



FUND DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE REPORT ON 2005-2010 NEW FUNDING PRIORITIES SEPTEMBER 19, 2005

1. Background

United Way of York Region (“UWYR”) conducted a community needs assessment study in 2004 and identified new funding priorities which are reflective of the dominant community needs. The following two reports were adopted by the Board of Directors of UWYR in June 2004:

1. Understanding Our Environment – Phase 1 Report
2. Needs Assessment and Funding Priorities Review – Final Report

The following five (5) new funding priorities, not in order of preference, have been identified in the Final Report:

- Support those who have **mental health** challenges;
- Addressing issues of **affordable housing and homelessness**;
- Providing services geared towards **newcomers/immigrants**;
- Promoting **literacy**; and
- Preventing **domestic violence and abuse**.

Although the above priorities provide focus for distributing UWYR’s funding in the coming five years, they are also very broad and have to be drilled down to specific program outcomes for UWYR’s consideration of applications for the Community Fund.

In May 2005, the Fund Distribution Committee (“FDC”) of UWYR was asked by the Board to research and propose program outcomes for the new funding priorities. The report will be considered by the Board of Directors in September 2005.

2. Methodology

The FDC commissioned the Kappel Ramji Consulting Group (“the Consultants”) to collect advice from UWYR member agencies and other funders about the general purposes and program outcomes that they believe UWYR should/should not be funding in the five priority areas.

Two member agency consultation meetings were held on June 20, 2005 with 31 representatives from 25 member and funded agencies attended. Ten agencies also sent in self-administered questionnaires before the meetings. Six funders from Federal, Provincial and Municipal governments and a foundation, were interviewed individually by the Consultants in June 2005. The Consultants submitted their report to the FDC on July 15, 2005. The FDC considered the report at its July 26, 2005 meeting. The summary of the report is attached (Appendix 1). In general, the report of the Consultants was well received by the FDC. The findings are very useful to the FDC in identifying general purposes of UWYR funding and expected outcomes of UWYR funded programs.

The FDC also instructed UWYR staff to conduct a research of United Ways in Canada on their funding priorities which are similar to UWYR's new priorities. The research objects have reputation of adopting best practices in their allocation activities. Janice Chu, Community Resources Manager, was the principal researcher. The following United Ways were studied by Janice in June 2005:

- Greater Toronto;
- Peel;
- Oakville;
- Oshawa-Whitby-Clarington;
- Ottawa;
- Lower Mainland, B.C.; and
- Greater Montreal.

Janice's report was also considered by the FDC on July 26, 2005. The summary of the report is attached (Appendix 2).

3. General Purposes and Expected Outcomes of Funded Programs

The FDC has carefully examined the results of the consultations and research. Based upon the results as well as the revised UWYR's vision and mission statements, the FDC identified the following "general purposes" and "expected outcomes of funded programs" for UWYR Community Fund in respect to the five new funding priority areas.

Priority: Support Those Who Have Mental Health Challenges

- General Purposes
 1. UWYR Community Fund supports programs that promote the psycho-social well being of individuals with mental health challenges and their caregivers, and programs that prevent more serious mental health issues jeopardizing or preventing community living. Funded programs should also focus on supporting individuals with mental health issues to live in their communities for as long as possible.
 2. UWYR Community Fund does not support any mental health programs supported through OHIP.

- Expected Outcomes of Funded Programs
 1. Improved awareness of services and resources for people and families facing challenges that threaten their emotional and/or mental health well being.
 2. Improved and broadened access to support services by addressing and removing the following barriers: transportation, visibility, availability, location and cultural/linguistic competence.
 3. Increased engagement in age-appropriate activities and life tasks.
 4. Improved self-esteem, life and coping skills.
 5. Reduced inappropriate use of institutions by providing community support.
 6. Improved support to caregivers.

Priority: Addressing Issues of Affordable Housing and Homelessness

- General Purposes
 1. UWYR Community Fund supports programs that alleviate homelessness in York Region. Service users of funded programs who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless will be able to reduce their needs for emergency crisis services. Member agencies will also be supported to create and maintain infrastructure and/or partnership that will lead to more supply of affordable housing in York Region.
 2. UWYR Community Fund does not support funding of capital building projects and financial assistance to individuals and families.
- Expected Outcomes of Funded Programs
 1. Improved skills and knowledge to improve financial means of individuals and families experiencing poverty.
 2. At risk individuals and families gain more support to maintain stable housing.
 3. Improved access to services and resources that provide housing, shelter and other support services.
 4. Increased support to individuals and families waiting for subsidized/affordable housing.
 5. Decreased dependency of shelter users/group home residents by supporting them to find and retain long-term housing.
 6. Increased willingness of landlords to rent to individuals who were previously homeless.
 7. Improved public awareness of the problems of homelessness in York Region and their support to programs and services that address the problems.
 8. Increased awareness of need to revitalize government housing building programs including affordable housing of all varieties for individuals and families with different needs.

Priority: Providing Services Geared Towards Newcomers/Immigrants

- General Purposes
 1. UWYR Community Fund funds programs that support the integration of newcomers, including immigrants and refugees, with communities that they settle in.
- Expected Outcomes of Funded Programs
 1. Improved geographic access and more services/supports that address settlement needs including counselling services, ESL/ELD and employment programs.
 2. Increased access to linguistically and culturally sensitive services all across the Region.
 3. Increased interaction with the mainstream community and participation in employment, civic engagement and volunteerism.
 4. Increased financial independence.
 5. Improved achievement in education.
 6. Increased ability of family members to develop harmonious relationships and address conflicts.
 7. Increased school readiness for children aged 0-6 yrs.
 8. Increased community awareness of challenges faced and contributions made by immigrants.
 9. Improved inclusion and integration in the community.

Priority: Promoting Literacy

- General Purposes
 1. UWYR Community Fund supports programs that address illiteracy as a barrier that limits individuals' abilities to participate in employment, activities of daily living and education activities outside formal education system.
- Expected Outcomes of Funded Programs
 1. Individuals' literacy level to be capable to read and write English at grade 9-10 level.
 2. Increased literacy to accomplish economic self-sufficiency of individuals with literacy problems, people living in poverty and/or experiencing homelessness.
 3. Increased involvement by parents in child's education.
 4. Enhanced self-esteem and life skills of children & adults in school.
 5. Increased access to services/supports for children and adults to continue with their education.
 6. Improved coordination and collaboration with other service providers of literacy services - research and planning and service delivery.

7. Increased community awareness of challenges faced by individuals with literacy challenges.

Priority: Preventing Domestic Violence and Abuse

- General Purposes
 1. UWYR Community Fund supports programs that prevent domestic violence and abuse, remove victims from abusive to safe environment and support victims to cope with and recover from abusive experiences.
- Expected Outcomes of Funded Programs
 1. Increased community awareness and education related to abuse issues.
 2. Improved awareness and acknowledgement of the existence of domestic abuse and violence in communities, including communities of equity seeking individuals, e.g. women, ethnocultural communities, people with disability, people with different sexual orientations and people of different age groups.
 3. Victims have increased ability to cope with the effects of abuse and stronger self-esteem and control over their lives and futures.
 4. Improved access to services and resources for victims of abuse.
 5. Improved access to treatment and rehabilitation services for abusers or potential abusers.
 6. Increased support/resources for victims to pursue legal action.
 7. Improved partnerships between agencies and funders.
 8. Improved ability for family members to engage in positive and non-abusive behaviour.

4. Recommendations

The above general purposes and expected outcomes of funded Programs of UWYR Community Fund will provide very specific instructions to member agencies to propose programs that would accomplish any of the identified outcomes. However, the FDC also believes that the expected program outcomes are broad enough that allow agencies to design a variety of service delivery strategies that accomplish the expected outcomes. Since all funded programs in the coming five years are related to at least one of the identified program outcomes, UWYR shall be able to articulate the overall impacts of its funded programs in each priority areas.

The FDC recommends that the Board of Directors of UWYR approve the general purposes and expected outcomes of UWYR funded programs for the five priority areas for consideration of applications to the Community Fund from 2005 to 2010.

UNITED WAY OF YORK REGION
DEVELOPMENT OF NEW FUNDING CRITERIA
CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Prepared by:
Kappel Ramji Consulting Group

July 15, 2005

1. Background

As the culmination of a broad based community needs assessment study in 2004, the United Way of York Region (UWYR) recently announced the following new funding priorities:

- Support those who have **mental health** challenges;
- Addressing issues of **affordable housing and homelessness**;
- Providing services geared towards **newcomers/immigrants**;
- Promoting **literacy**; and
- Preventing **domestic violence and abuse**.

The Fund Distribution Committee (FDC) of the UWYR is now at the stage of developing corresponding funding criteria for each of the five (5) priorities to guide its Fall, 2005, fund distribution process. To facilitate this, the committee wished to get advice from its member agencies and other funders in York region about the types of services and program outcomes they believe UWYR should/should not be funding in the five (5) priority areas. This input along with information about how other United Ways are implementing similar priorities will form the basis for FDC's decisions about how it will implement the new strategic priorities of UWYR in its upcoming funding process.

This report summarises the information gathered from the overall consultation process including:

- A member agency consultation process held on June 20, 2005 with 31 representatives from 25 member/funded agencies
- Input from 6 funders gathered in individual telephone interviews
- Feedback from 10 members to a self-administered questionnaire.

Five (5) UWYR FDC members and 1 UWYR staff attended the consultation meetings as observers. Appendix 1 contains the list of participants and the interview and consultation guides.

2. Outcomes and Funding Role for United Way in Priority Areas

Both member agencies and funders welcomed the opportunity to give input to this important process. Given the scarcity of resources generally, they acknowledge the need for accountability and specific funding priorities. They agree that the priorities that UWYR has identified are relevant and appropriate for York Region at this time in its development. They note that many of the priorities are about hidden issues that are generally under funded. This means that there is the added benefit that, by having these as priorities, there will be increased education and awareness about these important community issues.

For each of the (five) 5 priority areas much varied and valuable input was provided by agency representatives and funders. Appendix 2 has their detailed feedback. This process gathered input of three (3) kinds- community needs, impacts or outcomes that UWYR funding could have in meeting those needs and program initiatives that could be implemented to respond to the needs. Because this consultation process was undertaken to assist FDC with establishing funding criteria, in this report the outcomes have central focus. The suggestions for specific programs have been deliberately de-emphasised. This is for two reasons:

1. There was inconsistent feedback about program initiatives. In some priority areas, stakeholders gave broad advice such as to fund prevention initiatives or to create a continuum of

services/supports. In other cases there were very specific suggestions such as homework clubs or a multilingual, multi-service settlement centre in a highly populated area. It was also not the emphasis of the process –and stakeholders seemed to understand this. That means that ideas about all the possible programmatic responses or initiatives that could meet the outcomes were not generated/listed.

2. United Ways typically do not identify the types of specific responses to community needs that they expect to fund. Rather the job of a United Way is to establish the priorities and outcomes they wish their funding to achieve and let the service delivery experts bring forward the most innovative, creative and responsive initiatives they can for potential funding. The job of the member is to demonstrate specifically how their proposed program initiative both meets the UW's priority and also addresses community needs. This includes spelling out more detailed and specific **sub-outcomes** that their initiative will achieve since their program can only be part of the solution.

Following are highlights of stakeholder input and some general themes that the FDC may want to consider as it narrows down the criteria it wishes to implement within the broader funding process.

2.1. Mental Health

A central message that was articulated by UWYR member agencies was that this priority needs to be carefully defined. They recommend that the medical/disease implication that the current wording can imply should be de-emphasised because people with mental illnesses for example, can access services that are government funded, not UWYR funded. They recommend that the primary emphasis here should be grounded in a psycho-social wellness framework and be on preventing more serious mental health issues for individuals and families throughout the life span continuum. This would mean such things as reducing social isolation, improving individual families' ability to cope with stress etc.

Key outcomes that stakeholders recommend FDC should consider targeting for their funding are:

- Improved awareness of services and resources for people facing challenges that threaten their emotional and/or mental health and wellbeing
- Improved/broadened access to support services: transportation; visibility; availability/location; cultural linguistic competence
- Increased engagement in age-appropriate activities and life tasks
- Improved self-esteem, life and coping skills
- Reduced premature use of institutions
- Improved support to caregivers

Stakeholders emphasise UWYR should fund programs that create a continuum of support for individuals and families, better linkages between support service providers, and build capacity both at the individual/family level but also at the community level.

2.2. Housing and Homelessness

Everyone acknowledges that the UWYR should not be in the business of building affordable housing. Stakeholders, however, are able to identify many important outcomes that UWYR funding could realise that would contribute to alleviating homelessness in the Region:

- Improved financial means for those families experiencing poverty
- Reduced eviction rates through strategies that prevent loss of housing and resulting damage/ trauma (especially to kids)
- Improved access to services and resources that provide housing and shelter

- Increased support to individuals and families waiting for subsidized housing
- Decreased dependency of shelter users/group home residents by supporting them to find and retain long-term housing
- Improved access to shelters – physical (i.e. barrier free) and transit
- Increased willingness of landlords to rent to tenants who were previously homeless
- Increased advocacy/ awareness of need to revitalize government housing building programs including affordable housing of all varieties: single rooms only (sro's), family residences, etc
- Reduced “nimby” (“not in my backyard”) attitudes in York Region
- Increased services offered in York Region that are accessible to all – including the poor, those in shelters and group homes

Specific support services that assist individuals and families to find, maintain and remain safely and securely housed are important to fund (drop-ins, outreach and support for those at risk of losing housing, support for individuals with complex needs and homelessness etc.) Stakeholders also emphasise that UWYR should take a role advocating for housing strategies in the Region, support the establishment of an agency that works exclusively on issues to do with affordable housing in the Region, and participate in public education efforts to reduce “nimby-ism”.

2.3. Newcomers and Immigrants

Several broad issues were raised in the discussion of this priority. It was noted that refugees are an important and growing group of newcomers in the Region that may need to be specifically identified since due to their status they are not eligible for many of the government funded health care and settlement programs, making them particularly vulnerable. There was some discussion about the inclusion of ESL in the Literacy priority and a general consensus that Second language acquisition is more a settlement issue than one of literacy so should more rightly be situated within this priority.

The key outcomes that stakeholders recommend UWYR funding be targeting include:

- Improved geographic access and more services /supports that address settlement needs including counselling services, ESL/ELD and employment programs
- Increased access to linguistically and culturally sensitive services all across the Region
- Increased interaction with the mainstream community
- Increased financial independence
- Increased opportunities to volunteer in local communities
- Improved achievement in education
- Increased school readiness for children aged 0-6 yrs.

Here the emphasis for the types of programs UWYR should be funding include the concept of satellite offices, a multicultural, multilingual, multi-service pilot in a densely populated neighbourhood, and strategies to increase the cultural competence and accessibility of all UWYR member agencies

2.4. Literacy

There was a good deal of discussion about this priority mostly because the word “literacy” is typically defined (by government funders) in a limited manner – *reading, writing, speaking and listening skills up to the Grade 10 level in English or a person's first language.* It does not typically refer to acquiring English as a second language, nor is it often extended to include interventions for children having difficulties in school. Rather, illiteracy is viewed as a specific barrier that limits individuals' abilities to participate in employment, activities of daily living (e.g. shopping), their children's

education etc. It was generally felt that the Board of UWYR might need to further clarify what it intends this priority to cover- its definition of literacy in the context of this funding priority.

In the context of the government definition of literacy, stakeholders suggest that there are outcomes that FDC could be targeting funding to in the region. They include:

- Increased % of individuals who read and write English at grade 9-10 level
- Increase in economic self-efficiency of individuals with literacy, people living in poverty and/or experiencing homelessness
- Increased involvement by parents in child's education
- Enhanced self-esteem and life skills of children & adults in school
- Increased access to services / supports for children and adults to continue with their education in schools
- Improved coordination and collaboration with other service providers of literacy services - Research and planning and service delivery
- Programs are offered where people can get to them

Stakeholders recommend that UWYR should fund enhancements to the existing programs so they can reach more people in the Region, family literacy programs and programs for youth 16-30 to get their GED.

2.5. Domestic Violence and Abuse

This has long been a UWYR funding priority and everyone agrees that it needs to be retained as there is much more work to be done. Specific outcomes that stakeholders recommend UWYR funding work to achieve include:

- Improved awareness and acknowledgement of the existence of domestic abuse and violence in ethnic communities and other marginalised communities e.g. deaf and blind communities, lesbians, seniors, women with disabilities
- Victims have increased self-esteem and control over their lives and futures
- Improved access to services and resources for victims of abuse
- Improved access to treatment and rehabilitation services for abusers or potential abusers
- Increased support/ resources for victims to pursue legal action
- Improved partnerships between all agencies and funders
- All domestic violence services are linguistically and culturally sensitive

The need for UWYR to play a brokering/coordinating role to ensure that there is clarity about who is doing what was emphasised by member agencies. This could include facilitating the creation of partnerships between ethnospecific and VAW services to share expertise and increase reach and relevance for the diverse communities living in the Region. Other services could include ant-bullying supports and non-residential victim supports and services.

**FUND DISTRIBUTION REVIEW WORKING GROUP
SUMMARY REPORT ON RESEARCH OF
UNITED WAYS' PROGRAM FUNDING CRITERIA
July 25, 2005**

1. Researcher

Janice Chu, Community Resources Manager

2. Purpose and Scope

As part of United Way of York Region (“UWYR”) new funding criteria development process, Janice has conducted a research on existing fund distribution priorities, criteria and process of other United Ways, including:

- Greater Toronto;
- Peel;
- Oakville;
- Oshawa-Whitby-Clarington;
- Ottawa;
- Greater Montreal; and
- Lower Mainland, B.C.

The research was conducted from May 30 to June 17, 2005.

3. Findings

- There is limited related information for the following two UWYR funding priorities:
 - # 1: Supporting people with mental health challenge.
 - # 4: Promoting Literacy.
- Most United Ways do not provide information of expected “outcomes” of services that they support. In most cases, they only provide information on general purposes of the grants.
- The following table illustrates themes of program outcomes relevant to the following 3 UWYR funding priorities identified in the research:
 - #2: Address issues of affordable housing and homelessness.
 - #3: Provide services geared towards newcomers/immigrants.
 - #5: Prevent domestic violence and abuse.

Funding Priorities	Outcomes of Funded Programs	Types of Programs not Funded
#2 – Homelessness and Affordable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased safety and stability for individuals and families in crisis. • Increased enhanced services addressing mental, emotional and physical needs of individuals and families experiencing poverty and homelessness. • At risk individuals and families gain more support to maintain stable housing. • Increased access to community services which will enable successful integration into society for homeless and formerly homeless individuals and families. • Increased networks within the community for individuals and families in poverty and/or homelessness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital funding
#3 – Services for Newcomers/Immigrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced settlement and post-settlement. • Increased ability of family members to develop harmonious relationships and address conflicts. • Increased participation in employment, civic engagement and volunteerism. • Increased awareness of challenges faced and contribution made by immigrants. • Improved inclusion and integration in the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital funding
#5 – Domestic violence and abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased community awareness and education related to abuse issues. • Improved ability of family members to engage in positive and non-abusive behaviour. • Improved parenting skills to reduce incidents of child abuse and neglect. • Increased outreach, support and education to seniors regarding issues of abuse, neglect and exploitation. • Increased effective support for victims. • Increased ability of victims to cope with the effects of abuse. • Improved ability of abusers to understand, address and change their abusive behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital funding

Summary report prepared by Simon Cheng, Community Resources Director.