

CANADIAN INDEX OF WELLBEING SURVEY REPORT



REGENT PARK NEIGHBORHOOD

COMMUNITY RESOURCE AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT



By

Claire Yue Wang

IMMIGRANT WOMEN INTEGRATION PROGRAM

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT



April 2012

Table of Contents

1. ACKNOWLEDGMENT	5
2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	6
3. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE	7
4. COMMUNITY PROFILE	8
4.1. History of Regent Park	8
4.2. Revitalization of Regent Park.....	9
4.3. Public Service	10
4.4. Social, Economic, and Political Issues	13
4.5. Community Groups and Service Agencies	13
5. CANADIAN INDEX OF WELLBEING	15
6. NEIGHBORHOOD OF WELLBEING SURVEY.....	16
6.1. Objectives	16
6.2. Methodology	16
7. SURVEY FINDINGS:	17
7.1. Demographic Information of Respondents	17
7.1.1. Age Range	17
7.1.2. Education Level.....	17
7.1.3. Current Situation	17
7.2. Self-Identify:	18
7.2.1. Gender.....	18
7.2.2. Race/Ethnicity	18
7.3. Employment.....	19
7.3.1. Schooling Required for Job.....	19
7.3.2. Number of Jobs.....	19
7.3.3. Looking for Work.....	19
7.3.4. Meaningful Work	19

7.4. Living Standards	20
7.4.1. Changes in Living Standards.....	20
7.4.2. Satisfaction with Standard of Living.....	20
7.4.3. Day-to –Day Involvement	20
7.4.4. Leisure Time	21
7.5. Programs and Activities needs	21
7.5.1. Leadership	21
7.5.2. Skills building.....	21
7.5.3. Digital Storytelling	21
7.5.4. Tutoring	22
7.5.5. Recreation	22
7.5.6. Mentoring	22
7.5.7. Job development	22
7.5.8. Social activities.....	22
7.5.9. Desire for Training	23
7.5.10. Distance Education.....	23
7.6. Community Vitality	23
7.6.1. Belonging to Community	23
7.6.2. Participation in Community Activities	23
7.6.3. Volunteering	23
7.6.4. Willing to Help Neighbors	24
7.6.5. Experience of Discrimination.....	24
7.6.6. Walking Alone After Dark.....	24
7.6.7. Area Changing	24
8. ANALYSIS BASED ON SURVEY FINDINGS	25
9. CONCLUSION	28
10. RECOMMENDATIONS.....	28
11. BIBLIOGRAPHY/REFERENCE LIST.....	29
12. ABBREVIATIONS LIST.....	29

1. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Toronto Centre for Community Learning & Development (CC&D) , for taking me through this wonderful learning process. Thanks to the Executive Director of CCL&D, Alfred Jean-Baptiste and Manager of Operations and Development, Alison Chan whose encouragement, and support, enabled me to develop an understanding for my community and people from different background.

I'm heartily thankful to Caroline Outten, Manager of Training Resource Development, for her valuable guidance feedback and for encouraging me to finish the program. My sincerest thanks to Rihab Abbas, Community Engagement Worker, her substantial support helped me from the first day of this learning process to the final level. I owe my deepest appreciation to Sureya Ibrahim , Community Engagement Worker of Daniels Centre of Learning Regent Park for connecting me with the residents in community.

Thanks to all the teachers in the program for their knowledge, skills and encouragement and all the staff at CCL&D for their support and positive attitude. Thanks for Sunny Yang Mu, student of University of Toronto, and placement student from Ryerson University, Behiwot Degefu who help us writing the reports.

I also commend in particular the residents of Regent Park, for participating in the survey and sharing their knowledge and experiences around the community. We hope that the findings of this survey would help us to build a stronger Regent Park community.

Finally, and not least, I would like to thank my classmates who contributed together to develop and conduct the community well-being survey, and offer my regards to all of those who supported me in any respect during the completion of the project.



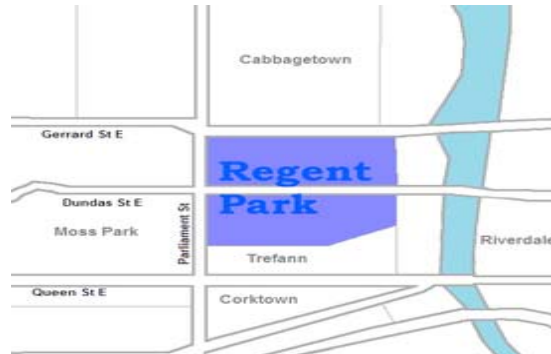
2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this survey was to obtain a better understanding of community needs of Regent Park neighborhoods and to measure the index of wellbeing. The survey result is summarized as following.

The survey covered the immigrants, both citizens and permanent residents, from various parts of the world with the concentration from South Asia, South East Asia, Africa and East Europe.

- *66% respondents are in 26-45 age groups. 21% respondents are seniors whose ages are 65 or over.*
- *Chinese are 28% of the respondents and Bengali are 31%*
- *28% respondents have been in Canada more than 10 years, and 12% respondents are new immigrants that lived in Canada less than 2 years.*
- *Education level of the respondents is high. However they are not getting suitable employments matching their qualification and expertise. This is one of the main causes of unhappiness and depression.*
- *27% respondents are employed full time and 24% part-time. Most employed respondents feel that their jobs required lower level of education and experience compared to what they have. 36% are looking for work and feel that it is not easy to find a job, especially in line with their expertise.*
- *68% participate in community activities.*
- *Respondents' level of satisfaction with the community is good and the sense of belonging is 68%.*
- *The strength of the respondents indicates how they have high support system (support from family and friends is very high).*
- *Only 34% of respondents were doing volunteer with civic, community, or nonprofit groups.*
- *54% respondents spend their leisure time with their family, 21% watched TV.*
- *65% respondents highly needed job development and employment programs.*
- *Half of local respondents highly needed social activities and opportunities to interact.*
- *During the survey it has also been noticed that neighborhood people felt the area they live in was getting better.*

3. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE



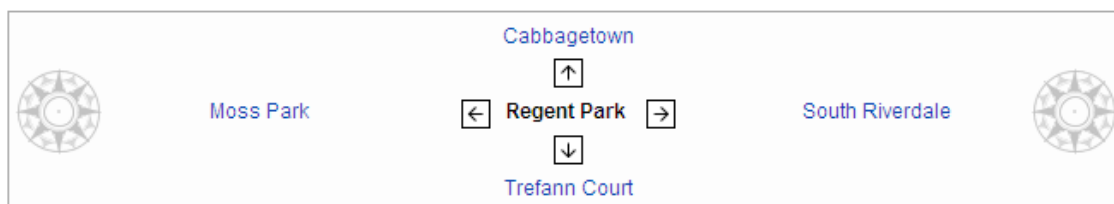
Regent Park is a neighborhood located in Old Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Regent Park is Canada's oldest and largest social housing project; built in the late 1940s. Formerly the centre of the Cabbagetown neighborhood, it is bounded by Gerrard Street East to the north, River Street to the east, Shuter Street to the south, and Parliament Street to the west. 41% of the populations living in Regent Park are children 18 years and younger (compared to a Toronto-wide average of 30%).



The average income for Regent Park residents is approximately half the average for other Torontonians. A majority of families in Regent Park are classified as low-income, with 68% of the population living below Statistics Canada's Low-Income Cut-Off Rate in one of its census tracts, and 76% in the other (compared to a Toronto-wide average of just over 20%).

Regent Park's residential dwellings are entirely social housing, and cover all of the 69 acres (280,000 m²) which comprise the community. The Toronto neighborhood then known as Cabbagetown was razed in the process of creating Regent Park; the nickname Cabbagetown is now applied to the historical, upscale area north of the housing project.

Neighborhood in Toronto



4. COMMUNITY PROFILE

4.1. History of Regent Park



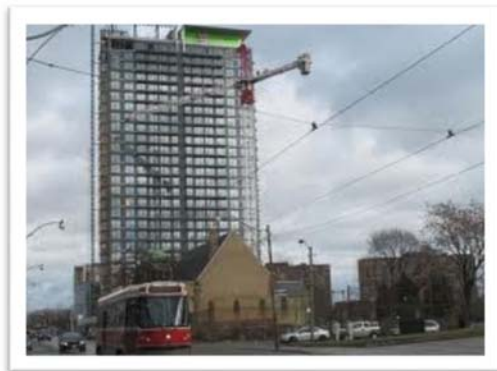
Regent Park is Canada's first and the largest social housing project or a social engineering project. Thus, it has attracted the attention of various social science scholars and the media. Scholar and activist Dr. Sean Purdy has written his thesis based on his research about Regent Park. His paper "Ripped Off" By the System: Housing Policy, Poverty, and Territorial Stigmatization in Regent Park Housing Project, 1951–1991 provides valuable insights about Regent Park.

The recent Regent Park Revitalization Plan is also viewed and undertaken as a pilot Canadian social re engineering effort. The federal and local governments view the plan as means to establish best practices and bench marks. Although such enthusiasm adds to the momentum of the revitalization plan, the Regent Park history warrants caution as not to repeat or reproduce the shortcomings of its past.

In addition, Norman Rowen, Program Manager of the Pathways to Education Program, and researcher Kevin Gosine has published research that documents the success of Pathways in improving academic achievement and reducing the high school dropout rate among Regent Park youth.



4.2. Revitalization of Regent Park



Toronto City Council approved the revitalization of Regent Park in July 2003 and directed that the Social Development, Finance and Administration Division work with community stakeholders and Toronto Community Housing (TCH) on a Social Development Plan. This direction recognizes that revitalization is about more than planning for the physical environment, it is about planning for people as Regent Park undergoes significant demographic and social changes.

The content of the Social Development Plan includes 75 recommendations in three broad areas - social cohesion, community services and facilities and employment as well as an implementation strategy for moving forward.





Toronto City Council approved the Regent Park Social Development Plan in October 2007. This is the first locality or "place-based" Social Development Plan for the City of Toronto and provides a framework for building a cohesive and inclusive community.

The full document and appendices (including the Employment Plan) are available below. The Regent Park Social Development Plan was also approved by the Toronto Community Housing Board of Directors in September 2007 and is posted on website at www.regentpark.ca.

4.3. Public Services

Transportation



Regent Park is served by the Toronto Transit Commission's streetcar routes: 501, 505, 506, and the route: "65 Parliament" bus. The streetcars provide quick access to the Yonge subway line.

The Don Valley Parkway is a major highway that runs on east of the Regent Park neighborhood. The DVP is accessible from on ramps at both Queen Street and Dundas Street and an exit ramp from River Street.

Libraries



Regent Park is served by two close public libraries. The Toronto Public Library – Parliament branch is located at Gerrard and Parliament junction, and houses a special local history archive about Regent Park. The other nearby branch is the Riverdale branch, and it is located at Gerrard and Broadview junction.

Emergency services



The Toronto Fire Services station 325 is Regent Park's fire station, and located at 475 Dundas Street.^[4] The Toronto Police Service – 51 Division is responsible for the community. It was once located in the community at 30 Regent Street, and it has now moved to nearby 51 Parliament Street. Paramedics serving the Regent Park area are deployed from Toronto Emergency Medical Services Station 40. Station 40 is an Advanced Life Support and Basic Life Support station staffed with Level II (Advanced Care Paramedic) and Level I (Primary Care Paramedic) crews located at 58 Richmond St E.

Housing



The majority of the buildings in Regent Park are owned and operated by Toronto Community Housing the public low income housing administrator in Toronto. Regent Park is the "Community Housing Unit 27" managed by TCHC, and its manager is Ade Davies.

Most units are low rise apartment units bounded by Gerrard Street, Parliament Street, Dundas Street and River Street. The units are three storey brick buildings with central balconies.

On the south side of Dundas Street the housing consists of 5 high rise apartment towers with two storey townhomes on the east and west sides.

Child care



Regent Park has a very young population. The Regent Park Child Care Centre cares for infants and toddlers.

Education



There are two schools (public schools with the Toronto District School Board) located within the neighborhood:

- *Nelson Mandela Park Public School on Shutter Street - first opened 1853 as Park Public School (current building built 1914-1917) and renamed in 2001 when Park Public School and Park Senior Public School merged; school serves Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8.*
- *Regent Park/Duke of York Junior Public School on Regent Street - opened 1958 as Regent Park PS and merged with Duke of York PS (located at 14 Pembroke Street and now ecole publique Gabrielle Roy of the Conseil scolaire Viamonde) during the period of 1977-1980.*

4.4. Social, Economic, and Political Issues



Regent Park is characterized by a high rate of poverty and unemployment, and is home to an immigrant and marginalized population. It experiences a higher rate of violence, crime, drug abuse, and social ills compared to many other Toronto communities. Police and residents relations

As late as 2001 the relation between some residents and police was confrontational. Police face tremendous challenges in providing protection and security to the community.

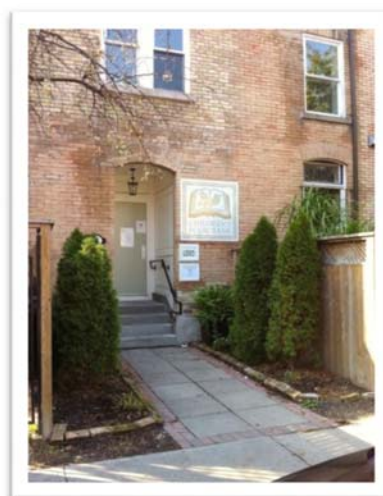


4.5. Community Groups and Service Agencies

Various community groups have been highly active in promoting a positive sense of community and community representation, and in pursuing a higher quality of life. Regent Park Neighbourhood Initiative (RPNI) is one such organization, which mission is "to provide leadership in building and sustaining a healthy and vibrant community." Another such organization is Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre, which "uses media technology as a tool to employ young people, enhance resiliency, bridge information gaps, increase civic engagement, promote health and effect positive change." Pathways to Education is a program of the Regent Park Community Health Centre that promotes "individual health and the health of the community by addressing the two principal social determinants of health: education and income." Moreover, there are various cultural associations such as Regent Park Tamil Cultural Association, which aim to promote intra and inter cultural development and exchange, and to foster a healthier community.

List of Regent Park community groups :

- *ArtHeart Community Art Centre*
- *Centre Communautaire Africains Francophones*
- *Parents For Better Beginnings*
- *Regent Park Community Health Centre*
- *Regent Park Community Centre*
- *Regent Park Bangladesh Community Association*
- *Regent Park Khaddim Committee*
- *Regent Park Women and Families*
- *Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre*
- *Regent Park Film Festival*
- *Regent Park Youth Council*
- *Regent Park African Women's Group*
- *The Salvation Army Corps 614*
- *South East Asian Services*
- *Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre*
- *The Umar Bin Khattab Mosque*
- *W.A.T.C.H (Words, Action, Thought, Character and Heart) – U of T Community Service Club working to transform RP*
- *Toronto Christian Resource Center*
- *Yonge Street Mission*
- *Dixon Hall*
- *South East Asian Service Center*
- *One Bengali Nation*





5. CANADIAN INDEX OF WELLBEING

There are many definitions of Wellbeing. The CIW has adopted the following as its working definition:

The presence of the highest possible quality of life in its full breadth of expression focused on but not necessarily exclusive to: good living standards, robust health, a sustainable environment, vital communities, an educated populace, balanced time use, high levels of democratic participation, and access to and participation in leisure and culture.



- Community Vitality
- Democratic Engagement
- Education
- Environment
- Healthy Populations
- Leisure & Culture
- Living Standards
- Time Use

6. NEIGHBORHOOD WELLBEING SURVEY

6.1. Objectives

Neighborhood survey was based on the domains of the Canadian index of wellbeing (CIW) Unlike Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the CIW created a picture of not just how our economy is doing, but more importantly, how people and community is doing.

Through this Community Needs Assessment 2012 Survey, we wanted to:

- ☐ *-measure the index of wellbeing at community level*
- ☐ *-know how we feel about our neighborhood*
- ☐ *-find out how community services and life conditions impact the residents' perception of wellbeing*
- ☐ *-provide information and guidance to government and non-government service organizations to develop appropriate programs in order to promote community wellbeing.*

6.2. Methodology

Approaches to Indicator and Index Development

- *Top-Down (Theoretical)*
- *Bottom-Up (Empirical)*
- *Bi-Directional (Pragmatic)*

Information regarding the survey was posted on <http://capacity-builders.org/ciw/iwip2011-12.asp>.

The formal survey assessment process with each neighborhood began when CCL&D's survey Team:

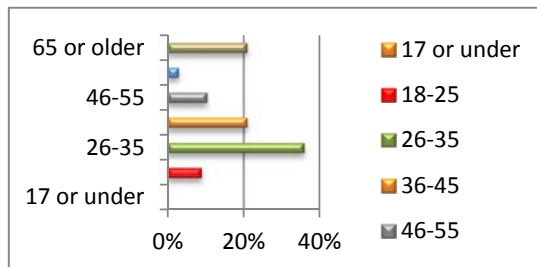
- *Prepare materials for their review*
- *Prepare questionnaires*
- *Prepare leaflet with online information*
- *CCL&D designed and administered an online survey. The online survey consisted of 42 questions*

7. SURVEY FINDINGS

7.1. Demographic Information of Respondents

7.1.1. Age range

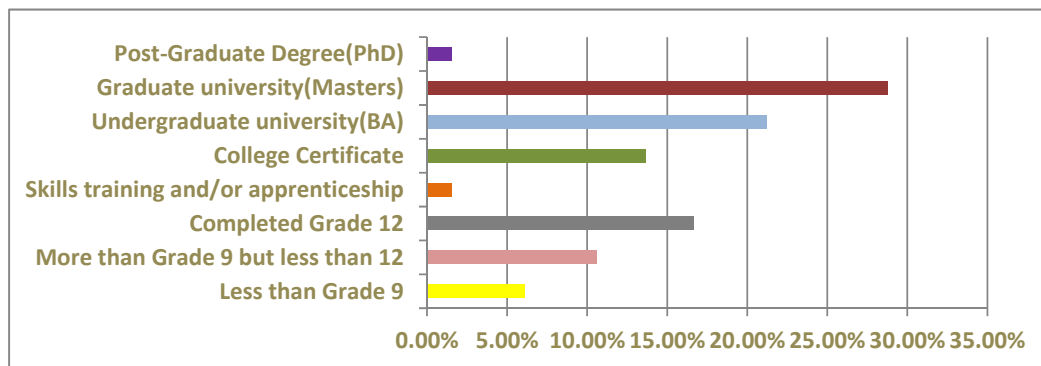
The table shows the age group of the respondents in Regent Park 21% of respondents' were from 36-45 and 65 or over age groups, while 36% were from 26-35 age groups.



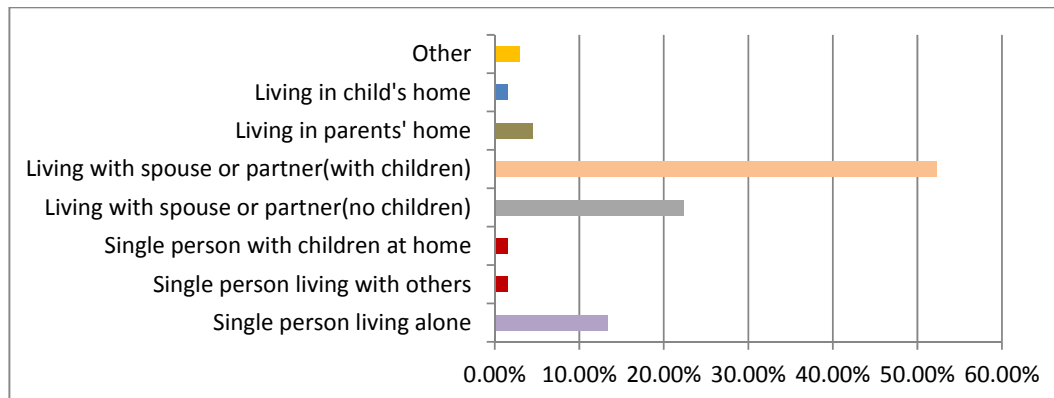
7.1.2. Education Level

The bar shows there are almost 30% respondents have master's degree.

Highest Level of School



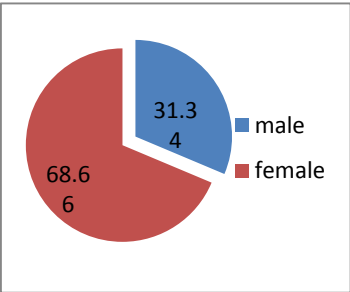
7.1.3. Current Situation



7.2. Self-Identify

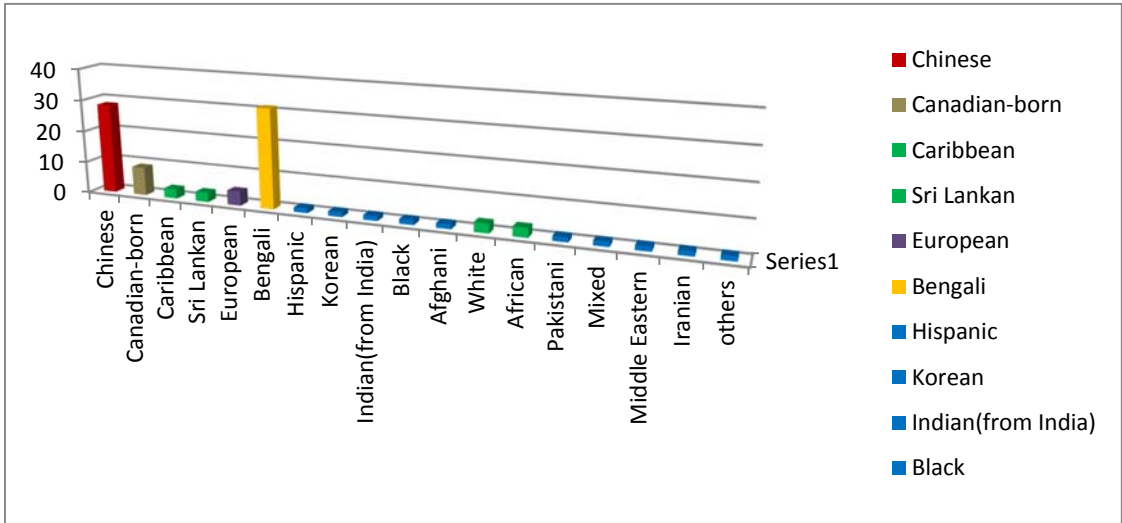
7.2.1. Gender

The chart below shows the majority of the registers who joined this survey are women.



7.2.2. Race/Ethnicity

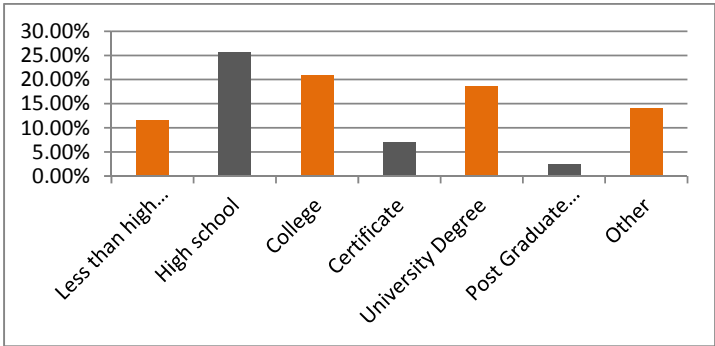
The table below shows most of respondents are Bengali and Chinese.



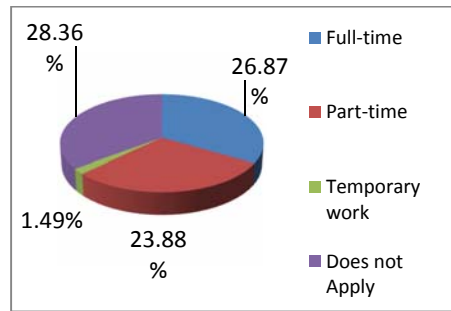
7.3. Employment

7.3.1. School Required for Job

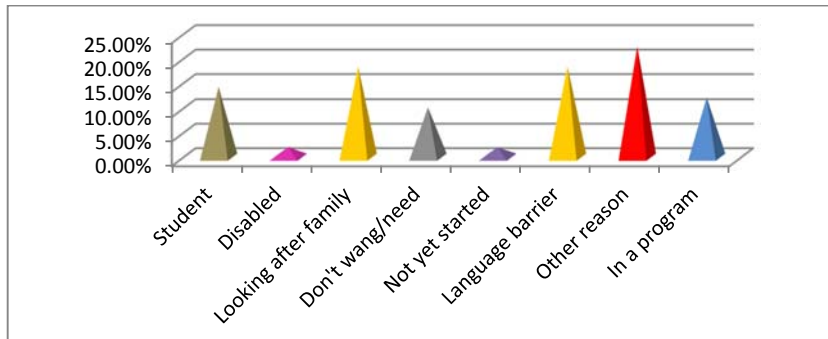
The table shows people were doing low education required jobs.



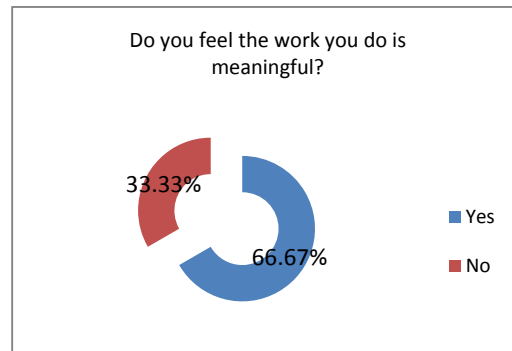
7.3.2. Number of Jobs



7.3.3. Looking for Work



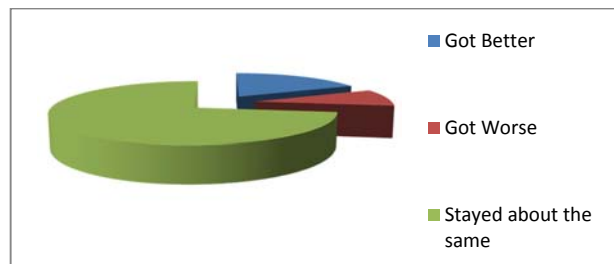
7.3.4. Meaningful Work



7.4. Living Standard

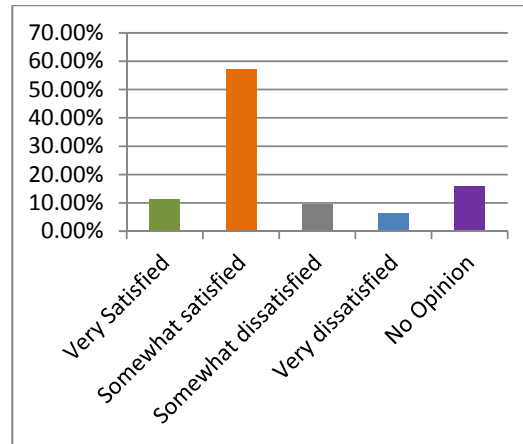
7.4.1. Changes in Living Standard

Most of the respondents thought their household's standard of living stayed about the same over the last 12 months.

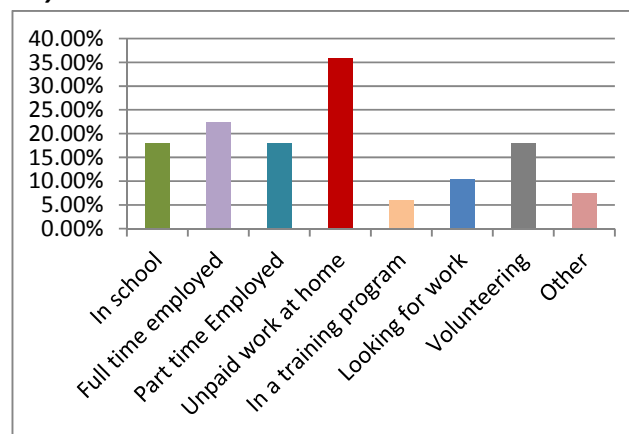


7.4.2. Satisfaction with Standard of Living

The tables below shows more than half of respondents are somewhat satisfied with currently life.

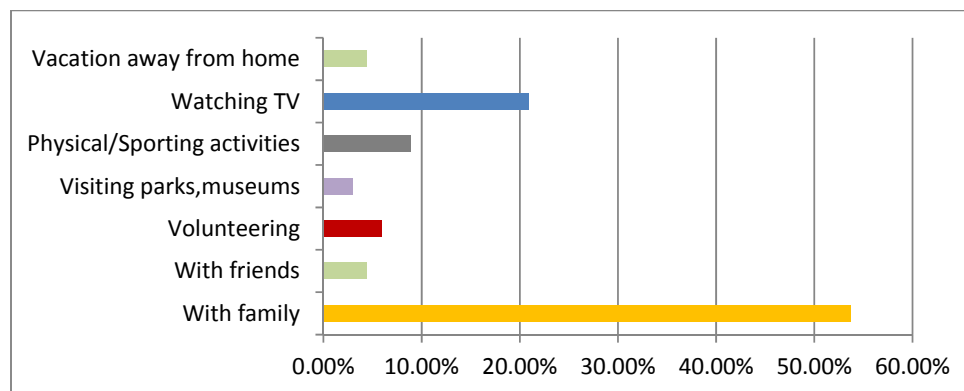


7.4.3. Day-to-Day Involvement



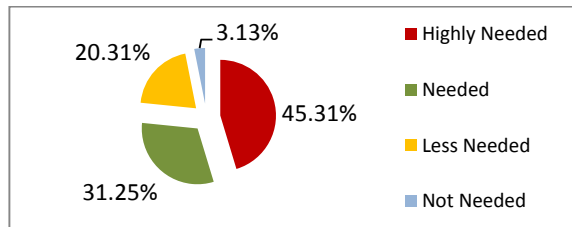
Most of respondents were spending time at home.

7.4.4. Leisure Time

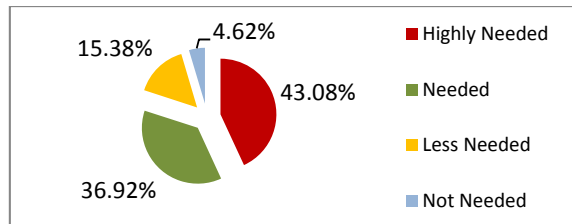


7.5. Programs and Activities Needs

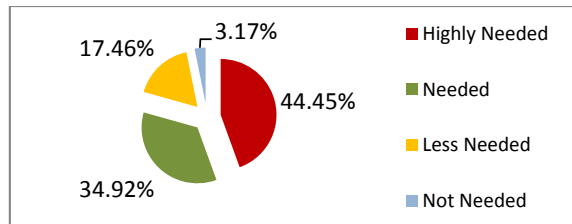
7.5.1. Leadership Program



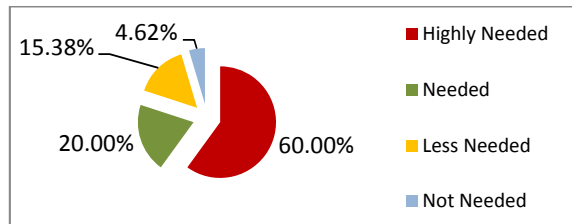
7.5.2. Skills building Program



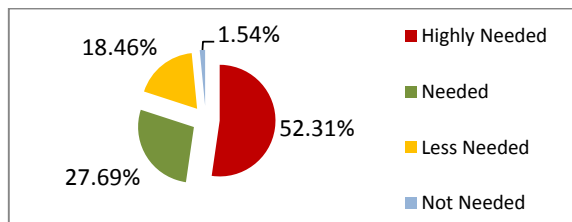
7.5.3. Digital Storytelling



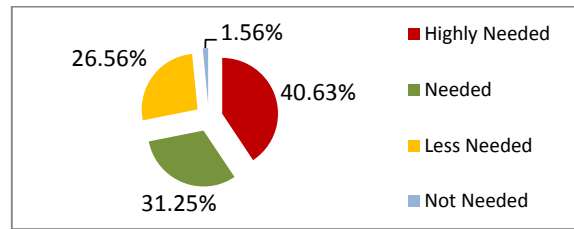
7.5.4. Tutoring Program



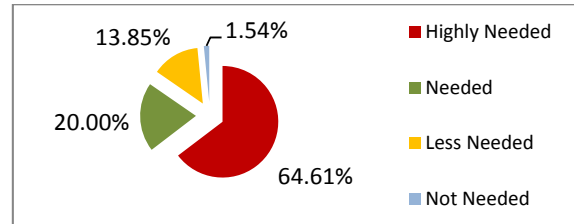
7.5.5. Recreation Program



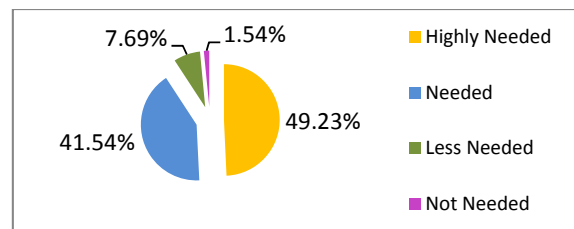
7.5.6. Mentoring Program



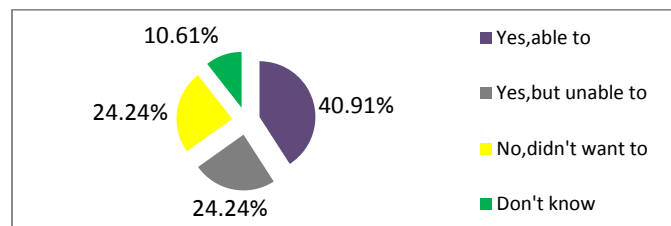
7.5.7. Job development Program



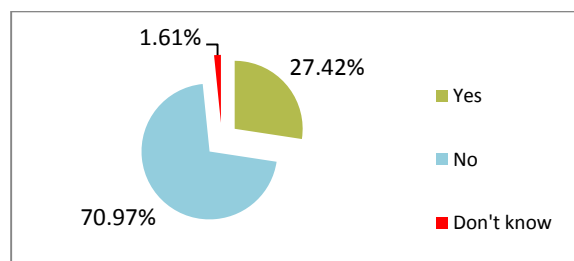
7.5.8. Social Activities



7.5.9. Desire for Training

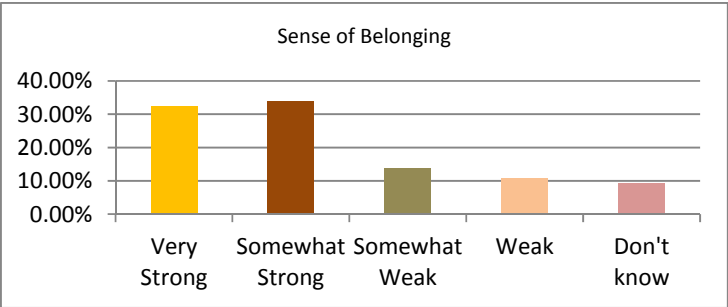


7.5.10. Distance Education

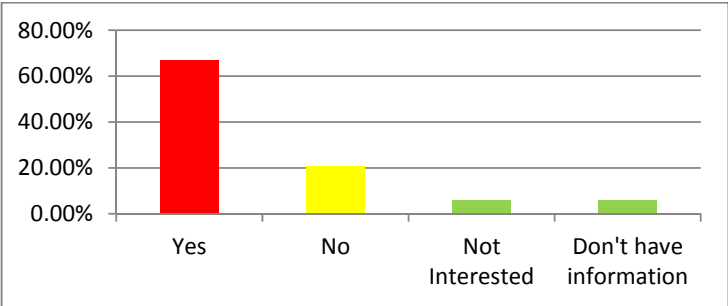


7.6 Community Vitality

7.6.1. Belonging to Community

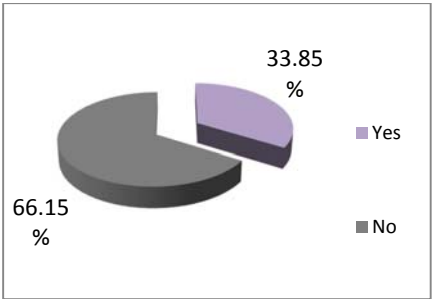


7.6.2. Participation in Community Activities



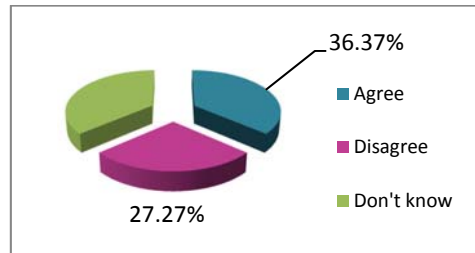
7.6.3. Volunteering

The question here is "Do you volunteer with any civic, community or, nonprofit group(s)?"



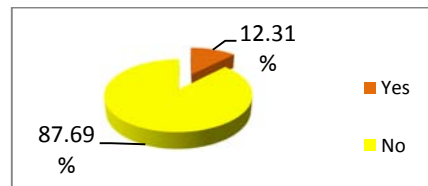
7.6.4. Willing to help neighbors

People do things together and try to help each other.

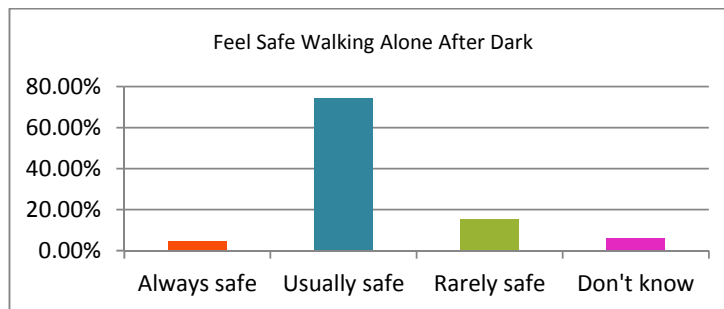


7.6.5. Experience of Discrimination

The question for this one is "Would you describe yourself as being a member of a group that is discriminated against where you live?"



7.6.6. Walking Alone After Dark



7.6.7. Area Changing



77.27% of respondents felt the area they live was getting better.

8. ANALYSIS BASED ON SURVEY FINDINGS

The purpose of the survey is to assess the eight domains of Canada Index of Wellbeing Measurement. They are Community Vitality, Democratic Engagement, Education, Environment, Healthy Populations, Leisure & Culture, Living Standards and Time Use. Among all those areas, we have found the most issues reside in three domains: Education, Employment, and Community Vitality.

1. Education

Based on survey result, the education level in the community was shown as 29% of respondents have Master degrees; 21% of respondents had Undergraduate degrees; 14% of respondents had College Certificates. For age range, result showed that two largest groups are 26-35 years old and 65 or older. Age 26 to 35 is the people who have the highest potential to be important contributors to our community. People 65 and older are senior residents who have great life experiences and well rounded knowledge especially the ones with higher education. In addition, 69% of respondents were female which means the main components of our community are young or older female who had good education background. They will be the focus group to be studied, researched, and served. The family section of the survey also indicated more than half of the families have children, which is why our future training classes should focus more on Childhood development, young children safety and health, and family activities to fulfill the community needs.

It is clear to us that residents in Regent Park are eager to be engaged into the community and taking initiative approach such as training class especially tutoring program and job development. Out of 80% respondents, there were more than 60% respondents that showed high interest to engage in training programs and 20% of the respondents highly need it. Over 70% of respondents were also in high need to be part of other training programs such as leadership, skill building, creation, digital storytelling, and mentoring program.

There were a small percentage of respondents who were not willing to participate in the training programs. This could be for various reasons such as work, family, or others. For those people, future research would be needed in order to help them achieve their goals. From chart 7.5.8, majority of the respondents are anxious to participate in social activities. In the following sections, we repeatedly found the consistency of needing social activities. Programs such as speeches for family housing, health, fitness, cooking, holiday parties, game nights, and cultural awareness should all be considered in the future.

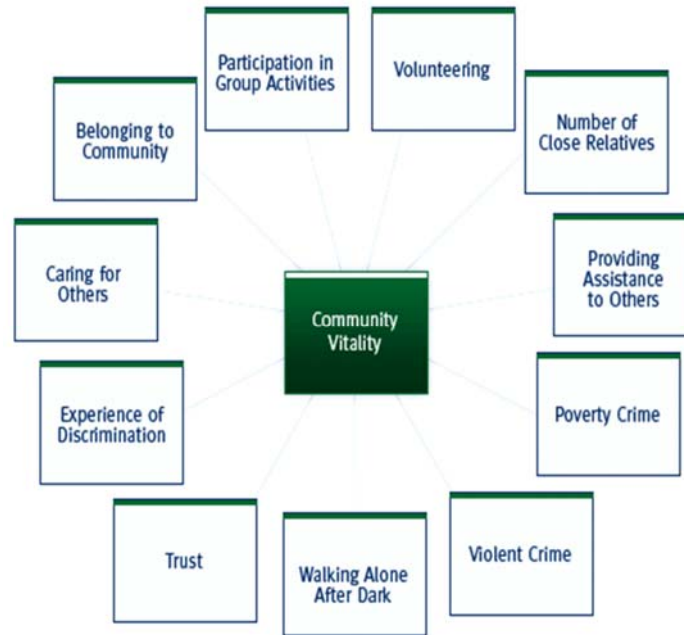
2. Employment

Employment is one of the key elements to improve economy and well being. Chart 7.3.2 showed less than 30% of residents had full time jobs; less than 25% had part time jobs; 45% are unemployed. However, 25% jobs only required high school degree which is extremely inconsistent with the high education population we surveyed. Among all the jobs only 20% people had positions that required college degree. Therefore, the question is raised how we place high educated people with proper jobs in our community to remediate the gap and how we provide more training for the jobs that is already there.

On the other hand, In order to place the right person at the right job training class alone is not adequate. How can community provide more jobs? What types of business Regent Park should bring in? Can we organize more social events and invite more charity organizations or business owners to help the employment? What advantage Regent Park has that can draw business in? Those are the questions also need to be investigated and researched in the near future.

3. Community Vitality

This domain brings to life our everyday reality from a community perspective. It tells us what is happening in our neighborhoods, how safe we feel, and whether we are engaged as citizens or whether we are becoming socially isolated. Through close inspection of the data in this area, we can see more respondents being concerned about the needs of others, regardless of the pressures of their own lives – a measure of how caring a society we truly are.



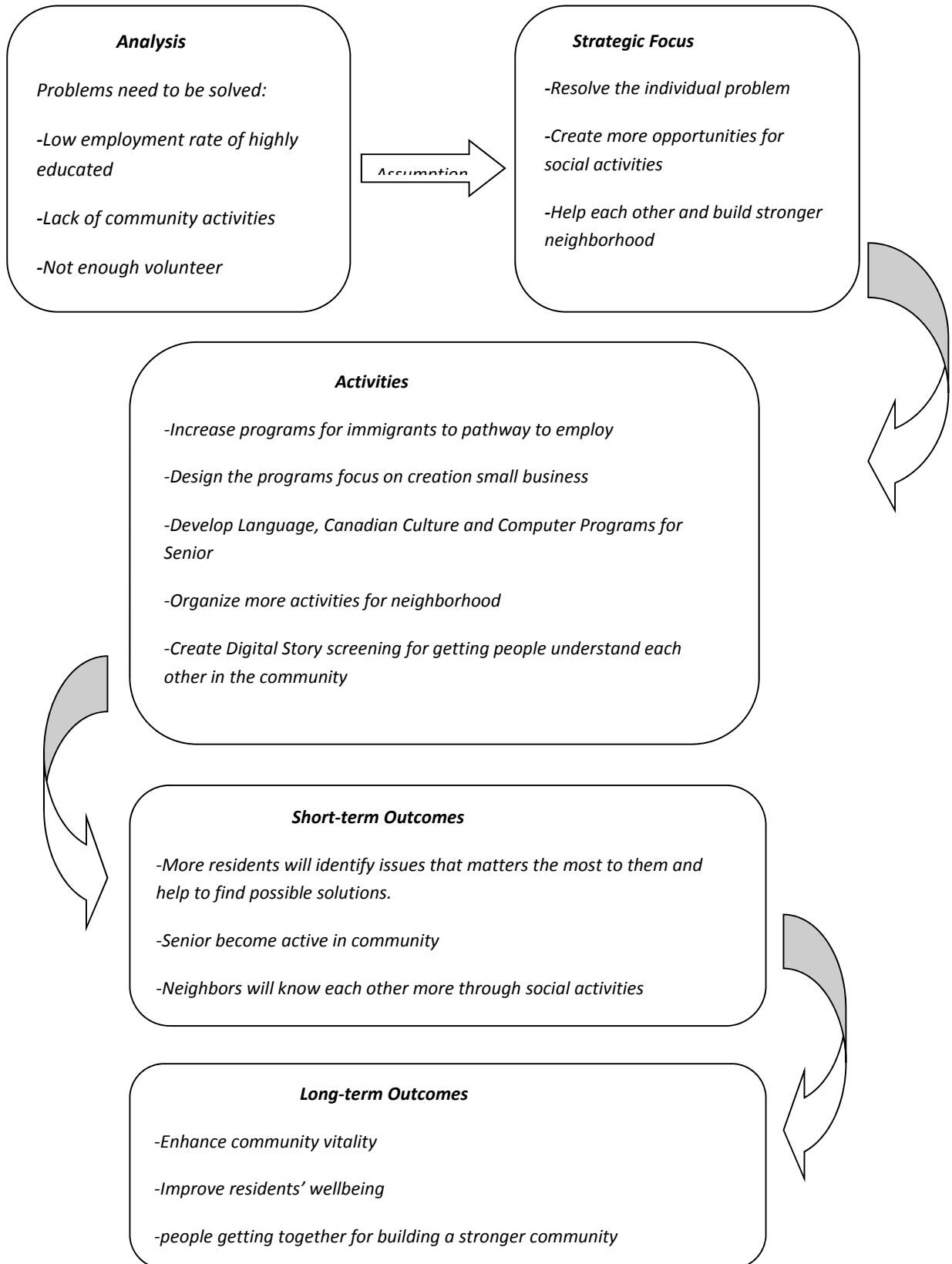
Vital communities are those that have strong, active and inclusive relationships among residents, private sector, public sector and civil society organizations – relationships that promote individual and collective wellbeing. Vital communities are able to cultivate and marshal these relationships in order to create, adapt and thrive in the changing world. They do so in ways that are inclusive and respectful of the needs and aspirations of diverse communities.

One of the wonderful findings is that Regent Park residents have a very high sense of belonging in their community. There were more than 60% respondents that answered very strong or somewhat strong sense of their community. Also the same percentage was shown for participation in community activities which further confirmed the need for social activities.

Almost 80% respondents agreed that Regent Park area is getting better and feel safe walking alone after dark. Only less than 13% answered had experience of discrimination.

36% respondents agreed in their survey that people do things together and try to help each other in the community while 36% answered they don't know. By creating more social events, family outings and activities, we will definitely improve this area and help building the bonds in our community.

Theory of Change



9. CONCLUSION

The CIW is a new way of measuring societal wellbeing. It provides unique insights into the quality of life of Canadians – overall, and in specific areas that matter: our standard of living, our health, the quality of our environment, our education and skill levels, the way we use our time, the vitality of our communities, our participation in the democratic process, and the state of our arts, culture and recreation.

The survey that I have conducted is in Regent Park neighborhood. The community members, organizations, community centers and individuals have shared their views, ideas and comments regarding the survey. It means that they have concerns about the existing problems and challenges in this neighborhood. They really want to solve the problems to have a developed community to improve their skills and contribute them to the neighborhood.

75% respondents spend their leisure time with family and watching television. It shows lack of availability and accessibility of arts, culture and recreation facilities. There is very low involvement in sports activity. Highly needed areas are: leadership development programs, job development and employment programs for skilled immigrants, and skill building workshops (including art and music).

We need to focus on different programs for the neighborhood and specific programs for the group that has special needs, like Chinese Seniors. By expanding the small projects to bigger projects we will achieve our short-term goals. To bring positive social changes in the neighborhood, we would be able to see a brighter future in the community which is our long-term goal.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

There are a few key points for future improvement.

- 1) Develop more training program on the topics that people are interested in learning. For example, perform a survey in the neighborhood to gather the topics people want to hear.*
- 2) Create lectures or classes to encourage home owned small businesses or internet businesses which is suitable for high educated stay home moms.*
- 3) Reassess child care program in the community. If the program right now satisfies the needs for the families, is there more children activity need to be created? If so, what age group? Need survey.*
- 4) Community Centre organizes activities of art and music to strengthening residents' cultural life.*
- 5) Create more volunteering opportunities to enhance people's sense of belonging in their community and give them an opportunity to get Canadian working experience.*
- 6) Sports facilities should be accessible and available for all the residents of the neighborhoods. These opportunities and facilities will eventually enhance the state of recreation.*
- 7) Screening of Digital Stories, arranging Jane ' s Walk can be strong tools to enhance community spirit.*
- 8) Social Service agencies need to broaden information and communication services and encourage enterprises such as, community gardens and small businesses to benefit the unemployed.*

Wellbeing is the ultimate goal for human life. Resident's happiness is important to community. If adequate emphasis is allocated on employment and economics the wellbeing will be improved. In addition, family events, social groups, children activities, and business promotion events are all good resources to enhance wellbeing in Regent Park.

Bibliography/Reference List

- <http://www.toronto.ca/>
- <http://www.torontoneighbourhoods.net/neighbourhoods/>
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regent_Park
- <http://www.regentpark.ca>

Abbreviations List

<i>NGOs</i>	- <i>Non Governmental Organizations</i>
<i>CCLD</i>	- <i>Centre for Community Learning and Development</i>
<i>IWIP</i>	- <i>Immigrant women integration program</i>
<i>CIW</i>	- <i>Canadian Index of Wellbeing survey</i>
<i>TOCO</i>	- <i>Theory of Change Community</i>