include age, gender, sexuality, ethnic and cultural background, duration of settlement and status, interests, educational background and physical ability.

*Main factors influencing success or failure*

The Spot, as mentioned before, is very popular and well-received by the youth in Jane-Finch. Some of the primary *internal factors* contributing to its success are outlined as follows: (i) *The location*: The centre is strategically located at a mall, which makes it accessible for the youth. Further the proximity to other service providers (such as a youth health centre across the hall in the mall) is an advantage for the centre; (ii) *The space*: the physical space is very vibrant and welcoming. The youth are very much involved in designing and re-designing the interior of the centre. Generally there is a lot of attention paid to creating a space where the youth feel most comfortable in. For instance, despite outside pressure, the staff has strategically rejected the use of security cameras in the centre; (iii) *Feeling like a family*: there are strong ties between staff members themselves and also between them and the audience which helps build trust and keep the youth on board; (iv) *Engaging the youth on a deeper level:* since its start, the Spot has been very much focused on giving voice and agency to the youth by involving them in running the centre as well as designing and implementing the programmes; (v) *Flexibility*: the programmes and staff are highly flexible in terms of making change in order to respond to the needs and demands of the youth effectively; (vi) *Creative ongoing outreach*: the staff is very pro-active in using various creative tools in reaching out to the youth in the community (including street outreach, attending community events, and using social media). Moreover, *access to a solid network of service providers* in the community is also indicated as an external success factor. Meanwhile, precarious funding, having to compete with other youth centres (whose number is on the rise), and strict regulations from the mall (regarding working hours for instance) are the most important internal challenges faced by the Spot.

*Conclusion*

The Spot provides a fascinating case study for a successful bottom-up community based initiative with cross-cutting targets. The centre is pro-active in its programming as it aims to provide a positive all-inclusive space where youth can feel safe while engaging in productive activities. The space creates *encounters* for youth from diverse backgrounds; and directly or indirectly, creates *recognition* of many important topics like safe sex and sexuality, drugs, and bullying. It further tackles *redistribution* as it provides youth with access to computers, skill trainings and access to em-

ployment resources for youth. However, the approach of the initiative is not 'preventive' in a negative sense of educating youth on dealing with the possible problems. It rather follows a positive approach to respond to the creative side of the youth to engage them better in positive activities. Especially given the special characteristics of Jane-Finch neighbourhood (particularly the gang turfs), the Spot plays a vital role in the community by helping youngsters stay out of trouble through providing them with a better alternative. There are ambitious goals for the future of the Spot, as our respondent contended, the most important of which are getting access to more stable funding and a bigger space.

## Jane and Finch Action Against Poverty

*Strategy, focus and organisation*
Jane and Finch Action Against Poverty (JFAAP) is a grass-roots action group, which consists of community residents and members from different organisations in the Jane-Finch area. The group was formed in October of 2008 following a rally at the intersection of Jane-Finch to commemorate the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. After the rally being positively received by the community, a collective decision was made regarding establishing JFAAP as a resident-led action group, which would meet on a weekly basis in order to discuss and think of solutions regarding ongoing chronic issues in the Jane-Finch community.

The *main goals* of JFAAP are addressing the issue of poverty and other systemic barriers in Jane-Finch, promoting social economic justice, and community and leadership capacity building. The grass-roots organises public meetings every first and last Thursday of the month wherein community residents, different community-based groups as well as other organisations functioning on broader levels (such as city-wide groups) get together and discuss timely issues in the community and how to take action regarding them. JFAAP also organises community events, rallies, consultations and workshops. The target audience of the initiative is defined as all the community members of broader Jane-Finch area.

JFAAP impacts social cohesion by creating a safe space where residents can come together, make social ties, and discuss issues related to their community. The *target audience* is very diverse as the community meetings often attract a very diverse group of people, thereby facilitating inter-ethnic, inter-cultural, and inter-generational interactions. A good example of how such interactions are stimulated by JFAAP is a recent initiative launched by the grassroots called Cross-culture and Intergenerational Community Building. The purpose of the project is to bring together community residents from a very wide age group (from teenagers to 80 years old) that have been involved in JFAAP throughout the years, to interview each other about the history of Jane and Finch.

> "Y*oung people interviewed the elder, and the elders interviewed the younger people about their struggle and why they got involved with JFAAP. What are the histories? Where do they come from? What are the differences when they came here? Why did they get involved in this kind of a struggle? And all that. All of the interviews are going to be videotaped, and the end result is going to be launched as a new project.*"

explained our respondent. Thus, while broad long-term goals of JFAAP are geared more towards economic development (buy improving employment, and eradicating poverty), its short-term and more tangible impacts have been more upon social cohesion.

The majority of JFAAP's members are community residents. JFAAP also receives support from community workers and community organisations such as Jane Finch Community and Family

Centre, and some organisations within York University such as the Ontario Public Interest Research Group and York University Faculty Association. There has been a deliberate decision made within the grassroots from the beginning to not have any constitution or by-laws or organisational hierarchy. Therefore, there is no executive board within JFAAP. Moreover, the grassroots does not have any core funding.

> "JFAAP *doesn't apply for funding. It did not register as a non-profit group so that it could stay at a resident led grass-roots group.*"

emphasized our respondent. However, the group receives material and non-material support from organisations such as JFCFC such as food and TTC tokens, and childcare services for the meetings.

*Perception and use of the concept of diversity*

Diversity is a central element to the very existence of JFAAP and all its activities as it resonates in who is involved in the grassroots, what issues it addresses, and what type of activities and programmes it organises. Our respondent identified a fundamental component of JFAAP as

> "*The cultural diversity of the people and then the experiences that need sharing, the strength that people are bringing, the assets that everyone has*".

JFAAP meetings address a wide array of problems for instance funding security for community-based programmes, newcomer settlement and access to services and information, barriers to employment, advocacy, racism and discrimination, issues surrounding none-status and undocumented immigrants. Even though the primary target of the grassroots is to address negative chronic issues in Jane-Finch, many of its efforts at the same time focus on celebrating the neighbourhood's diversity. For instance, JFAAP collaborates with local artists to organise exhibitions, cultural events, wherein different individual and group-based diversities are recognized and celebrated. These diversities include gender, ethnicity, culture, age, immigration status, educational and occupational background, sexuality, and even 'food' cultures.

*Main factors influencing success or failure*

One of the most interesting characteristics of JFAAP, and perhaps the most important *internal success factor*, is the strong mandate and commitment within the action group to stay autonomous. Grass-roots often face a great risk of co-optation once they become financially and organisationally dependent on state authorities. Thus JFAAP continues to refuse funding or support from organisations it does not socially or politically align with. In turn, the grassroots have been successful in mobilizing a strong supportive network in the community that are quintessential to its functioning and success. Our respondent shared the following example accordingly:

> "*We did an event on minimum wage. A big celebration, it was really a street party. People were actually dancing! We had big numbers of group dancers on the corner of Jane and Finch, loud music, big speakers, everything. But then you needed some donations as well. So, some people said they'd just go Tim Horton's and ask them to give coffee and all that. But then the collective decision was made that because JFAAP is doing this for the minimum wage campaign, and Tim Horton's is one of the strongest opponents of minimum wage increase (they are actively organizing against minimum wage increase), we refused that because asking them for donations for that event would have been inappropriate. A group like this is continuously looking at all these factors*".

Our respondent further recognized commitment and readiness to organise as two of the most important *internal success factors* for JFAAP. Meanwhile, grassroots organisations such as JFAAP are not easy to maintain as they very often get marginalized or co-opted as one of the *external factors* that create barriers. Moreover, the collaborative network within the community is the backbone of JFAAP, however many of these community-based organisations, which are supporting the grass-roots are facing precarity, cut-backs and challenges of their own, which directly or indirectly influence the current and future state of the grass-roots.

*Conclusion*

JFAAP deals with poverty and other systemic barriers in Jane-Finch area by promoting social economic justice, and community and leadership capacity building. While as an autonomous resident-led action group, JFAAP, remains very true to its core political values, the group does not refrain from getting involved with other agencies and cooperating with official and non-official community and city-wide organisations in addressing different issues in the community. It thereby provides a unique and interesting case for *recognising* diverse needs to understand how those needs can be voiced within a neighbourhood via grassroots mobilization. Also, the grassroots addresses *redistribution* through its over-arching objectives such as eliminating poverty and fighting systemic barriers. It further provides opportunities for *encounter* by bringing community members together through gathering or rallies. As far as future development is concerned, the main strategy of the group is to remain autonomous and independent while finding new and broader approaches towards reaching out and giving voice to different groups within the community whose voice has been silenced.

## 2.2.  Arrangements targeting social mobility

**Women Moving Forward**

*Strategy, focus and organisation*

Women Moving Forward (WMF) is an initiative within the JFCFC. In 2005, the Jane-Finch Community and Family Centre established WMF. The real drive behind this initiative came from some of the previous experiences the community centre had had with a teen-mom (aged 13-20) support group living in the Community. The programme staff observed that once these women reached the age of 21, they could no longer participate in the programme. Meanwhile, the majority of them, having not had the chance to plan for the next step in their lives (i.e. career), ended up living below the poverty line and became recipients of social assistance. The outcomes of that programme thereby demonstrated an obvious lack of adequate supports or career-focused programmes targeting young, sole-support mothers over the age of 20 that would help them successfully move from social assistance to economic self-sufficiency. In order to address this gap, WMF developed its programme design, drawing from extensive research led by JFCFC with support from other organisations such as of the *G.H. Wood Foundation*, and the *Black Creek Community Health Centre (BCCHC)*, in order to determine the needs of these women. The research included a literature review on poverty among single-parent young moms and a number of focus groups in the community.

The *primary goal* of WMF is to support and assist young sole-support mothers in the Jane and Finch community in their process of transitioning from poverty to economic self-sufficiency. The *target audience* of the programme is thereby defined as sole-support young mothers aged 18-30. Building on direct community input, the programme is divided into the two phases, each include following activities to educate and support women in taking the steps necessary towards setting and achieving personal and professional goals (Women Moving Forward, 2013). *Phase I:* (Self-

assessment and Goal Setting; 5 months) focuses on *life skills*, *career planning*, *citizen participation*, *counselling* and *literacy*. *Phase II* (Professional Development and Training; 5 months) is broken down into two components, namely *planning* and *pursuing*. The planning part goes on for 6 weeks and includes women choosing a minimum of 2 options – ranging from academic upgrading to a volunteer placement in their field of interest. The rest of phase II focuses upon helping women transition into the next step of their career plan. Upon completion of phase II, the women receive a graduation ceremony. After graduation, WMF continues to offer support and assistance to women.

WMF, as identified by the programme leader, aims to mainly impact the self-improvement and the life-style of its participants by adopting an integrated approach which cuts across different fields such as literacy and education, life skills, employment, and civic participation. The programme strives to increase civic responsibility among the women and in particular provide them with the skills to advocate for themselves and their children. The trainings also help women gain an understanding of the government structures in which they are involved (education, welfare, and childcare) and how to navigate them. This is particularly important for the integration and settlements of those participants who are newcomers or have recent immigration backgrounds.

Our respondent asserted that over the course of 8 years, the programme has helped establish strong ties between staff members and participants, especially given the efforts within the programme to stay in touch with the women after they complete the two phases:

> *"They call us. Whether they are in school, whether there is a celebration and they are getting married. Whether they got accepted into a new programme. Whether they have a child. So it is building that relationship with the women that is like family. There is a meaningful contact there that is made."*

Thus, by establishing long-term meaningful relationships between women (who come from a diversity of backgrounds but find common grounds to connect on the basis of their individual paths), the programme contributes to enhancing social cohesion by helping the women to contribute to the wider Jane-Finch community. Similarly, positive contributions are made to social mobility since the programme helps women gain the education and skills required to get out of social assistance and move upwards into higher-education and/or employment.

Currently, the programme has three part-time staff members at the JFCFC; namely a team leader, a programme worker, and a life skills coach. Additionally, WMF receives assistance from two other staff members through collaboration with other organisations in the community; an English Language Arts Facilitator provided by Literature for Life; and a Group Talk Facilitator/Programme Counsellor provided by Y-Connect/Griffin Centre. The programme is funded by a number of private and public sources, namely The Geoffrey H. Wood Foundation (Private charitable), United Way Toronto (private), The McEwan family foundation (private), TD Waterhouse (private bank), and the City of Toronto.

*Perception and use of the concept of diversity*
Diversity is a defining characteristic of the Jane-Finch area and thereby resonates in WMF. The women who participate in the programme are from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, though women from Afro-Caribbean backgrounds tend to shape the largest group. There is an interest in getting a broader diversity in terms of ethnicity, our respondent explained, but the fact that it has not been largely achieved is mainly because the particular characteristics of the pre-

defined target audience of WMF (single-parent young mothers) are less visible in certain ethnic-groups as our respondent elaborated on:

> *"We would love to have more diversity like Vietnamese, Cambodian and so on cause they are here in our community but again is there much teenage pregnancy in those ethno-cultural groups? And if somebody has baby at 22-23 years old that is fine they can still come into the programme but they have to be a single mom. In those communities they are not often single. They are married,"*

The programme initiative plans to expand in the future to include young men as well. WMF explicitly addresses diversities in terms of age, ethnicity, culture, gender, socio-economic status, mental health, and settlement. Moreover, the programme pays explicit attention to the barriers faced by these women such as poverty and racial discrimination (especially against the Afro-Caribbean community). Beyond these categories, WMF's activities also address hyper-diversity as they focus on women's personal interests and abilities, aiming at fostering women's individual talents and capacities through helping them create and pursue their career plans based on their own preferences and interests. Thus both positive and negative aspects of the diversity in the Jane and Finch community are addressed by the initiative.

*Main factors influencing success or failure*

The integrated approach in dealing with all aspects of women's lives while helping them achieve self-sufficiency is identified as the main *internal factor* contributing to the success of the programme by the staff. Another *internal factor* is the bottom-up initialization of the programme, which from the start focused its attention on addressing actual needs in the community. Furthermore, through the years, WMF has been undergoing constant evaluation and reshaping in order to make sure that it sufficiently addresses the particular characteristics and needs of its target audience. Our respondent also asserted that the fact that all staff members are women from the community has been highly influential in building trust and empathy with the participants. Meanwhile, lack of funding and physical space was identified as the most important *external factor* posing a challenge to the programme. One possible explanation for these limitations, as contended by our respondent, is that since the programme has an integrated approach, there is not one particular Ministry or City department that would take up the responsibility to fully fund the programme as it cuts across different fields. Moreover, given that Jane and Finch is a high-need area, WMF has to compete with other small-scale community programmes over the already limited resources. Thus, WMF has struggled with limited resources resulting in cutting staff hours and moving to a new smaller space.

*Conclusion*

WMF is a bottom-up initiative, which cuts across various fields in its programme design. The programme is special as it adopts an *integrated* approach in addressing different characteristics and needs of its participants in helping them achieve self-sufficiency. Although small in size, the initiative has managed to leverage financial, organisational and physical resources via establishing collaborations with a range of other organisations and programmes. WMF contributes to creating *encounter* between its diverse audience; to *recognition* of their individual needs with regards to their particular circumstances; and to *redistribution* of resources by providing them access to education, and helping them apply for grants. In terms of future developments, the programme aims to grow into an independent organisation, which targets a broader audience (men, a broader age group, a larger geographic scale of focus). The feasibility of this plan, however, depends on the extent to which WMF will be successful in securing its sources of funding over the next number of years.

**PEACH**

*Strategy, focus and organisation*

PEACH (Promoting Education and Community Health) is a community-based organisation, which provides transformative, youth-centred, social and educational programmes for marginalized youth and their families in the Jane-Finch community. Established in 1993, the organisation was originally created with an anti-drug focus, which shortly changed into community economic development. Following the introduction of the Safe Schools Act in Canada in 2000 and in response to a dire need in the community to support youth whose education would be jeopardized by these policies, PEACH once again switched its core focus to education or *"alternative modes of engagement"* as our respondent called it.

PEACH programmes work on the basis of an integrated model which incorporates education, positive mentoring for youth, and social programmes for youth and their families into a supportive environment from which they can bounce back from setbacks with their education, safety and mental health issues associated with the poverty they are facing. Thus, the *primary aim* of the organisation is building relationships and partnerships that guide *youth in crisis* and their families to the supports they need to re-imagine their future and achieve success. Thus the main *target audience* is defined as at risk youth (14-24 years of age). The components of the integrated programme according to our respondent are as follows:

- *School Away from School*: A collaboration with the Toronto district School Board and the Toronto Catholic School Board which provides a supportive space where assigned teachers supervise youth at risk of falling out of the school system, while PEACH provides a web of other supportive programming such as life-skills and conflict management to reconnect youth to schools and re-establish their trust in institutions.
- *Wraparound*: A programme for building a supportive network of caring adults (such as youth advocates, family members, friends, even people from the church) and service providers which wraps around the young person at its centre creating trust and support.
- *Music Studio*: a weekly drop-in programme containing a 3-hour workshop based on theory of music and engineering and entrepreneurship which aims at developing youth's artistic expression and ties which help break down negative 'turf affiliation' that undermine youth's mobility and safety in Jane-Finch.
- *Youth Outreach*: An initiative, which builds on organisational partnerships to fill gaps in existing services by connecting youth programmes in the community.

Building social ties and supportive networks are core elements in the integrated model adopted at PEACH. Given the special characteristics of the Jane-Finch community in terms of its turf boundaries and gang-related issues, one of the important objectives of PEACH has been to facilitate contact and interaction among youth from different geographic areas of the community. *Jane and Finch community,* as our respondent explains

> *"[…] is so diverse in terms of street by street nature and so young people find it scary and unsafe to walk and they really plan their* routes *out so they are not walking into somebody else's territory."*

Thus, through provision of a neutral space wherein youth from different territories can come together and build meaningful contacts, PEACH continues to have an important impact on creating a safe and cohesive community. Although the organisation has shifted focus from economic development to education over the years, PEACH programming still has a strong positive influence on the economic conditions and social mobility of its participants by helping them finish high school education and train in specific employment areas related to their interest.

Moreover the programme offers youth with life-skills and conflict management training, which help them deal with behavioural issues that may be halting their performance at school-work. The programme also has a specific focus on helping incarcerated youth bounce back out of criminality and into education and employment.

PEACH has six permanent staff members, including two part time youth advocates, which are supported by the Youth Outreach Programme of the government of Ontario. The funders of PEACH include Ontario Works (municipal government), governmental programme-specific grants (such as the youth outreach programme), private foundations, Rogers telecommunications (private corporation). PEACH collaborates broadly with other organisations and services in the community in providing services to its participants (i.e. arts programmes, school boards, mental health services, the police, community centres).

*Perception and use of the concept of diversity*
Although the target audience addressed by PEACH is precisely defined as at-risk youth, there is explicit attention paid towards to the multiple characteristics and needs of the participants. Thus, there is a focus within all programmes to pay attention to individual interests and capacities of youth while addressing wider systemic issues facing them, such as inter-generational poverty, criminalization and racial stereo-typing of youth (Afro-Caribbean in particular), gang structures in the neighbourhood, and poverty-driven mental health issues. The programmes thus address different categories of diversity, namely age, gender, ethnicity, personal interest, mental and physical health. Moreover, our respondent asserted that PEACH has experienced increasing diversification of its audience especially in terms of gender given the recent influx of female participants in the past two years. PEACH has further experienced increased diversity in terms of the ethnic groups it served:

> *"The programme used to be predominantly Afro-Caribbean, but more and more nowadays we are finding that there is a Somalian community coming, there is a Spanish speaking community so we are seeing whoever is living in this community is getting referred and is coming. We don't have a policy of supporting only one ethnic group."*

While PEACH adopts an *asset as opposed to deficit-based approach* as our respondent claims, by emphasizing on youths' potentials, the programme is overall designed to tackle barriers and negative aspects of the diversity in Jane-Finch (referred to as 'systemic issues' above) by helping youth move out of incarceration and gang affiliations and (back) into education and employment.

*Main factors influencing success or failure*
One of the key *internal factors* contributing to the success of PEACH in terms of moving towards its vision for a *healthy, inclusive and empowered community* has been establishing personal connections and collaborations. Dedicated staff has over the years been able to create strong friendships with youth as well as among themselves. This has contributed to the building of the foundation of trust and a supportive environment as well as keeping the youth on board with the programme. Establishing collaboration with other services and agencies in the community has as well helped the organisation fill gaps in services and cope with recent cutbacks in terms of funding and organisational support. Another internal success factor is the attention paid within the programme to the diverse needs of youth identified in a bottom-up manner in re-engaging them with education:

> *"The school system that is from the industrial age with a very colonial curriculum is not responding to the changes in diversity and multi-culturalism that are here to stay in Canada.*

> *So the young people we see are disengaged from it… We try to swing that around a little bit and say how else can we engage them so that it is still education but they are learning what is relevant to them".*

Meanwhile, capacity, and space where identified as the biggest *internal barriers* the programme is currently facing. Our respondent contended that while it is not so hard to find grants to fund specific programming, administrative costs and maintenance are areas wherein lack of financial resources is most pertinent to. Moreover, having a very specific focus, the programme staff admittedly does not make a pro-active effort in being involved and visible in the community (i.e. organizing public events, attending community meetings, and engaging in community outreach), which could potentially connect them to additional sources of funding and support. Furthermore, *external factors* such as limited funding and the underlying systemic issues outlined earlier continue to pose a serious challenge to the success of the programme. Such issues vastly contribute to the quick dis-engagement and even re-incarceration of youth once they are out of the programme.

*Conclusion*

PEACH is an interesting example of how a programme with a very specific focus can incorporate hyper-diversity by paying attention to the different and complex needs and capacities of its participants while recognizing the complexity of the problems faced by them thus contributing to *recognition*. The programme also creates *encounter* opportunities among youth who may otherwise not interact due to turf boundaries in the area. These encounters contribute a great deal to easing tensions and improving safety in the community. PEACH also enhances *redistribution* through providing youth with access to skill trainings and assistance in finishing their education, which impacts the economic well-being of youth. In terms of future development, there are aspirations within the programme to grow in capacity and become more involved in the community. PEACH further hopes to engage schools in its 'alternative engagement model', which places the needs and potentials of youth at its core. Meanwhile, there is still great concern around the future development of youth in their post-graduation life as broader inequalities in the community continue to reproduce patterns of cyclical poverty, mental illness, criminal engagement and incarceration among young people of colour.

## COSTI Specialized Housing Programme (COSTI-SHP)

*Strategy, focus and organisation*

Specialized Housing is a programme within the COSTI North York Centre (a non-profit community-based agency which provides a range of services to the community), which focuses on providing support to 'vulnerable' seniors in North York with regards to their housing and living conditions. Specialized Housing impacts social mobility of the seniors in that it helps them move out of isolation and gain access to society again. Thus COSTI-SHP is not a housing agency but a community service to help seniors to be involved social networks and active community life while they receive access to accommodation and health care services that they could not receive in their previous isolated lives. Established officially in 2011, the programme is part and parcel of the 'Street to Home' programme, a housing support programme launched by the City of Toronto with the following mandate; serve homeless people who live outdoors, which includes individuals living in parks, ravines, under bridges, on sidewalks, lane-ways, alleys, stairwells, building alcoves, squats and living in vehicles. Specialized Housing was created as a response to a high need within the community for not only general housing support services (COSTI already had a programme which focused on that) but specialized services which recognize case-specific complexities and provide services based upon specific needs of each client.

COSTI-SHP works with individuals on a one-to-one basis to identify their needs based upon conditions, mental health state, physical ability, and mobility levels. The *target audience* of the programme is defined as 'vulnerable seniors' in North York, that is seniors (55 and above) with mental and/or physical disabilities, mobility and isolation issues. The programme's *primary aim* is to provide these seniors with the support they need in order to get out of isolation and have easy access to services. This support includes anything from helping them fight against eviction to helping seniors relocate to specialised housing units with on-site care. The programme serves around 45 seniors per year.

> *"We introduce or connect them to the senior centres of the area, then that senior centre or community centre also helps them with many of their needs, whether they are tax-related, financial, etc. So we basically take them out of that desperate isolated situation and then put them in contact with a lot of services."*

Specialized Housing focuses on addressing the very basic needs of its audience at an individual level. Our respondent asserted that there is currently a visible gap within services provided to seniors in the community, many of whom are deeply struggling with making ends meet. Moreover, their problems are often compounded when they face one or multiple of the following issues: (i) *become isolated* in their homes due to not having social ties; (ii) have *mobility and physical problems* which limits their ability to take care of themselves and their living environment; (iii) most significantly when they *struggle with mental health issues* (which in many cases go without being recognized and addressed). Moreover, often seniors who are addressed by the programme are on the verge of getting evicted as many of them cannot afford rent or have problems with managing their finances (many struggle with paying rent on time). Our respondent underlined that being involved in this programme the seniors become active members of the community again. They are linked to each other, to the other age groups of the community and participate constructive community activities. The cases our correspondent referred included desperate situations and financial and social improvements of seniors after receiving this service. Thus, by helping them find alternative housing and connecting them to available services, the programme positively influences the financial conditions of the seniors and put them back into the social live.

The programme is very small with one social worker as the only permanent staff member. In addition there is a City officer who supervises and supports the programme. Specialized Housing receives its entire funding from the City of Toronto. Given the size of the organisations, collaboration with other agencies and service providers is quintessential to the existence and functioning of this programme.

*Perception and use of the concept of diversity*
The diversity of the neighbourhood very well resonates in the audience of the programme. Our respondent contended that there is great diversity among the seniors in terms of ethnicity, culture, educational and occupational background, socio-economic status and length of stay in Toronto. Given the case-based approach towards provision of services within this programme, diversity is addressed at the individual and a very personal level. For instance, the programme works with many newcomer seniors who need assistance in specific areas such as language, legal and tax-related information as well as settlement. He further noted that addressing diversity is a deliberate goal within Specialized Housing, however given that the programme serves 'vulnerable' seniors, most of the efforts are organised around dealing with negative aspects of the notion.

*Main factors influencing success or failure*

The most important *internal factor* contributing to the success of the programme is the passion and commitment of the programme manager. COSTI-SHP is a one-man project, thus it is without a doubt that personal characteristics of the person behind it have had direct influence on its effectiveness. Additionally, the flexibility and mobility of the social worker allows him to reach out to a broader audience. Moreover, the programme tends to keep in touch with the seniors for a long period making sure that they do not fall back into isolation after the referrals have been made. Many service providers tend to put the responsibility upon the clients in terms of making use of services while for some high-need cases there needs to be consistent follow-up and touching base in order for the individuals to remain on board with the programme. Meanwhile, the fact that they have one staff member is a clear indication of how limited the resources made available to the programme are. The funding is stable, as our respondent contends, however it entails that only a limited number of seniors can be served while the demand in the community remains very high. Another *external limitation* is not having direct and timely access to other service providers. Sometimes there are long waiting lists and it takes a while before the seniors can make use of services in other agencies and that creates many issues within the programme.

*Conclusion*

COSTI's Specialized Housing programme is a small but none-the-less significant project, which aims towards serving a very vulnerable and high-need part of the community. The innovative potential of the programme lies in its intense and individually-based approach towards *recognition* of needs; and enhancing *redistribution* of resources via providing services which creates an opportunity for addressing the so-called 'invisible' or 'hidden' diversities in the community. The future development of the programme will highly depend on changes with regards to sources of funding made available to it. Right now there is an evaluation report being made on the effectiveness of the project and its impacts on the community. The programme manager hopes that the report will serve as evidence for the importance and outreach of Specialized Housing and may thus help with attracting new and additional sources of funding and support to the programme.

## 2.3   Arrangements targeting economic performance

**The Learning Enrichment Foundation**

*Strategy, focus and organisation*

The learning Enrichment Foundation (LEF) is a community-based non-profit organisation based in Black Creek which provides integrated and holistic community responsive initiatives that enable individuals and families to become valued contributors to their community's social and economic development (www.lefca.org). LEF has been serving the former city of York in North-West Toronto since 1978 when it was first established by the York Board of Education. Since then the organisation has developed from a youth theatre project into one of the largest community economic development organisations in Toronto. The core focus of LEF has thus changed gradually and organically over the years and always in response to needs that were identified on the ground and in a bottom-up manner as our respondent highlighted:

> *"Our former first programme was community theatre. And what became very evident, was that the kids were at risk because their parents were not working. And so the second programme would have been a partnership with Levi's. So we started an industrial sewing programme. And then the community space in the neighbourhood was sort of falling apart. The*

> *city did not really have the money to keep the community space up. And so we started a construction training programme and started renovating community space."*

Child-care programmes, cooking trainings, and community kitchens also later followed in the same manner.

The core focus of LEF is community economic development at the former city of York. The *primary aims* of LEF as outlined on the organisation website include: 'to work to restore/enhance self-sufficiency and self-determination for clients; support an inclusive community focus; celebrate diversity; value justice and compassion; uphold integrity in programming and accountability to stakeholders; promote creativity and innovation; collaborate, cooperate and share; approach work in a proactive, flexible, multi-faceted and practical manner; respond to community needs; and trust in the commitment, high professionalism and integrity of the staff (www.lefca.org). The *target audience* of the programme is further defined as 'residents of the former city of York'. The activities at LEF include the following: settlement services for newcomers, employment services, skills training, language training, child-care, youth services, and entrepreneurship.

While the main focus of LEF is on economic development and enhancing the social mobility of individuals in the community via a range of integrated programmes, the organisation also impacts social cohesion as it provides a platform for community members to come together via its on-site open space titled the 'Town Square'. The Town Square is a large indoor open space located at the centre of the LEF building which provides ample space for gatherings, which includes a sitting area, a cafeteria, market stands, and a kitchen. The space is used frequently for holding events. Social interactions are also stimulated within LEF's different on-site classes, workshops, and traineeships which all take place on a daily basis in this space.

LEF collaborates with dozens of other community and city-wide organisations. The organisation has 350 staff members on 2 different locations to serve more than 10,000 people every year. They also hire staff from the community to provide access to employment right away after trainings. LEF has around 90 different funding streams including the federal government, City of Toronto, private foundations, banks and private corporations.

*Perception and use of the concept of diversity*
Given the size of LEF as well as the variety of its programming, it is not surprising that the organisation encounters a great deal of diversity in the audience it serves. As mentioned earlier, one of the strong components of LEF is its settlement programming which serves newcomers who constitute an incredibly heterogeneous group. Furthermore, while 'ethnic diversity' was identified by our respondent as the primary category of diversity addressed by the organisation, attention is paid to catering other types of diversity, in particular gender, age, sexual orientation, and disabilities (i.e. vision and mobility issues) via creating inclusive workspace, learning space, and curriculum.

*Main factors influencing success or failure*
The main *internal factors* contributing to the success of LEF can be outlined as follows: Firstly, the organisation is very well-established and has access to a wealth of resources especially a very large space with many facilities on site. The space contributes a great deal to providing multiple services at the same time and thus addressing multiple needs of diverse groups. Secondly, there is a lot of attention paid within LEF towards maintaining an integrated approach that is trying to respond to different interconnected needs simultaneously by providing multiple integrated programmes. Thirdly, within each programme attention is paid to addressing basic needs on site such

as food and childcare, which has helped a great deal with attracting more community members to the programme. Lastly, a large and diverse funding stream has provided the organisation with a great degree of financial resilience. However, the organisation continues to face multiple barriers in keeping its mandate and reaching its goals. One of the biggest *internal challenges* faced by LEF, as outlined by both our respondents is fragmentation within the organisation due to separated funding streams for specific programmes:

> *"Increasingly we were seeing people who are feeling accountable to the funder, rather than the organisation. So, if they worked in Settlement and their funding came from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, they were feeling more like their employer was CIC, rather than being LEF. That was a struggle we were starting to see and that meant that people were so focussed on hitting that targets, they were not necessarily able to do other things."*

The organisation has thus undergone a restructuring since 2012 in order to address the fragmentation, which undermines the integrated approach within LEF.


*Conclusion*

LEF provides important insights into how social service providers can address hyper-diversity by adopting an integrated and holistic approach. Though its integrated approach, LEF contributes to creating *encounters* among community members via providing gathering space, group trainings, and hosting events, also to *redistribution* of resources by easing access to education, training, and employment opportunities. *Recognition* is also addressed through creation of inclusive spaces and attention to individual needs. LEF is different from most other community-based initiatives in the area as it is very well-resourced in terms of finance, staff and space. However, the organisation is still very much active in terms of collaborating with other community-based agencies in the neighbourhood in identifying needs on the ground and serving the community. Future plans of the organisation further revolve around dealing with internal fragmentation and strengthening the integrated programming within LEF to reach its core objectives.


**Youth Enterprise Network**

*Strategy, focus and organisation*

Youth Enterprise Network (YEN) is an initiative of the local Black Creek Coordinating Committee (a network made up of agencies in the area) made up of entrepreneurs and local organisations that have come together in aims of providing support and increasing opportunities for young entrepreneurs living in the Black Creek community. YEN was created in 2009 by the Black Creek Community Collaborative as a response to concerns around youth employment issues in the community. A major component of the initiative is a youth store called Ascend, which was established in 2012 as a cooperative social enterprise, managed and run by community youth.

The main *target audience* of YEN is defined as local youth (ages 18 to 34). There are many community organisations and independent organisations collaborate with YEN[5]. The *primary aim* of YEN is community economic development. The initiative is designed to provide a comprehensive set of supports to equip youth entrepreneurs with the tools, networks and qualifications needed to succeed. Through YEN, participants will take part in a workshop series. They will further be referred to YEN partners, Blueprints YU and SECE (Jane-Finch based non-profits which

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[5] The dynamic members of YEN include NYKE, Blueprints Youth Unlimited (YU), Doorsteps, Black Creek Community Collaborative, Involve Youth, Soulfull N Soulless, Mr. Fresh (INI's Entrepreneur of the year), Greenwin Inc, Broker Carmen Shoukralla, SECE (Social Enterprise Centre of Excellence), as well as other partners. Trillium foundation is the primary funder of the initiative.

focus on life skills mentoring, entrepreneurial training), for more intensive training. The YEN curriculum includes the following two phases: (i) Training: introduction to entrepreneurship and financial literacy, life skills, getting your business started: market research, social entrepreneurship, life skill, business planning, networking, financing, public relations and marketing, distribution, financial management and business planning. (ii) Implementation: At the end of the first six months of the programme, workshop graduates are provided with a space in the YEN store (Ascend) to showcase their products. The graduates further receive support to apply to the Black Creek Community Capacity group's micro-credit loan initiative to finance their business. The second six months of the initiative focuses on producing and distributing the product, and marketing the business.

Earlier in the report it was mentioned that there is a dire need for social infrastructures for youth in the community. Thus while maintaining its obvious focus on economic development; the store also functions as a safe space for youth where they can hang out in their free time. The programme manager further asserted that the store functions beyond just a retail space for selling products, rather it has a strong focus upon two areas: community development (via providing a space where young people can meet, exchange knowledge and experience, and feel connected to their community), as well as building economic self-sufficiency (by helping youth firstly identify their own goals and thereafter by providing them with appropriate training according to those goals). Ascend is also involved in arranging community events, gatherings, flea markets. in the Black Creek neighbourhood. Ascend has two permanent staff members, namely a store manager (funded by Trillium) and a system manager (City of Toronto).

*Perception and use of the concept of diversity*
YEN serves a very diverse range of youth in terms of age, gender, ethnicity and cultural background. Diversity is addressed mostly in terms of individual interests within the program. Among the individuals serves by YEN and Ascend are also newcomer youth and also young people out of incarceration who in particular get involved through a programme called Making the Cycle. The programme aims to help youth with a criminal path reintegrate back into society by offering them with part time employment opportunities and traineeships at the store. Diversity among youth also resonates very well into the activities organised and the products sold at the store.

The general approach towards diversity is very positive within the store as well as other YEN programmes and focuses on fostering leadership capacities and self-sufficiency among diverse youth as emphasized by our respondent.

> *"We have so many different personalities, and we have so many different age groups, but when they are together, it is just like a bunch of people who like to be in each other's company, even the quietest of people they have the opportunity to be a leader."*

*Main factors influencing success or failure*
The initiative and the store in particular, are still at early stages of their development. Thus while the extent to which YEN is successful in terms of achieving its primary long term goal of community development is yet to be seen, some of the *internal factors* contributing to its current outreach are the following: (i) strong focus of YEN upon creating self-sufficiency among youth through a comprehensive curriculum which covers a broad range of topics and trainings; (ii) giving agency to the youth in terms of designing, managing and running the store; (iii) passion and commitment among staff; and (iv) inclusive safe community space. Meanwhile, the biggest *external barrier* currently facing the initiative is limited sources of funding.

*Conclusion*

A key innovative component of YEN is that in spite of its small scope, the programme offers a curriculum that is integrated and comprehensive in that it is designed in line with both long term (community development, building community capacity, self-reliance and financial independence among youth) and short term objectives (i.e. re-integration of criminalized youth, creating temporary employment opportunities for youth, and creating friendships). It functions as a space of *encounter* among youth; *recognition* of their individual interests and capacities; and *redistribution* of resources by providing them with retail space and financial training. The initiative further works in cooperation with other youth agencies and service providers in the community in order to improve its outreach. The primary future development plan for the store at the moment is to increase its revenues (through internal entrepreneurial activities or additional external funds) so that it can sustain itself in shape of a small retail space while serving the community as a social enterprise.

# 3   Synthesis and analysis of the results

**Synthesis of the investigated governance arrangements**

The aim of this report was to describe a selected sample of initiatives in Toronto to illustrate how diversity is conceptualised within these policy arrangements and initiatives; to outline the main factors influencing success or failure; and to identify some innovative policies and governance concepts on the basis of the cases. Table 1 provides an overview of the degree of contribution of each initiative to the three main objectives of social cohesion, social mobility, and economic performance. Thereafter the findings of our preliminary analysis regarding each aim are presented.

*Table 1: Contribution of the governance arrangements towards the three main objectives*

| Governance arrangements | Social cohesion | Social mobility | Economic performance |
|---|---|---|---|
| Black Creek Farm | *** | ** | * |
| Aging at Home | *** | ** | * |
| Black Creek SNAP | *** | * | ** |
| JFAAP | *** | ** | * |
| The Spot | *** | ** | * |
| Women Moving Forward | ** | *** | * |
| PEACH | ** | *** | * |
| COSTI specialized housing | ** | *** | * |
| LEF | * | ** | *** |
| YEN | * | ** | *** |

* = low contribution;  ** = medium contribution;  *** = high contribution

Among the initiatives mainly contributing to social cohesion, Black Creek Farm can be regarded as the most contributing since it has had a direct influence on relations among diversity of individuals and communities while initiatives like the Spot or Aging at Home tend to focus primarily on one type of group (young or old). The contribution of such initiatives has thereby been about the integration of these specific groups into the wider community. Our analysis further reveals that relative attention has been paid to all three objectives among all initiatives as a result of the general integrated approach present in the governance of diversity in Toronto. The programs,

which showcase a great impact upon social mobility, also tend to have an impact on economic performance. Such programs focus on enhancing the individual's managerial and financial skills, which help cultivate an entrepreneurial spirit. Initiatives such as Women Moving Forward and PEACH focus not only on educational and skill training, which help improve the economic performance of their participants, but also on improving their general well-being by providing trainings that focus on life skills and self-sufficiency. Moreover, programs such as LEF and YEN are particularly designed to improve entrepreneurial skills and tend to focus more specifically on enhancing economic performance.

## Conceptualisation of diversity

Diversity has a broader meaning than 'ethnic diversity' according to our interviews with the members of the initiatives and includes categories such as age, gender, sexuality, physical disability, mental health, and personal interests among many others. The perception of diversity is thus more in line with the definition of hyper-diversity as the diversification of the population not only in socio-economic, social and ethnic terms, but also with respect to lifestyles, attitudes and activities (Tasan-Kok et al., 2014). It is also positively perceived as an asset as it contributes to the existence of a diverse array of programmes and services in Jane-Finch and is celebrated through multiple events and gathering all of which make Jane-Finch a special tightly-knit community. However, it should be noted that ethnicity and equality are still very sensitive topics for the communities. Thus, *poverty, systemic racism* and *systemic discrimination* are highlighted in the interviews to emphasize the importance of recognizing the vulnerabilities facing the ethnic diversity in that respect. While age, culture, socio-economic, health conditions (especially mental health and elderly health), gender, sexuality, and labour backgrounds are repeatedly included in the definition of diversity*,* invisible diversity and the importance of recognizing the complex needs of residents on an individual level has also been highlighted during the interviews, confirming the policy discourses on the same topic. Moreover, lingual diversity was also a highlighted concept especially among seniors and their inclusion within the framework of cross-cultural and cross-ethnic interconnectedness. Cultural and intergenerational knowledge exchange was also emphasized in the same vein as a positive aspect contributing to integration and social cohesion in the neighbourhood.

## Success and failure factors

A glance at the results of our analysis through a comparative lens reveals that the investigated initiatives often face similar barriers as well as benefiting from similar internal and external success factors in serving the Jane-Finch community. Below a classified overview of the over-arching internal and external factors[6] affecting the *ability to reach the primary goals* of the selected initiatives in Jane-Finch is presented:

- *Main external factors for success*
The most important external factor of success is the availability of stable funding to maintain the quality and continuity of the services. Interestingly, addressing basic needs (like food to eat during the service, TCT ticket to get there or child care to enable participation of single mothers) is also a very important external success factor since these basic needs are not addressed by any other policies and can simply impediment the program's continuity. Our interviews show that very simple factors like availability of food during the program or a bus ticket to have access to the premises encourage people to continue attending. The reason for this may be the general ac-

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[6] These factors are discussed and confirmed with the Policy Platform members at the end of the research period.

ceptance and recognition of importance of such needs from the community as well as the city-wide organisations.

- *Main internal factors for success*

We can group the internal success factors under three main topics: *spatial and locational factors*; *programme design*; and *staff and internal capacity*.

**Spatial and locational factors** refer to the importance of the physical accessibility of the initiative for the target audience as long distances within the area and also an overloaded and insufficient public transit system create an important barrier of access to the services. Especially considering the levels of poverty in the neighbourhood it should be noted that almost each initiative mentioned the importance of access, as some residents do not have the financial power to take a public transport ticket even if they are in urgent need. Some initiatives receive funding from the Federal government or from other government resources to cover the transport costs, while some others try to find other resources to provide public transport tickets to overcome locational barriers. Quality and characteristics of the built environment (such as a shopping mall) and its visibility are also indicated as an important factor to reach the target of the initiative. Our observations also confirmed the importance of the spatial characteristics (such as size, interior design, visibility, and openness) especially concerning groups like youth, also access to resources and facilities on site is an important factor of success. However, some community initiatives also have very limited space, which limits their activities and the effectiveness and outreach of their programming. Inclusiveness of the space, in a sense of non-exclusive built environment that allows access to diverse people of different age groups, ethnic or cultural groups, is also a very important success factor. Inclusive spaces do not intimidate people or scare them off to be there, but on the contrary encourage them to be there no matter how their identities differ. Some of our respondents highlighted the importance of *design* and sensitivity of the built environment towards specific needs of the community as the factors contributing to the inclusiveness.

**Programme design** refers to the approach and internal context of the initiative to address a community need. Flexibility in the design and content of programmes to meet shifting needs of the community is indicated as important programme design aspects. A successful initiative should focus on capacity building in the community with a long-term vision. Moreover, the capacity to respond to the potentials and positive contributions from the community is also indicated as a very important factor. Our respondents highlighted the importance of an *integrated approach* in programme design towards dealing with different interconnected needs of audience for instance. Another success factor has been the ability to re-evaluate and reshape programmes on the basis of the changing needs and demands of the community. Furthermore, consistency to follow up and keep contact with the people in need to make sure the continuity of their commitment to the programmes, is also highlighted as a factor of successful programme design.

**Staff and internal capacity** is an important success factor. It means the ability of the devoted staff members in creating the community feeling with passion and commitment to the community, and also specialized knowledge, expertise and experience in dealing with specific problems. Basically ability, motivation, and the capacity of the staff members define the great deal of the success. The highlighted factors included the ability to respond to the changing demands of the group of people initiative covers; ability to speak the language of the target audience; motivation to engage members of the community with creative outreach instruments; and capacity of the staff members to create internal bonding and sense of attachment within the initiative. For all these reasons, hiring staff members from the community it is highlighted as an important success factor. This will also contribute to the bottom-up indication of needs and to build up empathy with the target audience. Another very important factor is the ability of the staff member to per-

sonally develop and maintain collaborative networks within the wider community (at diverse scale of governance), as it allows the initiative to bypass financial and bureaucratic barriers. Moreover, attention and ability of the staff to provide basic support to meet basic needs of the target audience (providing food, TTC fare, transport and child care on the community premises) also indicated as an important factor.

- *Main external barriers*

Main external factors that create barriers are related to *funding and support*; *neighbourhood characteristics*; and *cross-agency relationships*.

**Funding and support** is one of the major barriers for initiatives. Topics like lack of funding for staff and administration, and limited permanent and long-term funding, budget cuts, lack of organisational support to get funding, and the uncertainty it creates are repeatedly highlighted during the interviews as major barriers. Due to the budget limitations or uncertainty, funding is usually reactive (i.e. responding to the indicated need) as opposed to being pro-active (i.e. providing a good enough financial capacity to allow flexibility to respond needs). Almost all of the initiatives suffer from lack of administrative staff members, which is the first thing they have to cut off when there is a budget cut. Moreover, the silo mentality within official bodies results in programme-specific funding and fragmentation within larger organisations.

**Neighbourhood characteristics** refer to the systemic barriers and structural inequalities such as intergenerational poverty and racial discrimination, which have led to the stigmatization of the neighbourhood. Jane-Finch neighbourhood does not have a very positive image, largely due to negative publicity by mainstream media and news due to high crime rates in the area. Naturally, there is some truth about the social conflicts that exist in the neighbourhood due to territorial conflicts (gangs) limiting access to services for instance. Moreover, limited car ownership and dependence on the public transport system also create barriers for community members in accessing services due to large distances and overloaded public transport in Jane-Finch. This has also something to do with the spatial quality and organisation of the area as the neighbourhood is mainly consisted of high-rise apartment blocks located far from each other, and of large empty spaces that literally breaks the community into small pockets. This, we believe, also contributes to the lack of social infrastructure within the community.

**Cross-agency relationships** are important considering the huge network of communities and very fragmented links between them. Thus, absence of an umbrella organisation in coordinating the diverse initiatives is a major barrier to succeed the main targets of each community. Being also affected by missing coordination, competition between different initiatives to acquire funding and support increases. This, naturally also limits their cooperation possibilities. Due to this reason fragmentation and gaps within the current service provision system have become inevitable, creating further barriers for the initiatives.

- *Main internal barriers*

There have been a limited number of internal factors indicated as barriers. Firstly, despite the spatial resources of some initiatives that contributed to their success (such as large space, accessibility and visibility), *limited space and capacity* are still the most important barriers to many initiatives. Secondly, *internal fragmentation within larger organisations* is also highlighted during the interviews as a barrier. Earlier it was mentioned that large organisations with a diverse range of programming often rely on different governmental bodies for funding. Thus, each programmes is held accountable in terms of reporting to their funder and organizing their activities and services in line with what the funders demand and not necessarily with what the overall mandate and objective of the organisation is. This encourages programmes (which are often addressing interconnected

subject matters) to function in separate silos and thus undermines addressing needs through an integrated approach. Thirdly, the *compoundedness of individual problems* also seems to create internal barriers. Many Jane-Finch residents are simultaneously facing multiple difficulties such as inter-generational poverty, racial discrimination and stereotyping, lack of access to resources, and isolation. Thus while some programmes may be successful in assisting residents in dealing with issues concerning one of these areas, their compounded problems and complex circumstances still restrict their community engagement, upward mobility and economic performance. Thus, the complexity and multiplicity of systemic issues in the area makes the needs for an integrated approach towards service provision even more pertinent.

**Identification of new ideas for innovative policies and governance concepts**

One of the most significant innovations with regards to addressing diversity in Jane and Finch has been creating and designing programmes in a bottom-up manner so that they cater to the creative potential existing within the community. Despite all the systemic issues facing the neighbourhood, the community-based sector has been very proactive in terms of focusing on positive traits and potentials within the community (especially with regards to its diversity). Some of the ways through which this innovation has been achieved include; creating awareness, respect and appreciation for the diversity of people through attention to important cultural traits such as food; giving agency to participants in terms of designing, organising and implementing programmes which reflect to their diverse needs and interests; tailoring top-down projects to local realities and bottom-up needs; Maintaining autonomy of grassroots via remaining financially independent and selective (choosing funding streams that are not co-optative); adopting an integrated approach in addressing different characteristics and needs of participants which corresponds to the compoundedness of some individual issues; and paying attention to invisible diversities through intensive case-specific approaches. Invisible diversities refer to particular aspects of one's identity that do not reveal themselves at first glance, such as sexual orientation, forms of physical and mental disabilities. Thus for service providers to be able to address the needs arising from such characteristics, they need to work with clients on one-on-one basis and through an intensive approach.

## 4　Conclusions

The present report was an effort to analyse a sample of selected bottom-up initiatives in Jane-Finch neighbourhood in order to understand the conceptualization of diversity within policy arrangements, to analyse success and failure factors, and to draw lessons for innovative approaches towards addressing diversity in urban policy. The synthesis presented above shows some common tendencies in terms of diversity perceptions by the community members; the success and failure factors; and the innovative approaches highlighted by our respondents. Bringing the analysis further, we aim to locate the selected initiatives in a wider context of urban policy making. We will do this by a) situating the research outcomes within a wider policy context by comparing these analyses with the policy discourses and tendencies highlighted by Ahmadi and Tasan-Kok (2014); and b) putting the outcomes in a wider theoretical context by linking the analysis to the main concepts.

For Ahmadi and Tasan-Kok (2014), the common policy tendencies in Toronto relate to three main characteristics: policies' pluralist approach to diversity; comprehensive governance structure due to interconnectedness of diverse organisational bodies, service provision approach to integration, and embeddeddness of diversity discourses across city level policies. Within this framework our analysis at the community level is mainly in line with the macro level analysis but there are also some open questions emerging:

- *Pluralist approach* to diversity encompasses a wide array of categories (including seniors, youth, women, LGBTQ[7] people, the poor, ethnic groups, disabled people, elderly people, people with health problems, aboriginal peoples, and the homeless) as it was also indicated at the federal and urban scales of policy making. It also recognizes the importance of addressing needs on an individual basis in order to cater invisible diversities and compounded problems.

- *Interconnectedness* of diverse organisational bodies, *embeddedness* of diversity discourses across city level policies, and *service provision approach to integration* contribute to the comprehensive governance structure we have tried to describe in the report. In the previous report we argued and showed that integration in Toronto is not a discourse to divide the society along the host and the newcomer division to a process of 'inclusion' for everyone, not only newcomers, by highlighting strengths of individuals, and eliminating barriers to accessing services and to civic participation. At the community level we can still highlight the importance of interconnectedness of diverse organisational bodies but almost all of our respondents pointed out the increasing complexity and fragmentation within the whole networks of initiatives and larger organisational bodies. Those initiatives that are able to find links within these complex networks to reach funding or political approval are also those who are more successfully implementing their primary goals. This shows signs of increasing 'self-responsibilisation' at the community level. However, embeddedness of diversity discourses is still a very strong characteristic confirming the wider understanding of diversity at the higher scales of governance at the community level as well. Integration as a tool for service provision is also a repeating concept at the community level. It is, in fact, the primary target for almost all of the initiatives we investigated. The integrated approach also recognizes the interconnectedness of different needs and problems of individuals and communities and thus works towards achieving multi-dimensional goals.

For linking the results to a wider theoretical context we created two main groups of concepts reflecting to the initiatives' contribution to social cohesion, social mobility, and economic performance; and their contribution to encounter, recognition, and redistribution (Fincher and Iverson, 2008) which are interconnected in many ways.

- In terms of contribution to social cohesion, social mobility, and economic performance our analysis revealed that while some initiatives proved to have a specific impact area, most programmes illustrated impact upon all three notions of social cohesion, social mobility and economic performance. One of the primary ways in which programmes impact social cohesion is by focusing upon community engagement and strengthening social ties. Almost all of the reviewed initiatives provide safe spaces wherein community members can gather and establish connections. Moreover, common contributing factors towards addressing social mobility in programmes have been providing access to (and assistance in) education as well as offering workshops and skill trainings on topics such as career-building, life skills, self-sufficiency or managing of finances. Creating full-time or part-time local employment opportunities; focusing on hiring from the community; and providing referrals to employment agencies have been some of the common strategies adopted to enhance economic performance.

- In terms of contribution to encounter, recognition, and redistribution, these three interconnected notions are also addressed simultaneously, and not in silos within the integrated approach. By creating and fostering inclusive spaces, initiatives create opportunities for encounters and collaborations among community members who are diverse not only in terms of ethnicity but also in terms of economic status or cultural background (for example by creating encounters between the single-family housing residents with high-rise residents). Further recognition is promoted via

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[7] LGBTQA refers to lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, trans-gender, queer and asexual.

bottom-up identification of needs and paying attention to needs and interests at the individual level. Redistribution is similarly addressed via focusing on fighting systemic barriers facing individuals in the community while providing access to trainings and employment through different initiatives. These findings also are in line with the dominant discourses indicated at macro scales of governance. For instance, in the 'policies for recognition' category 'equal access for everyone' was a highlighted discourse and it was one of the recurring concepts as well. At the macro scale the 'policies for encounter' group primarily aimed at creating 'accessible and flexible community spaces for everyone'; and in fact the importance of the inclusive space is indicated as one of the main success factors at the community level as well. Lastly, in the final category namely 'policies for redistribution of resources' multiple focus points were observed at the macro scale, all of which aim towards increasing 'opportunities for everyone', which, again is one of the main targets of the initiatives at the community level.

# 5   References

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# 6    Appendix

## List of the interviewed persons

- Farm Manager, "Black Creek Farm"
- Executive Director, "The Learning Enrichment Foundation"
- Research Steward, "The Learning Enrichment Foundation"
- Coordinator, "Youth Enterprise Network"
- Programme Manager, "Women Moving Forward"
- Project Manager I, "Black Creek SNAP"
- Project Manager II, "Black Creek SNAP"
- Community Development Worker, "Jane-Finch Action Against Poverty"
- Project Manager, "Aging At Home"
- Project Manager, "COSTI Specialized Housing Programme"
- Project Manager, "The Spot"
- Project Manager, "PEACH"

## List of the participants of the round-table talk

*Date:  April 4, 2014*

*Place:  Social Planning Toronto, Toronto*

- David Hulchanski, Professor, "University of Toronto"
- Israt Ahmed, Social Planner, "Social Planning Toronto"
- Mohammad Araf, Intern, "Social Planning Toronto"
- John Stapleton, Policy Consultant, "Open Policy Ontario"
- Diane Dyson, Director, "WoodGreen Community Services"
- Victoria Grendys, Community Development Manager, "Jane and Finch Community and Family Centre"
- Michael Kerr, Coordinator, "The Colour of Poverty"
- Robyn Hoogendam, Research Steward, "The Learning Enrichment Foundation"