



Canadian Council of Muslim Women
Le conseil canadien des femmes musulmanes

Community Resilience: Environmental Scan Report

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Table of Contents

CANADIAN COUNCIL OF MUSLIM WOMEN	2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
INTRODUCTION.....	5
PART 1.....	7
MEDIA SCAN: NATIONAL OVERVIEW	8
GTA MEDIA SCAN	10
OTTAWA MEDIA SCAN	16
EDMONTON MEDIA SCAN	21
CALGARY MEDIA SCAN	25
VANCOUVER MEDIA SCAN	28
MONTREAL MEDIA SCAN.....	32
LONDON MEDIA SCAN.....	39
PART 2.....	43
INTERVIEWS/COMMUNITY INSIGHTS: NATIONAL OVERVIEW	44
GREATER TORONTO AREA	46
OTTAWA	51
EDMONTON	56
CALGARY.....	58
VANCOUVER	61
MONTREAL	63
CONCLUSION	69

CANADIAN COUNCIL OF MUSLIM WOMEN

The Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW) is a national not-for-profit organization whose overarching mission is to ensure the equality, equity and empowerment of Muslim women. The story of CCMW begins in 1982 when a group of dynamic and devoted Muslim women from across Canada congregated in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Led by the late Dr. Lila Fahlman, these women sought to mobilize their passion for social justice and faith in order to enrich their communities and work towards the common good of Canadian society.

For over 30 years CCMW has proudly advocated on behalf of Canadian-Muslims, encourage civic engagement, empower communities and lastly promote inter-cultural and inter-religious understanding. Past initiatives include the coalition for No Religious Arbitration, the Muslim Marriage Contract, My Canada and the Common Ground Project. CCMW is composed of a National Board that works to further CCMW's objectives at a national level, and its 12 local Chapters and members, whose passion and hard work advances the vision of CCMW within local communities.

Guiding Principles

- We are guided by the Quranic message of God's mercy and justice, and of the equality of all persons, and that each person is directly answerable to God
- We value a pluralistic society, and foster the goal of strength and diversity within a unifying vision and the values of Canada. Our identity of being Muslim women and of diverse ethnicity and race is integral to being Canadian
- As Canadians, we abide by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the law of Canada
- We believe in the universality of human rights, which means equality and social justice, with no restrictions or discrimination based on gender or race
- We are vigilant in safeguarding and enhancing our identity and our rights to make informed choices amongst a variety of options
- We acknowledge that CCMW is one voice amongst many who speak on behalf of Muslim women, and that there are others who may represent differing perspectives
- We aim to be actively inclusive and accepting of diversity among ourselves, as Muslim women

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The research for the environmental scan of the Community Resilience project found that a major threat to community resilience was the circulation of negative stereotypes, by media organizations, politicians, or special interest groups to promote their own interests. This is a difficult issue for minority communities and resolving it often requires interaction with the media as well as engaging the group spreading the stereotype, which may or may not know the full extent of the harm caused by spreading these stereotypes. There were several good examples (see the Media Scans section of the report) of individuals and organizations dealing with negative situations in a calm and relationship enhancing manner.

Issues of “extremism,” “radicalization,” and gang activity also constituted a major theme. Communities responded to this crisis by developing resources and supports to help families touched by this issue. Building stronger ties within the community and reaching out to individuals feeling alienated makes it possible for those individuals to be a part of a strong community and make a difference. Specific programs responding to these issues, that also provide an opportunity to strengthen cultural and community ties, help individuals find meaning and a sense of belonging within their own communities.

Intercommunity collaboration was a major finding in the media scan; it demonstrated major strengths as well as areas for improvement in community resilience. Several examples arose revealing the “do’s” and “don’ts” for such situations.

Most community leaders and activists interviewed stressed the need for financial and human resources, institutions, and partnerships to develop more resilient communities that can effectively take on major social problems. Another common element to building community resilience was education; many stressed the need of educational programs not only to equip future community leaders with certain skill sets, but also to build empathy and understanding.

Participants in the training sessions felt that it is crucial that law enforcement has an ongoing relationship with community and connect early in times of crisis. However, they felt that law enforcement, though it is necessary, often pushes people away rather than engaging communities. Nevertheless, participants acknowledged that there is a great need to consult with community leaders and young people in developing particular strategies to prevent violent extremism. These strategies must be community based and should not be described as an anti-extremism project.

Participants generally agreed that social cohesion; community involvement and social interdependence are essential to community resilience. They mentioned that the best initiatives to build these feelings are ones that encourage a sense of belonging.

INTRODUCTION

The research and training for Project Communitas was carried out in four Canadian provinces and seven cities (the Greater Toronto Area, Ottawa, Edmonton, Calgary, Vancouver, Montreal, and London) in the period August 2014 to March 2015. It consisted of a media scans of major broadcasters, print media, and online sources using the Lexisnexis database; interviews of community leaders and activists; and weekend training sessions on resilience. A three-day national train-the-trainers session was also held in Toronto prior to the city-based training.

The project's activities were co-ordinated by Stephane Pressault of the Canadian Council for Muslim Women. Karim H. Karim, Director of the Carleton Centre for the Study of Islam, was the academic lead for the research. Nadia Hai was the primary researcher for the conduct of the media scans and interviews. The project is funded by the Government of Canada's Minister of Public Safety through the Kanishka Project Contribution Program. This report presents the findings of the media scans and the interviews.

The media scans showed that one major threat to community resilience was the circulation of negative stereotypes, either by media organizations, politicians, or special interest groups to promote their own interests. This is a difficult issue for minority communities and resolving it often requires media engagement as well as engaging the group spreading the stereotype, which may or may not know the full extent of the harm caused by spreading these stereotypes. Cases from Edmonton and Ottawa demonstrate resilience where the responses to stereotypes not only worked to dispel them, but also aimed to build a sense of understanding.

Issues of "extremism" and "radicalization" were also a major theme impacting Calgary in particular. Communities responded to this crisis by developing resources and supports to help families touched by this issue. Building stronger ties within the community and reaching out to individuals feeling alienated makes it possible for those individuals to be a part of a strong community and make a difference. Gang issues were prominent in Vancouver and youth in Edmonton's Aboriginal and refugee communities. Programs responding to these issues also provide an opportunity to strengthen cultural and community ties, help individuals find meaning and a sense of belonging within their own communities.

Intercommunity collaboration was one of the most prominent issues in the media scan, particularly Toronto and Vancouver. It demonstrated major strengths as well as areas for improvement in community resilience. When engaging in debates, it is important that groups understand common ground shared by Canadians who are concerned about international issues and their rights to protest and express themselves freely.

Efforts to reject the Charter of Values in Montreal demonstrated some of the best examples of intercommunity engagement. The multi-faith educational events and creative works demonstrated how communities can work together to resist legislation that they view as being unfair. Other events in the scan provided examples of communities supporting a community under threat. As many of the case studies from the media scans demonstrate, communities can, with greater collaboration, develop stronger responses to threats to community resilience be it gang violence, discrimination, or "radicalization." When facing issues like these it is important to have a composed, empathetic and strong response.

The interviews with community leaders and activists provided multiple perspectives on issues facing different communities. These issues included discrimination, unemployment, poverty, and criminal activity. Each participant provided a different definition of resilience; however, their definitions shared many similarities. Each leader suggested different methods of building community resilience including constructing individual resilience, developing strong ties across communities, and promoting empathy and understanding through honest communication. These interviews also provided existing examples of resilience within communities across Canada ranging from organizations promoting intercommunity engagement through ideas and the arts. Interviews with community leaders provided a glimpse into what is happening in communities across Canada, and what needs to happen in order to make these communities stronger.

PART 1

MEDIA SCAN: NATIONAL OVERVIEW

The media scan revealed a diverse range of events and issues addressing community resilience in Canada. Some events provided exemplary lessons in resilience, while others revealed areas for improvement. Although these events and issues impacted different communities living in different cities, most of them had similar underlying issues, namely how communities respond to threats to community resilience and peaceful coexistence, and how communities work together.

One major threat to community resilience was the circulation of negative stereotypes, either by media organizations, politicians, or special interest groups to promote their own interests. This is a difficult issue for minority communities and resolving it often requires media engagement as well as engaging the group spreading the stereotype, which may or may not know the full extent of the harm caused by spreading these stereotypes. In Edmonton when the SIOA released ads targeting Muslim women being “honour killed,” Sohi and Afsar responded in way that highlighted why the group was wrong and also informed the SIOA and the wider community of the community groups which are working on violence against women, should they want to help. In Ottawa, the Nepean Redskins management did not realize the offensive nature of the team name and Ian Campeau helped them with the costs of the name change with a fundraiser. These cases demonstrate resilience where responses to stereotypes not only work to dispel them, but also aim to build a sense of understanding.

Issues of “extremism” and “radicalization” were also a major theme impacting Calgary in particular. Communities responded to this crisis by developing resources and supports to help families touched by this issue. “Radicalization” is relevant to community resilience as individuals looking to join extremist groups are often seeking a cause or something larger of which to be a part. Building stronger ties within the community and reaching out to individuals feeling alienated makes it possible for those individuals to be a part of a strong community and make a difference. In a similar vein, gang issues were also prominent with gang violence in Vancouver and youth in Edmonton’s Aboriginal and refugee communities joining gangs. Programs responding to these issues like WrapED that also provide an opportunity to strengthen cultural and community ties, help individuals find meaning and a sense of belonging within their own communities.

Intercommunity collaboration was one of the most prominent issues in the media scan; it demonstrated major strengths as well as areas for improvement in community resilience. Problems arose when people were engaged in controversial and often divisive debates like the Gaza conflict. Protests in Toronto demonstrates a need for the development of common understanding and respectful engagement where each “side” avoids silencing other voices and using labels like “terrorist” to shut down conversation. When engaging in these debates, it is important that groups understand common ground shared by Canadians who are concerned about international issues and are exercising their rights to protest and express themselves freely. In Vancouver there was much debate about ethnic communities existing in isolation with little intercommunity engagement, while at the same time there were many initiative like Cycling4Diversity working to build cross-community ties.

Efforts to reject the Charter of Values in Montreal demonstrated some of the best examples of intercommunity engagement (although it was not perfect with one of the first protest marches being scheduled on a major Jewish holiday). The multi-faith educational events and creative works demonstrated how communities can work together to resist unfair legislation. Other events in the scan provided examples of communities supporting a community under threat; for example, in Toronto the respective spiritual leaders of the mosque and synagogue that were vandalized came out in support of each other and how the Canadian Association for Jews and Muslims helped the NCCM with their libel case.

As many of the case studies from the media scan demonstrate, communities can, with greater intercommunity engagement, develop stronger responses to threats to community resilience be it gang violence, discrimination, or “radicalization.” When facing issues like these it is important to have a composed, empathetic and strong response.

GTA MEDIA SCAN

In the past year there were a number of incidents in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) involving intercommunity tensions and cases of community resilience in responding to different crises. A search was conducted for stories on the CBC and CTV Toronto websites; *Macleans* magazine; *Huffington Post Canada*; and the *Toronto Star* (using the Lexis Nexis database) using search keywords like “Racism”, “Anti-Semitism”, “Islamophobia” and “Radicalization” between August 2013 and August 2014. The majority of incidents involve community reactions to the Gaza conflict, which escalated in August. The first section discusses the reactions to the Gaza conflict including protests, online awareness campaigns, and pushes to reframe the debates. The second section studies how leaders of a Toronto Mosque and nearby synagogue, which were vandalised at the same time (also at the height of the Gaza conflict) reacted to the situation and how other organizations assisted the National Council of Canadian Muslims in their libel case against a member of the Conservative government. The third section looks at how the Brampton community responded to racist flyers distributed by Immigrant Watch Canada. The final section examines how the Toronto police responded to a *Toronto Star* investigation that revealed that African Canadians are disproportionately carded by police. Overall, the common thread between these incidences was how communities deal with threats to social harmony be it vandalism, racism, or international conflicts.

GTA Reactions to the Gaza Conflict

Gaza protests

The conflict in Gaza between Israel and Palestine started July 8, 2014 and ending with a cease fire on August 26, 2014 leaving 2100 Palestinians (mostly civilians), 67 Israeli Soldiers and six Israeli civilians dead (CBC, 2014). There were several protests in response to the conflict, often in support of or in opposition to Israel’s actions. Many articles referred to the tensions between both “sides” of the conflict (namely “pro-Palestine” or “pro-Israel”). In one protest in downtown Toronto, protesters on each “side” were described in the following way, “Separated by metal barriers and lines of police, hundreds of protesters gathered on opposite sides of Bloor St. W. ...hurling pro-Israel and pro-Palestine chants across the road at each other” (Chow Oved, 2014). The “pro-Israeli contingent” was described as “...played Bob Marley over the loudspeakers” (Chow Oved 2014). The author quoted Meir Weinstein, director of the Jewish Defence League of Canada, who was at the protest. As Weinstein states, “That’s a pro-Hamas rally and we’re countering it. The goal here is to stand up against support for terrorist groups”(Weinstein quoted by Chow Oved 2014). The “pro-Palestinian contingent” was described as waving “‘end the siege’ placards and Israeli flags with the word terrorist spray painted across the Star of David.” (Chow Oved 2014)

What can we learn from this?

Regardless of whether there was sensationalism at play in the description of the protest, this example could provide a lesson in keeping protests respectable. This means respectfully engaging with the “other side” and not blocking their voices, be it through shouting or loud music. It is important to note that the JDL (Jewish Defense League) is involved with this incident; it is known to be confrontational, and for this reason, it does not receive wide support from the Jewish community. In addition to this, labelling representatives of the “other side”

“terrorists” can be unproductive as such labels tend to shut down dialogue. It is important for communities to find common grounds as concerned Canadians; for example recognising the common values of respectful debate, exercising our liberties, and defending human rights.

“Hug a Terrorist” Video

Another story in response to the Gaza conflict involved an online video entitled “hug a terrorist” where two Palestinian-Canadian girls hold a sign that says "HUG A TERRORIST" in downtown Toronto (Edwards, 2014 p. GT4). The video was produced by social media activist group Like for Syria and created by 18-year-old York University student Omar Albach. The video was created to raise awareness about the civilian deaths in the Gaza conflict

“Hug a Terrorist Video” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rD79V9qAPSw>

What can we learn from this?

The “Hug a terrorist” video problematizes the use of the word “Terrorist” (as it is often stated that Israel is fighting terrorists through their military strikes) by emphasizing the impacts on civilians. This is an interesting approach as there is a focus on the human impact of the conflict. Rather than calling the perpetrators or military “terrorists”, they try to reflect on how that label is used.

Reframing the Gaza conflict

One approach to building community resilience during an international crisis is to change how we discuss issues that tend to put different communities in conflict allowing for more productive and less divisive conversations. In an Op-ed, writer Haroon Siddiqui, critiques the simplification of the Gaza conflict by Canadian leaders. Siddiqui refers to an event where Liberal leader Justin Trudeau made a speech stating that, Canadians in the past (French and English) put aside “old-country conflicts, so can we today” (Trudeau Quoted by Siddiqui 2014, p. A17). As Trudeau stated “Be they French or English, Jewish or Muslim," they can "work together, not against one another." (Trudeau quoted by Siddiqui 2014, p. A17). Siddiqui (2014) states why he finds this treatment of the conflict problematic,

Fine sentiment, except it implied that Canadian Jews and Muslims are not living in peace and harmony. But they are, despite democratic disagreements over Gaza. Trudeau seems to view the Mideast conflict as war between Jews and Muslims/Arabs. But it is not a religious war. Only the extremists posit it as such. Islamists want jihad against Jews. Right-wing Zionists want a forever war on "Islamic terrorists." Not all Arabs are Muslims. Some of the biggest opponents of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands have been Arab Christians. Some of the biggest critics of Benjamin Netanyahu are liberal Jews (p. A17).

Instead of describing this situation as a human rights/political issue, it is often described by media and members of the public as a religious conflict.

What can we learn from this?

Though religion may have an influence on the conflict, strictly describing it in these terms makes it more divisive and more difficult to engage audiences from different communities. Siddiqui is trying to change the narrative surrounding the situation in Gaza to make it more

inclusive and gear it towards more universal ideas like human rights, so communities can work through this crisis to effectively engage with each other and policy makers.

NCCM libel case

There were cases where communities showed support for other communities facing a problem or crisis. When The National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM) filed a libel complaint against the Prime Minister's chief spokesman minister Jason MacDonald for accusing the group of having ties to terrorist groups like Hamas, they were supported, not only by secular organizations like the Canadian Civil Liberties association, but also by religious groups like The Canadian Association of Jews and Muslims (Nabil, 2014, p. A4).

What can we learn from this?

These organizations helped a religious community whose reputation had been threatened, which demonstrates community resilience. This is also a good example of maintaining strong intercommunity relationships and being strong allies for groups who are facing a crisis.

Vandalism of the Thornhill Mosque and Synagogue

When the Thornhill Synagogue and nearby Jaffari Community Centre, were vandalised with anti-Arab and anti-Semitic messages at the height of the Gaza conflict, spiritual leaders from each organization expressed support for each other's community (Corbeil, 2014). Both leaders did not want hate to be "imported from abroad" disrupting community relations. Sam Eskenasi of B'nai Brith, a Jewish Advocacy group stated

... Jewish communities might have nothing to do with Israel or might not even support Israel in any shape or form, and they're still the victim of these attacks. We do hope that the police find whoever did both of these incidents. We don't want to see a situation where a foreign country affects our lives in Canada, and bring that hatred that exists elsewhere in the world and import [it into] Canada (Eskenasi quoted by Corbeil 2014)

From the Mosque and community centre Shabbir Jaffer stated "My community roundly condemns any act of racism and nastiness, regardless of who it is targeting and regardless on whose property it is." (Jaffari, quoted by Corbeil 2014).

What can we learn from this?

These cases demonstrate resilience after being the target of hateful acts. These communities and organizations supported each other in this time of crisis. It was a discourse of peace and solidarity; rather than focusing on the culprits, they both stressed the need for peace and supporting each other.

Racist Flyers in Brampton

Racist anti-immigration flyers were distributed throughout Brampton by Immigrant Watch Canada. The flyer targeted the Sikh population,

The flyer depicts a black-and-white photo of an all-white group with the caption "from this," above a colour photo of a group of angry Sikh protesters, with the caption 'to this.' It cites Census data suggesting Brampton's "mainstream Canadian" population dropped from 59.6 per cent in 2001 to 32.9 per cent in 2011 (Keung 2014).

At the bottom of the flyer it says “Is This Really What You Want? Let's Make Immigration Work For The Interests Of Canadians Again!”(Keung, 2014).

The article featured reactions from residents of the neighbourhood condemning the flyers. As well, they featured reactions from members of the Sikh community including City Councillor Vicky Dillon, As Dhillon states,

Sikhs have lived in Canada for more than 100 years. We are in every professional sector in the society. ... We accept everyone in Brampton, and we don't have any problem in our neighbourhoods. And these are the people who create problems for the community. (Dhillon, quoted by Keung 2014, p. GT1)

A similar incident happened at York University and the flyers were condemned by the University's community (Gallant, 2014, p. GT7).

What can we learn from this?

Dhillon's response highlights the fact that Sikhs have been part of Canada's history, countering assumptions that Canada was only built by European settlers or that “real Canadians” are of European Origin. This demonstrates resilience, because he not only responded in a peaceful and rational manner, but also countered common stereotypes about Canadian immigration history.

Toronto Police relations with black Canadians

The *Toronto Star* conducted an investigation into the carding practices of the Toronto police. Carding refers to the process of stopping, questioning and documenting a person on the street, outside of a criminal investigation. Their research found that even though carding has seen an overall decline, carding black Canadians has increased (Rankin and Winsa, 2014). The Toronto police chief, William Blair responded with an editorial about how the Toronto Police are always in a process of “self-examination and improvement” consulting community groups in their work. Chief Blair discusses the Police and Community Engagement Review (PACER) program being implemented by Toronto police, which includes consulting representatives of sixteen communities including Aubrey Campbell of the Jamaican Canadian Society who also participated in the Impartial Police Training program for officers. The program has also been given support by UCLA professor Dr. Atiba Goff who studies police equity. Blair claims that the racial disparity in carding is due to the fact that police patrol neighbourhoods with higher crime, which unfortunately involves lower income neighborhoods with more black Canadians (Blair, 2014). As Blair (2014) states,

Opportunity is not equally distributed across all communities. Some groups and neighbourhoods experience higher rates of victimization and violence. My officers go where crime occurs. ... The Toronto Police Service is committed to working in partnership with all communities to address these disparities (Blair 2014).

What can we learn from this?

The police chief shows some understanding of systemic inequalities. Though the system is by no means perfect, the police engage with different communities in order to educate members of the force on issues facing black Canadians. Whether the PACER program proves to

be successful or not, it is a good lesson for community leaders to engage with law enforcement in order to create a more inclusive society.

Conclusion

Overall, these stories highlight the importance of responding to local and international threats to intercommunity harmony. The confrontational protests and current dialogues surrounding the Gaza conflict highlight a need for better intercommunity engagement. More specifically, this issue should be discussed in a less divisive manner; for example, refraining from dividing “sides” based on religion or calling opponents “terrorists.” Instead, there should be a focus on peaceful engagement and recognising commonalities as Canadians concerned about international human rights. The case of the Thornhill Mosque and Synagogue vandalism and NCCM’s libel case demonstrate how communities can help each other in times of crisis and prioritise peaceful coexistence. Brampton’s Sikh community presented a calm response to the racist flyers, not only condemning the flyer, but also contesting the flyer’s assumptions by highlighting how Sikhs play an important part of Canadian history. The Toronto Police’s PACER program provides an important lesson in addressing systemic inequalities by engaging with communities that are most vulnerable. All of these cases demonstrate that community resilience when facing a crisis must be fostered through respectful and collaborative intercommunity engagement.

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OTTAWA MEDIA SCAN

The Ottawa media scan revealed a variety of events involving community resilience from Ottawa's reaction to the shootings in October to Ottawa's reaction to events in Ferguson. A search was conducted for stories on the CBC and CTV Ottawa websites; *Maclean's* magazine; *Huffington Post Canada*; and *The Ottawa Citizen* using search keywords like "Racism", "Anti-Semitism", "Islamophobia" and "Radicalization" between August 2013 and November 2014. This particular scan was expanded past August in order to incorporate the Ottawa Shooting incident, which was an important case for examining community resilience. First, this section will discuss the Ottawa shooting and how communities and leaders reacted to the attacks and its aftermath. More specifically, community responses to the incident as it happened and to incidents following the shooting like backlash against Muslims. Second, it will study the case of the minor football league, the Nepean Redskins' team name change. Third, it will examine the Black Lives Matter protests in Ottawa. Finally, I will discuss Aboriginal group's protests demanding an inquiry into murdered and missing Aboriginal women.

Overall, the major theme for Ottawa was protecting vulnerable groups, or rather building a more accepting society where people of different backgrounds can feel safe, whether it is protecting the lives and dignity of Aboriginal people through investigating the disproportionate number of Aboriginal women being murdered, changing racist team names, fighting for better treatment of African-Canadians and Americans by law enforcement, or helping Muslim communities from potential backlash from a terrorist attack. In order for a community to be resilient, all groups must feel safe and included.

The Ottawa Shooting

Reacting to the Attack

The Ottawa shooting was the most prominent news story. The Ottawa shootings happened the morning of October 22, 2014 when Michael Zehaf-Bibeau shot and killed Corporal Nathan Cirillo, a soldier guarding the war memorial, and ran into parliament firing shots where he was eventually killed by security staff. Understandably, the majority of the news discussed the Ottawa shooting as a security issue. At the same time, there were many stories on responses to the attack: both as it happened and the aftermath. CTV provided an account of how individuals rushed in to help Corporal Nathan Cirillo moments after he was shot. A nurse, a lawyer and another armed guard provided assistance by calling an ambulance, administering first aid, and providing comfort. CTV describes the lawyer Barbara Winters' actions at the time of the event, "After a time, someone else relieved her on the chest compressions, and Winters moved to Cirillo's head. She talked to him, comforting him. 'You are loved. Your family loves you. You're a good man', she told him" (CTV 2014a). Winters stated that, "No one was hysterical. Everyone was so calm. Everyone was entirely focused on the soldier and on helping him." (Winters quoted by CTV 2014a).

People also responded to the crisis online, one example of this was The Stand on Guard Fund, which was a "spontaneous fundraising campaign" created by citizens to help soldiers' families and to honour the soldiers killed in both the Ottawa and Montreal attacks (Schnurr, 2014). The fund was successful; they aimed to raise \$10,000, but ended up raising \$550-

thousand. Individuals, organizations, corporations, and even celebrities like American talk show host Rosie O'Donnell donated (Schnurr, 2014).

What can we learn from this?

In each of these cases, both on a micro and macro level, the reactions did not come from a place of revenge or anger. Rather, these responses were more proactive as they came from a place of healing and helping those who were impacted by the attack. Though the first story was not so much about the event described by the journalist, but the actual sharing and narrative behind that story, it is still relevant as it is important to share accounts of a crisis that showcase the best of a community. These narratives provide accounts of community resilience and also demonstrate how individuals can show compassion and resilience, even at a time of crisis.

Aftermath of the Attack

Several articles discussed the aftermath of the attack or how different segments of Ottawa's community responded to the events. In his analysis of the attack's aftermath, Brian Stewart, a journalist for the CBC used the term "resilience" when describing how a society reacts to attacks,

Government, police and our intelligence agency, CSIS, have together long studied how society should react after such shock attacks and the underlying theme comes down to that word resilient... "A resilient Canada is one that is able to mitigate the impacts of a terrorist attack, ensuring a rapid return to ordinary life," the official counterterrorism strategy declares (Stewart, 2014).

Stewart also states that non-resilient or "extreme" reactions lead to harming dissent and certain communities, which does not help a society remain resilient. This sentiment of working with certain communities (those that could be targeted like Muslim communities), is reflected by Ottawa Police Chief Charles Bordeleau who sent out a letter that encouraged building relationships between different groups (CBC 2014a). He states "This is about one individual who committed a despicable act. I want to reassure (groups) should there be any backlash that they notify us We are there to continue to support them." (Bordeleau, 2014 quoted by the CBC)

In Ottawa's Muslim community, Imams got together to determine how to deal with the aftermath of the shooting. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at Canada condemned the attack on Parliament Hill and the one in St-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec. They issued a statement saying, "These acts of terror have no basis in any religion. Our thoughts and prayers are with the deceased, and we offer our heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of the soldier who gave his life"(CBC, 2014a).

Prime Minister silence on Muslim Backlash

Many Muslim groups were disappointed that Prime Minister Harper did not condemn any of the backlash violence against Muslims following the Ottawa shootings, nor did he defend moderate Muslims (which both Trudeau and Mulclair have done) (Bryden, 2014). Mohammad Mostefa, president of a mosque in Ottawa. which was vandalised on the Friday following the shootings, stated

We are trying to work together with our law enforcement and our authorities to end this what is called radicalization of youth. We are trying to do our utmost to help... But when political leaders denounce Muslim extremists but don't come to the defence of moderate Muslims, young Muslims will think: "This is my country and you don't come to my support to stand by my side" [which sends] the wrong message. (Mostefa, quoted by Bryden, 2014).

What can we learn from this?

Often how societies react in a time of crisis is a good indication of their level of resilience. Actions like supporting Muslim communities facing backlash, maintaining democratic values, or helping the families of those impacted, demonstrate community resilience as the focus is on maintaining peaceful coexistence and order. In addition to this, when Muslim groups condemned the attacks, they also removed the perpetrator's religious ethos as associating religion with the attack may help bolster the extremists' narrative.

At the same time, there is room for improvement as in the case of Harper's silence on backlash against Muslims and failure to support moderates. A potential lesson from this case could be the importance of reaching out to leaders and the media, and stress why there is a need for support from major politicians. As Mostefa stated, this was an important issue, not only in cases of "radicalization", but an issue impacting young Muslim Canadians' sense of belonging. In order for a community to be resilient, individuals must feel like they belong to a community and more importantly, that they do not feel like their religious identity conflicts with their sense of belonging.

Nepean Redskins name change

Ian Campeau, an Ottawa man of Ojibway descent, and member of popular music group A Tribe called Red, tried over two years to get the youth football team "The Nepean Redskins" to change their name; "Redskin" is a known derogatory term for Aboriginals. The team did not listen to his and others' requests, so Campeau filed a complaint to the Human Rights Commission (Cobb, 2014). Instead of fighting the claim, the team decided to change their name. Many representatives of the group, like the treasurer, felt that this would be a tough change as there would be many expenses to change logos on uniforms and score boards (Cobb, 2014). In response to this, Ian Campeau offered to do a concert to raise money to help with name change costs (Cobb, 2014).

What can we learn from this?

While it is important to acknowledge that finances should not be an excuse for continuing to have an offensive team logo, this is a good example of working together to make the organization more inclusive. Campeau not only lead the initiative to change the name, but also helped with the implementation of it.

Ferguson protests

There were discussions about the Black Lives Matter protests in solidarity with Ferguson protestors in Ottawa and Toronto (CBC 2014, CTV 2014). The organisers of the protests posted an announcement on their Facebook page asking whites and non-blacks to move to the back of the protests, allowing blacks to be more visible. Bilan Arte, one of the Ottawa event organizers,

stated that allies should not be in the center of the protests. Arte states, “Particularly tonight, we're talking about black lives, and we're talking about the experience of black people, which is different from the experience of other racialized folks” (CTV, 2014). This decision sparked outrage amongst some of the protestors. There were many angry comments on the Facebook page accusing the movement of “segregation.” At the same time, other protesters agreed with the decision. The CBC quoted a “white” protestor Rebecca Macintyre who states, “For us, it's really important to come up and show our solidarity and make sure black voices are leading this — that their feelings and opinions are front and center for everything happening here. We're just here to show support and be allies” (CBC 2014).

What can we learn from this?

One important lesson from this case could be the importance of navigating intercommunity protests and how to be a good ally supporting a group that is disproportionately impacted by an issue, like African Americans (and Canadians) being more likely to be targeted by law enforcement. This could also be a lesson for respecting and promoting the voices of those who are being represented by a cause one may choose to take up as an ally.

Missing Aboriginal women

The RCMP reported that 1,181 Aboriginal women went missing or were murdered between 1980 and 2012. Despite making up four per cent of all females in Canada, Aboriginal women constitute 16 per cent of female homicides in Canada (Macdonald, 2014). With this information, Aboriginal women’s groups and other leaders called for a public inquiry into missing and murdered Aboriginal women. The Harper government refused to call for an inquiry stating that the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women was a “crime problem” and not a “sociological phenomenon” (Macdonald, 2014, p. A8). This resulted in demonstrations at Parliament led by Aboriginal women’s associations and families and friends of missing and murdered Aboriginal women. Eventually, Aboriginal leaders collaborated with several provincial premiers and held an event to discuss murdered and missing Aboriginal women in hopes of getting representatives from the federal government to attend (Macdonald, 2014).

What can we learn from this?

One lesson that can be taken from this, is when the party in power does not cooperate, it is important to ally with other leaders, such as leaders of opposing parties or other levels of government, to put pressure on the party in power.

Conclusion

These incidents highlighted efforts to help all groups feel welcome within the wider community, be it a local or national. In the aftermath of the Ottawa shooting, not only did people come together to help those impacted by the shootings, some leaders and law enforcement also offered support to Muslim communities who may be impacted by backlash. At the same time, with the Prime Minister’s silence on the issue of backlash and supporting moderates, there is room for improvement as such (in)actions may leave Muslim Canadian youth feeling like they have no support from their government. Though it took a while for the Nepean “Red Skins” to change their name to something less offensive, Campeau helped the team with the name change in order for it to be more inclusive. The organizers of the Ferguson protests in Ottawa highlight the importance of not only supporting groups facing a crisis, but also making sure that they are

being seen and heard. Aboriginal women's groups allied with provincial leaders to investigate missing and murdered Aboriginal women in order to ensure that the safety and security of Aboriginal women is respected. When all members feel like they are safe and an important part of the community, a community becomes more resilient because all members are able to make more positive contributions.

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EDMONTON MEDIA SCAN

The cases from the Edmonton media scan emphasize the importance of intercommunity initiatives that deal with a variety of societal problems like gangs, violence against women, and hate crimes. This scan conducted a search for stories on the CBC and CTV Edmonton websites; *Macleans* magazine; *Huffington Post Canada*; and *The Edmonton Journal* using search keywords like “Racism”, “Anti-Semitism”, “Islamophobia” and “Radicalization” for stories between August 2013 and August 2014. First, this section will discuss the formation of WrapEd, an initiative made up of several community organizations dedicated to preventing youth from joining gangs. Second, it will study the Islamophobic bus advertisements on Edmonton transit targeting Muslim women and how members of the community responded to the ads. Finally, it will look at the Hate to Hope Rally, a rally against all forms of hate like homophobia, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and racism.

Dealing with Gangs: WrapEd

In January of 2014, the federal government provided five million dollars’ worth of funding towards gang prevention for the WrapEd (Wrap around Edmonton) initiative. WrapEd is an initiative made of several organizations: REACH Edmonton, The Africa Centre, Edmonton John Howard Society, Edmonton Police Services, Native Counselling Services of Alberta, and YOUNCAN. WrapEd will focus on youth 12-17, primarily youth of Aboriginal descent and youth from refugee families who are the most vulnerable and are more susceptible to joining gangs. The organization will offer services like rehabilitation services and career development. According to journalist Nicole Weisberg (2014), “The program is set to run until 2018, and at the end of the five-year period it is expected participants will be less involved in youth gang criminal activity, will disengage in gangs and will have strengthened their cultural and community connections” (Weisberg, 2014).

What can we learn from this?

This is a good example of how several community organizations can collaborate to address an issue that impacts multiple communities. Instead of creating a “one size fits all” initiative, WrapEd includes a combination of organizations that are dedicated to youth and organizations that acknowledge issues of culture and identity like the Native Counselling Centre and the Africa Centre. The emphasis on building cultural and community connections is very important for developing community resilience as it provides a more positive support network for youth, which is often what youth are looking for in a gang.

Islamophobic Bus Advertisements

After several complaints, Edmonton Transit Services pulled an advertisement from its buses. The ad was sponsored by the American group Stop Islamization of America (SIOA). The advertisement shows a photo of some young women and the caption reads, "Muslim girls honor killed by their families. Is your family threatening you? Is there a fatwa on your head? We can help." The poster provides a link to their website, FightforFreedom.us, which warns about the "encroachment of Islam on western civilization" (Kent, 2013, p A1).

In response to the ads, City Counsellor Amarjeet Sohi and Canadian Council of Muslim Women member Erum Afsar wrote an opinion piece for *The Edmonton Journal* entitled “Bus ads

target and isolate Muslims; Campaign sponsors should instead highlight work of local groups” stating that these ads were not only offensive, but also harmful to the members of the community the organization was claiming to protect. As Sohi and Afsar (2013) state

The term "honour killing" must stop being used... Attaching the term "honour" to these crimes empowers the perpetrators, allowing them to justify their thinking and actions. ...Any actions of violence against women and girls must be identified as what they are: criminal acts. However, by targeting Muslim girls only, the campaign singles out and separates a group of people based on their faith, thereby stigmatizing and isolating them. One result could be that victims might not seek help because they may feel compelled to defend their faith at the expense of their own well-being. Providing support, services and resources to women and girls who might be caught in these situations is important and necessary. If the ad sponsors are in fact concerned about the welfare of Edmonton women and girls, then working with and advertising the work of local organizations already addressing these concerns should have been their priority (p. A19).

Sohi and Afsar then share information about organizations that are addressing issues surrounding violence against women, like Edmonton’s Indo-Canadian Women’s Association, Islamic Family and Social Services association that runs workshops on domestic violence in Mosques, Edmonton’s Women’s Shelter, and the CCMW, which “...has worked tirelessly to maintain equality, equity and empowerment for all Canadian Muslim women through education and advocacy. The council has sought to promote an Islam that is humane, egalitarian and equality-driven.”(Sohi and Afsar, 2014, p. A19)

What can we learn from this?

Rather than focusing on the ignorance of the SIOA’s ads, Sohi and Afsar share more effective ways to deal with the problem that the SIOA claims to be fighting against (violence against Muslim women) and do so in a calm, rational manner citing statistics about violence against women in Canada while emphasizing the fact that this is an issue impacting every community. Not only do they speak out against negative stereotypes and the harm they cause, they also point out to how these inter and intra-community initiatives have worked to address these issues.

Hate to Hope Rally

Junaid Jahangir, a lecturer in Economics at MacEwan University writes about “The Hate to Hope Rally” which was organized by Chevy Rabbit, a gay University of Alberta student who was a victim of a violent hate crime (Jahangir, 2014, p. F15). The goal of the rally was to unite against all forms of hate like homophobia, racism, Islamophobia, and Anti-Semitism. Jahangir was one of the speakers at the event. MLAs from the provincial NDP, Liberal, and Progressive Conservative parties were also in attendance. Jahangir (2014) writes about his speech at the event where he parallels the experiences of Ahmadi Muslims in Pakistan to LGBTQ communities in Alberta:

As one of the speakers, I took the opportunity to draw parallels between the concerns of LGBTQ students in Edmonton and Ahmadi students in Pakistan. ... Five years ago, while I was teaching in Lahore, Pakistan, a visibly shaken student came to my office. I saw a smart and strong young man break down in a stream of tears. His father's factory had

been attacked. The student told me it was because his family are Ahmadi Muslims. My vulnerable Ahmadi student did not have an IMA (Intra Muslim Alliance) where he could feel safe, where Sunnis, Shiites, Ismailis and Ahmadis could tear down walls and grow as compassionate human beings. He felt safe enough in my office to let go and cry. But what if some policy inhibited me from discussing the concerns of the Ahmadi community? Or that of another community prone to hate attacks? In fact, there are policies akin to this in Alberta. (p. F15)

Jahangir was referring to the political climate in Alberta where the establishment of Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs) in schools was being debated (making them mandatory if asked for vs letting school boards decide). Many religious school boards did not want to establish GSAs, which many see as important resources. As he states near the end of his speech, “Gay-straight alliances save lives and prevent harm. In the hallowed name of Allah and the Prophet we are obliged to stand for GSAs. As elders, it is our duty to comfort the vulnerable, to have zero tolerance for bullying in any and all of its ugly forms.” (Jahangir, 2014, p. F15)

What can we learn from this?

Similar to the first two stories, this could be an example of trying to foster intercommunity dialogue and initiatives to deal with issues like hate and bullying. By drawing parallels to Ahmadis in Pakistan, Jahangir presents the issue of GSAs as an important tool that could be important in other international contexts. This story also emphasizes the importance of being an ally. Jahangir uses his religious values to support LGBTQ youth. In other words, this could be a way that communities can connect through establishing their common values like protecting vulnerable groups and standing up to hate.

Conclusion

These cases demonstrate the need to develop multifaceted initiatives to deal with major societal problems. That is, programs that are not only knowledgeable of the social factors of a given problem, but also how such problems can be dealt with in different cultural contexts. The WrapEd initiative demonstrates how communities and organizations can work together to effectively address youth gang activity, something that impacts multiple communities. Sohi and Asfar, not only break down stereotypes about Muslim women used by groups like the SIOA who claim they want to help, they emphasize how these stereotypes can be harmful and take away from the important work done by inter and intra-community organizations dealing with violence against women. They emphasize how violence against women impacts all women and that Muslim women are not dealing with “honour killing”, a “foreign” or “Muslim” issue, but an issue that impacts all women. The Hate to Hope Rally demonstrates how communities can find common grounds and build strong intercommunity ties to address issues like racism and homophobia. Overall, these cases demonstrate how communities and organizations dealing with common societal issues can build community resilience and stronger initiatives by working together.

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“Radicalization”

In the past year, the majority of stories in Calgary focused on different community reactions to “radicalization,” more specifically to the thirty Calgarians who left for Syria and Iraq to fight with extremist groups like ISIS and Jabat al Nusra. A search for stories was conducted on the CBC and CTV Calgary websites; *Macleans* magazine; *Huffington Post Canada*; and *The Calgary Herald* (using the Lexis Nexis database) using search keywords like “Racism”, “Anti-Semitism”, “Islamophobia” and “Radicalization” between August 2013 and August 2014. First, this section will discuss the case of Damian Clairmont, a Calgary man who was killed while fighting with ISIS and his mother, Chris Boudreau’s initiative to prevent “radicalization” of youth. Second, it will look at the multi-faith rally in Calgary condemning ISIS and finally, it will examine the OWN IT! conference held in Calgary for the prevention of “radicalization.” Overall, these cases demonstrate how communities can form strong ties to respond to crises.

Damian Clairmont

Chris Boudreau is the mother of twenty-two year-old Damion Clairmont who was killed last year in Syria while fighting with Islamic State (ISIS). According to Boudreau, Clairmont struggled with depression and converted to Islam at age 17. Boudreau stated that his newfound religion made him more peaceful, but later he became more “radical” in his views and eventually joined ISIS in Syria. Boudreau felt that there was no support for families dealing with “radicalization” and contacted representatives of a program in Germany known as Hayat (meaning “life” in Arabic), which works “...to prevent the radicalization of Muslims through coordinated intervention and counselling with family members and government agencies” (Howell, 2014, p. A4) Hayat grew out of Exit, a program that works to prevent youth from joining neo-Nazi groups [and has successfully “deprogrammed” Neo-Nazis. Boudreau is working to set up a Hayat Foundation branch in Canada \(Arsenault, 2013\).](#)

What can we learn from this?

“Radicalization” is an issue impacting different communities; “radicals” represent a variety of causes (from religion to environmentalism), so it is important not only to collaborate on a national/intercommunity level, but also collaborate internationally. Collaborating with other international organizations could add new perspectives, which could help form new strategies for dealing with “radicalization” and perhaps other societal issues. Boudreau also took a more proactive approach, focusing on prevention and rehabilitation by reaching out to a foundation that can help support families dealing with “radicalization,” instead of solely focusing on policing. Though policing is important, it is also essential to help those who are “radicalized” to prevent them from committing violent acts and dealing with issues that could have made them more susceptible to extremism like depression or substance abuse.

Multi-faith Rally against ISIS

Calgary’s Muslim community organized a rally outside of City Hall to condemn ISIS and its actions. The rally happened a few days after Calgary's Farah Mohamed Shiridon was spotted in a video burning his Canadian passport, surrounded by ISIS militants (Robertson, 2014, p. A10). Representatives from other faiths also attended the rally including Rev. Natasha Brubaker

Garrison, of St. Martin's Anglican Church. Garrison is leading an Imam-in-Residence program at the church with Imam Syed Soharwardy, that aims to bring congregations together to learn about other faiths. Garrison (2014) stated "I support Islam. It's a beautiful religion and has much to teach us, and we are not enemies. I don't want to ever be in a place where we're considered enemies" (Garrison Quoted by Southwick and Stark, 2014, p. A8). Members of the Jewish community Annette Lengyel and Miriam Meir attended and stated that they wanted to come to the rally to show their support for their Muslim friends. As Meir stated, "I'm Jewish, and I'm for peace" (Meir, quoted by Southwick and Stark, 2014, p. A8).

What can we learn from this?

This event is not only an example of condemning extremism, but also an example of how other faith groups can support a group dealing with a crisis. This support could also demonstrate that issues like "radicalization" are not just the "other's" or "their" issue, but an issue that impacts the community as a whole and therefore requires intercommunity support.

Own It! Conference

The Own It! Conference was put on by a several groups, and individuals like Chris Bodreau and Mahdi Qasqas, a counsellor who works with Muslim youth. The conference was, "aimed at strengthening partnerships with law enforcement and government agencies, develop partnerships with researchers and connect people with mentors" (Howell, 2014a, p. A3). This was in response to Calgarians leaving to fight in Syria and Iraq with groups like Jabat al Nusra and ISIS. According to Calgary Police, thirty Calgary residents had been recruited by foreign terrorist organizations including Clairmont, Salman Ashrafi and, (who were both killed), and brothers Collin and Gregory Gordon who are believed to be alive and in Syria (CBC, 2014).

According to Mahdi Qasqas, president of 3OWN, the organization behind the conference, "The narrative that we have is a comprehensive narrative that involves prevention, interruption and rehabilitation" (Qaqas quoted by Howell, 2014a, p. A3). The conference featured several speakers, including Calgary Police Chief Rick Hanson, University of Calgary president Elizabeth Cannon and Ihsaan Gardee of the National Council of Canadian Muslims (Howell, 2014b, p. A10).

What can we learn from this?

This is a good example of a collaborative effort to build community resilience and foster relationships to help deal with a crisis within the community. It is important for individuals within the community to have the right training to deal with different crises. The conference featured speakers from other communities and disciplines, which emphasises the importance of recognising that "radicalization" is an issue that requires a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach.

Conclusion

Though the focus was on "radicalization," these Calgary cases demonstrate how communities can deal with other crises. Chris Boudreau demonstrates how individuals can address gaps in community resources, in this case it was support for families of "radicalized" individuals, by reaching out to other organizations and individuals dealing with similar issues. The rally against ISIS demonstrates the importance of not only condemning extremists, but also

the importance of other faith communities showing support for communities impacted by extremist ideologies. This includes refuting stereotypes and reaching out to the group impacted by the crisis like how Rev. Brubaker Garrison reached out to the Islamic community. The OWN IT conference is an important example of building individual capacities within a community to address crises. Overall, these cases demonstrate how individuals and communities can work together to address gaps in community resilience to deal with issues like extremism.

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VANCOUVER MEDIA SCAN

The main theme that emerged from the Vancouver media scan was fostering intercommunity relationships, both in the present and in the past. As well, there were a number of stories dealing with gang violence. This scan conducted a search for stories on the CBC and CTV Vancouver websites; *Macleans* magazine; *Huffington Post Canada*; and *The Vancouver Sun* and *The Province* using keywords like “Racism”, “Anti-Semitism”, “Islamophobia” and “Radicalization” to identify newspaper stories between August 2013 and August 2014. First, this section addresses initiatives to build intercommunity engagement between Vancouver’s cultural communities. Second, it discusses reflections on Vancouver’s racist past and how different communities cooperated during this time. Finally, it examines initiatives to deal with gang violence.

Intercommunity Engagement

The lack of intercommunity engagement and understanding in Vancouver’s multicultural society was a major issue. In one article, anti-racism activist Mo Dhaliwal likened the lack of intercultural integration to existing “in a giant Bento Box, where, instead of an integrated society, we exist in compartments, with a subtle racism and misunderstanding filling the divides” (Olivier, 2013, p. A10). Dhaliwal also discusses the roles of so-called “ethnic enclaves” in Surrey. While stating that they are a “welcoming and safe transition point” for immigrant families, Dhaliwal argues “that these enclaves do more harm than good as they discourage interaction and, in some cases, breed further misunderstanding” (Dhaliwal quoted by Olivier, 2013, p. A10). Dhaliwal believes that individuals must address their internal prejudices in order to move towards a more integrated society as he states: “When you don’t understand that you and all the others around you are an integral part of a greater system, your capacity to actually deal with large problems is incredibly diminished” (Dhaliwal quoted by Olivier, 2013, p. A10).

Other articles discussed discrimination occurring between different groups within so-called ethnic enclaves. Journalist Cheryl Chan (2013) wrote about racism between immigrants from mainland China and immigrants from Hong Kong (as well as other ethnically Chinese immigrants from southeast Asian countries) (p. A14). Chan interviews Alden Halbacon, director of intercultural understanding at the University of British Columbia who states that tension between members of similar ethnic communities is nothing new. Halbacon notes that “Multiculturalism emerged out of an intent to be inclusive, he said. It is not *carte blanche* to practise beliefs and traditions if those beliefs and traditions exclude others.” (Chan, 2013, p. A14).

A few articles discussed different initiatives to promote more intercultural integration and understanding. One such initiative was Cycling4Diversity founded by Ken Herar in 2011. According to Herar:

During Cycling4Diversity Week in B.C., which is held every May, the C4D team seeks to foster intercultural relationships by encouraging students and citizens to expand their circle of friends by connecting with people from various backgrounds, showing respect for differences and encouraging inclusion in their schools and communities (Herar, 2013, p. A14).

Another article discusses the importance of building bridges between communities and local initiatives working to foster intercultural relationships. As the author, Tung Chan (2013) states

...we need to build more social pathways to help people cross cultural barriers. If a geographically isolated community is not connected with society we would not label people in those communities as not willing to connect with others. We would build roads and highways to help them to connect. But we blame people who live in their own cultural communities for not trying to reach out. We label their neighbourhoods with the pejorative term “enclave” ... (p. A10)

Chan (2013) shares different initiatives in the Vancouver area working on fostering intercultural relationships including Dialogues Inspired by Cooking and Food, an initiative started by the Surrey Welcoming Communities Committee featuring six evenings of food from different regions providing “...dialogue based on the notion that through the age old practice of breaking bread with strangers, you also break down barriers” (p. A10). Another initiative is The World in Burnaby, which includes a storytelling festival and a “Welcoming Acts pledge campaign, which invites people to commit to one small act to make a newcomer feel welcome” (p. A10).

What can we learn from this?

Dhaliwal’s “bento box” analogy is important as it points out the need for communities to further integrate. Cheryl Chan’s article not only disputes the common misconception that all “enclaves” are homogenous, it also stresses the importance of building stronger intercommunity ties in order to build a more inclusive society. Tung Chan also makes an important point of building bridges, rather than judging groups for living in so-called enclaves. Initiatives like Cycling4Diversity and dialogues inspired by food are good examples of using common interests (like cooking and cycling) as a mode of fostering stronger intercommunity relationships (or building bridges). In order to be resilient, communities need to build strong intercultural relationships to build a stronger society as a whole and to be able to collaborate in times of major change or crisis.

Vancouver’s Racist History

Another prominent theme was British Columbia’s racist past (Chinese head taxes, Japanese internment, etc.). This is most likely due to the 100 year Anniversary of the Komagatu Maru, a ship full of would-be immigrants from India who were refused entry into Canada in 1914, because of Canada’s racist immigration laws. The ship was forced to go back after being in Canadian waters for two months. When the ship arrived in India, a riot ensued and nineteen people were killed by police forces (Wallace, 2014, p. A18). As well, the BC government was issuing apologies for racist laws like the Chinese head tax (Hoekstra, 2014, p. A4).

There were a number of articles that not only acknowledged Canada’s racist past, but also provided examples of how communities collaborated, even under racist laws. One article refers to Surrey Art Gallery curator and cultural historian Naveen Girm’s research on Indo-Canadian history, which “...revealed lost tales of intercultural integration: a Chinese photographer famed for Indo-Canadian portraits, a Hindu paper printed on a Chinatown press” (Olivier, 2013, p. A10).

Another example of intercultural cooperation is in a piece written by a reader, Kelvin Higo, which shares the story of his community, Stevenston, As Higo (2013) states,

After the Japanese were evacuated from the West Coast they were finally allowed to return in 1950. A few years later the community approached the Japanese-Canadians about joining them to build a community centre rather than building separate facilities. Keep in mind that this occurred a few years after the Japanese-Canadians were stripped of civil rights and interned during the war. The Japanese-Canadian elders thought this would help with the healing and thus donated \$15,000 toward the construction of the Steveston Community Centre (p. A12).

The community then came together to build the Steveston Martial Arts Centre, which was then followed by the Steveston Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre. (Higo, 2013, p. A12)

What can we learn from this?

Not only is it important to acknowledge racism in the past, it is also important to look at historical examples of resilience and cooperation, where despite racial tension and conflict, some communities still managed to thrive and work together. Naveen Girn's example reveals how different communities (Chinese and Indian) showed signs of intercultural cooperation in early Canadian history. Higo's story of the Steveston community not only demonstrates examples of how communities heal after a crisis, like Japanese internment, it also demonstrates how cultural communities make valuable contributions to the wider community.

Gang Violence

There were quite a few stories surrounding gang violence with a focus on the Red Scorpions and United Nations gangs in Surrey and Abbotsford. This focus on gang-related violence came out of the 2013 trial for the notorious "Surrey Six" gang massacre in 2007. The majority of stories discussed gang violence from a law enforcement perspective (e.g. arresting perpetrators, finding witnesses for unsolved murders.) However, one story discussed police prioritizing prevention in order to reduce gang violence. According to Kash Heed, a Vancouver police officer, law enforcement should develop programs focused on preventing youth from joining gangs. According to Heed,

There are so many other components that have to come together to prevent kids from getting involved in this activity. While law enforcement is doing their job, there are so many missing stakeholders that are not doing their job. That's a concern for me. (Heed quoted by Bolan, 2014, A9)

Heed suggested creating an anti-gang strategist position. This strategy has been successful in L.A; after the opening of the Gang Reduction and Youth Development office in 2007, gang crime "plummeted to near-historic lows" (Bolan, 2014, p. A9). B.C.'s anti-gang Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit has also developed a campaign called End Gang Life, educating youth on the consequences of gang life, which they have taken to several schools and community forums (Bolan, 2014, p. A9).

What can we learn from this?

Similar to other initiatives in Canada to end youth gang violence, like WrapEd in Edmonton, this is another example of how gang-related violence is not only a policing issue, but an issue that must also include input from other members of the community. Gangs often provide youth with a sense of value and community, so in order to turn youth away from gangs, it is

important to develop ways in which youth can feel that same sense of value and purpose within their own communities (cultural, municipal, religious etc.).

Conclusion

It is understandable that Vancouver, a historically diverse city as well as a city with a racist past, is dealing with issues of cross-cultural understanding and integration (not so say that other Canadian cities are dealing with similar issues). The main stories coming out of Vancouver focused on how Canadians in the past and in the present tried to build a stronger and safer society. Intercommunity initiatives like Cycling4Diversity, work to build better community understanding and build cross community ties emphasising how diversity can be a strength. The stories from Vancouver's past demonstrate how certain ethnic communities, despite not being considered full citizens, still build cross-cultural ties and made major contributions to their communities. The Vancouver police's reaching out to communities to end gang violence is another example of building safer communities. Overall, these stories showcase how Canada's multicultural communities can be as source of help, and not a hindrance to building community resilience.

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MONTREAL MEDIA SCAN

In the past year there were a number of incidents in Montreal involving racism, discrimination, and cases of community resilience in responding to these issues. A search was conducted for stories on the CBC Montreal and CTV Montreal websites; Macleans magazine; Huffington Post Canada; and the Montreal Gazette (using the Lexis Nexis database) using keywords like “Racism”, “Anti-Semitism”, “Islamophobia” and “Radicalization” (the last category did not yield many results) between January 2013 and August 2014. The main incident was the controversial Bill 60 also known as the Values Charter. Aside from the charter, other major incidents were the opening of a Montreal chapter of the controversial Jewish Defense League, Public Safety Minister Steven Blaney’s reaction to Justin Trudeau’s visit to a Montreal mosque, and Montreal Canadien’s P.K. Subban responding to racist tweets. Overall, the common thread between these incidences was responding to threats that may harm peaceful coexistence and cooperation. First, this section will discuss the above-mentioned incidents and then it will look at the Charter.

Justin Trudeau’s Mosque visit

Three years after Trudeau visited the Al-Sunnah Al-Nawabiah mosque in Montréal, Public Safety Minister Steven Blaney criticized him stating that, “It is completely unacceptable that Liberal leader Justin Trudeau would associate with a group that allegedly radicalizes Canadians to join al-Qaeda and engage in acts of unspeakable violent extremism....Now he is pandering for votes amongst religious extremists in our own communities” (CBC, 2014). Trudeau was also heavily criticised by *Sun News*. According to the CBC (2014), the mosque was “...Declared by the US to be one of nine places worldwide where ‘known al-Qaeda members were recruited, facilitated or trained’” (CBC, 2014). Several men who went through that mosque in the 1990’s were detained in the wake of 9/11 (CBC 2014). Articles featured reactions from other liberal members calling Blaney’s statement a character smear and questioning why the Harper government is not acting if they consider this Mosque to be a security threat (CBC 2014). This sentiment was also reflected in the some of the reader comments.

The Montreal Gazette featured an editorial repsonding to this incident. The editorial “Creating a Bogeyman; The fuss about Justin Trudeau’s Visit to a Park ex Mosque is Unwarranted and Disturbing” was written by Ihsaan Gardee, the executive director of the National Council of Muslims. Gardee criticises both Blaney and *Sun News*’ treatment of the incident as unfair to both Trudeau and Muslims. Gardee (2014) states:

Had Sun News done its basic job as a news organization, it would have learned that this mosque has not only been visited by Trudeau, but by several other politicians and prominent officials, including former Bloc Québécois leader Gilles Duceppe and the United States consul general. They would have also discovered that the mosque frequently hosts interfaith events and activities for women, and is open to people of various religious viewpoints and practices (p. A15).

Gardee (2014) cites Canadian academics like Mahmood Eid , Ross Perigo, and Jasmine Zine to position this incident as part of a larger phenomenon where Muslims are portrayed as “Other” and threats to “Western values and norms” (p. A15). As Gardee (2014) states:

This latest non-story falls neatly into this deceitful trope and represents political theatre at the expense of minority communities. After all, it was Public Safety Minister Steven Blaney who led the charge in describing Trudeau's visit to the Assuna-Annabawiya mosque in Park Ex as "pandering for votes among religious extremists in our own communities" (p. A15).

These forms of “political theatre” used by politicians to place their opponents in an unfavorable light end up harming minority communities. Near the end of the piece, Gardee (2014) points out that, “Blaney should be reminded that his own government included a member of the controversial Jewish Defense League of Canada as part of its official delegation to Israel ... The American JDL was officially ‘deemed a right-wing terrorist group’ by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation in 2001. France is currently considering banning its national JDL branch” (p. A16). In this sense, if security is the minister’s main source of concern, the actions of his own party should also be put under scrutiny.

What can we learn from this?

Some public figures may use forms of political theatre at the expense of other groups to win support, and a good way to respond to this is, like Gardee, to draw up a well-researched response correcting the public figure’s assumptions and pointing out the harm that these assumptions pose to different groups. This incident also provides an example of holding other media outlets, *Sun Media* in this example, accountable for properly researching their stories.

The Jewish Defense League Montreal Chapter Opening

Another major incident was the opening of a branch of the Jewish Defense League in Montreal. The JDL claim to fight anti-Semitism by “whatever means necessary” (CTV, 2014). According to the CBC, “The JDL’s tactics, including militant counter-protests and confrontations at anti-Israel demonstrations, have earned the league both attention and strong criticism” (CBC, 2014a). The JDL were also deemed a terrorist group in the United States. According to the CBC, “The FBI identified the organization as a “right-wing terrorist group,” in a report on terrorism in 2000 and 2001, citing a thwarted bomb plot in 2001 against a California mosque that involved members of the JDL”(CBC, 2014a). Additionally, JDL members have been linked to incidents in the past few decades involving vandalism, assault, explosive devices and firebombs (CBC, 2014a). The JDL claim that their activities “...are acts of self-defense or retaliation for anti-Semitic incidents” (CBC, 2014a). The JDL are not considered a terrorist group in Canada; the group has a presence in Toronto, but it mostly seeks legal avenues of action (Scott, 2014, p. A6).

Talks of the JDL’s establishment of a Montreal chapter was met by condemnation both within and outside of the Jewish community. Media outlets focused on the Jewish community’s reaction. Rabbi Reuben Poupko from the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs stated that he

understands that Jews may be worried about attacks, but he does not see a need for the JDL in Montreal. Poupko states, "If they are coming here to engage in street confrontations with pro-Palestinian supporters that is to no one's benefit it only harms the social harmony of Montreal," (CTV, 2014a). Poupko believes their "belligerent stance" is not helpful in improving community relations: "They have in no way made a positive contribution to Toronto, where they're centred"(Scott, 2014, p. A6). The CBC also interviewed David Ouellette, an associate director at Montreal's Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs. According to the CBC, "Ouellette said the JDL hasn't had a presence in Quebec in years and has had a difficult time establishing itself in any significant way" (CBC, 2014a). Ouellette stated that "They really stand on the fringes of our community...As an organization, they're a very, very small, marginal group based in Toronto which makes little inroads in the mainstream Jewish community" (CBC, 2014a). Israeli diplomat Joel Lion, consul general to Israel in Montreal stated that the JDL has no place handling anti-Semitic hate crimes. Lion states: "We're hoping that the police will do everything in their capacity to assure the safety and the defense of the Jewish members of the community here. That's the role of the police, not the role of a vigilante group" (CBC, 2014a). According to *The Gazette*, The Collectif Québécois contre l'islamophobie, launched a petition calling on Quebec Public Security Minister Lise Thériault to ban the JDL (Scott, 2014, p. A6).

What can we learn from this?

One potential lesson from this incident is not to give into fear as the "belligerent" and "vigilante" tendencies of the JDL could have easily been feeding off of the fear within the Jewish community. It is better for communities to collaborate with law enforcement to prevent and report on hate crimes, rather than resorting to forms of vigilante justice. The fact that the JDL are being condemned by community leaders within the Jewish community for posing a harm to social harmony demonstrates prioritising social harmony over fear.

P.K. Subban and racist tweets

Another popular story in Montreal involved Canadiens defenseman P.K. Subban; this incident happened on Twitter. Though Subban is an athlete and not necessarily the leader of a given community, as a celebrity he is a public figure. When Subban scored two overtime goals during a second round playoff game, several Boston fans took to twitter and tweeted racist remarks about him. The n-word was briefly trending on Twitter in Boston that night (Therriault, 2014). Sports writers mentioned the NHL community's reaction to this incident. As one *Gazette* writer states "The Canadiens and Bruins often clash on the ice, but they were united Friday in condemning racist remarks on Twitter aimed at P.K. Subban" (Branswell, 2014, p. B3). Representatives of both the Bruins and Canadiens organizations denounced the racists Claude Julien, the Bruins coach stated. "It's just poor judgment, poor taste, and we don't associate ourselves with people like that, and people who think that way are not what we call our fans,"(Todd, 2014, p. B1). Praise for Subban's reaction by sportswriters was common. I included his full statement:

What people may say on Twitter or social media is not a reflection by any means of the league or the Boston Bruins. So whoever that is, they'll get dealt with, but it's completely separate from this league or the Boston Bruins organization. I know some of those players personally on that team. Like I said, the fan base has been awesome. They are a great bunch of fans. It's unfortunate when things take away from the great hockey that

was played (on Thursday). It was a fantastic game, great for the league, great for hockey and that's what we are going to talk about. So I'm happy now that we can just move on. You know what the funny thing is, is that we get stronger as a league, you see how people come together and it's great. And it's not just about me. The NHL has tons of players from different backgrounds, from different places around the world and that's what makes this league so special and that's what makes sports so special, it brings everybody together. (P.K. Subban quoted, by Branswell, 2014, p. B3)

What we can learn from this?

Subban responded by not associating all Boston fans with the racist behaviour, but recognised that those were people on the fringes. In addition to this, he did not respond with anger and reinforced some of the inclusive aspects of hockey; for example, mentioned other players of different backgrounds joining the NHL. This could also be an example of not letting the actions of a few people within a community, be it fans of a team or people of a particular cultural background, define the community as a whole. (As a side note, could a possible activity be looking at Subban's statement and discussing how it shows signs of resilience?)

The Charter of Values

The proposed Quebec Charter of Values or Bill 60 was the most prominent issue for several communities in Montreal, religious communities in particular. Bill 60 proposed banning the wearing of “ostentatious” religious symbols in the public sector such as turbans, hijabs, kippas and large crosses (For the remainder of this report I will use the words “charter”, values charter, and Bill 60 interchangeably). During the media scan, two main issues regarding the charter became obvious. The first issue was the facilitation of inter-community and interfaith dialogue for events condemning the charter. At the same time, there were incidences where imprecise planning resulted in some communities feeling left out. The second issue focused on how the emergence of the charter debates led to the erosion of the social climate with a focus on hate crimes, mostly aimed at Muslims—Muslim women in particular.

Interfaith Collaboration

Because the charter targeted several religious groups including, Sikhs, Jews and Muslims, there were several interfaith efforts made to protest the charter. Many community and spiritual leaders felt that despite charter's unfair proposal, it brought communities closer together (Scott, 2014, p. B3). There were interfaith events at synagogues and Sikh temples. When referring to the anti-charter protests, Sara Parks, director of the McGill Office of Religious and Spiritual Life stated: "There were Jews and Muslims and Sikhs and Catholics and all kinds of people all walking along together, which was a magical thing to see" (Quoted by Scott, 2014, p.B3). At the same time, there was a major oversight when organizers of the anti-charter rally held it on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar. This meant that many Jews could not attend. Some Jewish groups also did not attend because of some of the organizers like the Collective Against Islamophobia due to “religious radical fundamentalists” to who they “will not make common cause” (Lee, 2013, p. A14).

Not only were there protests, several organizations collaborated to create educational events and panel discussions. One example of this is the Montreal World Hijab Day at Concordia with panel discussions to “spread awareness about religious head covering” (Sutherland, 2014, p.

A13). The first World Hijab Day was held in New York; this was Montreal's first time holding the event. Representatives of other faiths attended the event like Gwenda Wells, an Anglican minister who came to the meeting "as an act of solidarity with the Muslim women" (Sutherland, 2014, p. A13). Another panel discussion featuring six academics and faith leaders was hosted by Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom in collaboration with the McGill Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism, the Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Montreal, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, and the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre (Schwartz, 2013, A4). At the event Law Professor Daniel Weinstock discussed the role of islamophobia in the charter he stated:

Islamophobia is at the base of this...I see my female students wearing veils. And I feel for them because they are being targeted at the moment. ..If there is a lesson, it is that we have to stand with the people who are under the gaze of injustice. We have to stand with our Muslim brothers and sisters. (Quoted by Schwartz, 2013, A4)

Other panellists included Rabbi Lisa Grushcow, senior rabbi at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom, Leila Bedeir of the Collective des féministes musulmanes du Québec, and Mukhbir Singh, vice president for Quebec and Atlantic Canada of the World Sikh Organization of Canada.

In addition to panel events, there were collaborative creative projects. One example of this being a YouTube video created by the Christian and Jewish Dialogue Montreal, a multi-faith group founded in 1971 (Schwartz, 2013, A4). The video entitled "Nous Somme Québécois" (see link below), features different faith groups Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, Catholics and Jews, to name a few, discussing what it means to be a Quebecer. Namely, how their religious identity does not change their identity as a Quebecer or their profession. Another example of this is a photo of a young woman at an anti-charter protest wearing a Quebec flag as a hijab (Shingler, 2013)

"Nous Somme Québécois" video

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4f4OVWtJH0>

Other articles mentioned public institutions like school boards and municipalities condemning and opposing the charter. These groups included four Montreal universities and the Université de Sherbrooke, The English Montreal School Board, Lester B. Pearson School Board, the city of Montreal, and the town of Hampstead (Scott, 2013, p. A4).

What can we learn from this?

These examples demonstrate the importance of interfaith and intercultural initiatives like joint protests and promoting understanding through multi-faith educational events. At the same time, it demonstrates the importance of careful planning for multi-faith events like protests to make sure that the beliefs of all participating groups are respected, so as not to create any barriers. The incident where some Jewish groups pulled out of the protest due to the organisers, raises the importance of promoting inter-community dialogue to find common ground (I am not too sure about this one). The CJDM video project provides a great example of using creative means to express resilience in light of the Charter debate.

Violence against Muslim women

Another common theme related to the charter was a surge in intolerant behaviour and attacks, the harassment of Muslim women in particular, while the charter was being debated.

Some examples include the release of YouTube footage of a Muslim woman being harassed on a bus, a mosque being defaced with pig's blood (Anonymous, 2013, p.A24), and hateful comments being spread on social media when an individual took a photo of two female daycare workers wearing full veils without their permission and posted it online. This photo was also featured on a Sun news segment (Scott, Nov 28, 2013, p. A4). Many articles mention that the Quebec Collective Against Islamophobia had received 117 complaints of verbal or physical abuse while the charter was being debated (between September 15-October 15), compared to a total of 25 complaints in the seven-month period of January to July 2013 (Scott, 2013, p. A4). The majority of the victims were said to be women (114 of the 117 complaints) only three of whom did not wear a head scarf (Montgomery, 2013, A4). At the same time, The Muslim Council of Montreal president Salam Elmenyawli did say "that he was 'elated' by the number of supportive emails and phone calls he has received, especially from non-Muslim women wanting to wear the hijab in solidarity" (Montgomery, 2013, A4).

What can we learn from this?

Aside from reporting violent acts, it is important to support groups being targeted. At the same time, it is common for news organizations to elevate the level of fear by constantly highlighting these acts. Having said this, leaders should critically assess how these events are covered, (e.g. Muslim women constantly being portrayed as victims) while still empathizing with the communities impacted by these acts.

Conclusion

Overall, these stories highlight how communities, individuals, and organizations respond to threats to community resilience like racism and sectarianism. Representatives from the Muslim community provided a composed response to Blaney's comments highlighting the negative impacts statements like his have on minority communities. Members of the Jewish community rejected the establishment of the JDL as their actions often come from a place of fear and would disrupt social harmony. P.K. Subban demonstrated resilience in response to the racist tweets about him with a calm response highlighting the general tolerance and friendliness of Boston fans, and not focusing on the racist fans on the fringes. In response to the charter, several secular and faith-based organizations worked collaboratively to condemn the charter through creative works, educational events, and protests to showcase how their religious identity did not interfere with their identity as Quebecers. In this case, resilience is working collaboratively and proactively to potential threats to community coexistence.

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LONDON MEDIA SCAN

The main event in London this past year, was the case of two London residents who attacked a gas plant in Algeria as part of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). A search was conducted for stories on the CBC, CTV London and London Free press websites; *Macleans* magazine and *Huffington Post Canada* using search keywords like “Racism”, “Anti-Semitism”, “Islamophobia” and “Radicalization” between January 2013 and August 2014. This report will focus on how the community and law enforcement officials responded to the event. First this section will provide a summary of the event. Second, it will discuss how individuals who knew the three young men reacted to the event and their accounts of how these individual’s behaviour changed prior to the attack. The last section will examine how community leaders, experts and academics identified the issues and challenges with this and other “radicalization” cases.

The Algerian Gas Plant Attack

The Algerian gas plant attack and ensuing siege that lasted four days, took place on January 16, 2013. A total of 37 hostages and 29 terrorists were killed. The two London natives Ali Medlej and Xris Katsiroubas who took part in the attack were also killed (Ayed, 2013). A third individual, Aaron Yoon who like Katsiroubas, was a convert, was a close friend of the two young men and travelled with them to North Africa. Yoon did not take part in the attack as he was arrested in Mauritania on terrorism-related charges. He was later released and brought back to Canada in July of 2013. Yoon denies any ties with terrorist groups and claims to have gone to North Africa to study Islam (Richmond, 2013).

Community Reactions

With the exception of Medlej, all three men were converts. According to interviews with friends, and acquaintances, all three individuals were looking for a more “radical” path, something they couldn’t find at the mosque or youth centre (CBC 2013; O’Brien and Richmond, 2013). Several articles featured accounts from friends and acquaintances of the young men, stating how they noticed changes in their behaviour. One of Medlej’s friends recounted a disturbing conversation, when Medlej was “wrestling with a spiritual pursuit” and “did not want to give up girls or drinking” (CBC, 2013). Ali told him that,

There's things that I just can't give up on in my lifestyle, and it's hard for me to be a practicing Muslim, so why don't I just be a *shaheed* [martyr] and go straight to heaven instead of all the effort that I can't seem to do (CBC 2013).

A former colleague who worked with Yoon in 2008 and 2011, said she noticed a change in his personality over time:

He just didn’t have that spark. He wasn’t that friendly, outgoing guy anymore. He just seemed lost and kind of dead inside. He had a lot of friends. He was very sociable. But then he just didn’t want to talk to anyone. He didn’t open up to anyone. It was just him and his religion and his job. That's it (Quoted by Ayed 2013).

What can we learn from this?

These accounts demonstrate the importance of identifying signs that an individual may be distressed and/or “radicalized.” Yoon’s former colleague’s account in particular demonstrates a need for establishing personal connections, so individuals feel safe opening up to other people. Medlej’s case of seeking “martyrdom” or “direct entrance into heaven”, is another example of a red flag for someone in crisis or a very simplistic and destructive view of spirituality that could have been addressed. It is important for a community to build strong in order to prevent destructive behavior and potentially save lives.

Policing and Prevention: Experts Weigh in

In the coverage of the events, representatives from law enforcement, community leaders, and security experts provided insights into what happened. Dr. Wadeel Haddarra, a board member of a London mosque discusses the challenges of dealing with “radicalized” individuals.

It must be incredibly difficult for law enforcement and intelligence officers to know exactly when to pull the trigger. Too early and they’re accused of fear-mongering and profiling. Too late and well . . . this. But there must be a better way . . . If CSIS had these guys on their radar and decided no action was necessary, how can community leaders be expected to take action? Here is the government agency that does this full time, evidently didn’t find anything questionable that would necessitate any sort of legal action . . . so what am I (as Muslim) expected to do? (Haddarra quoted by O’Brien, J. and Richmond, R., 2013a).

Another article featured an Interview with Lorne Dawson, a professor of Sociology at the University of Waterloo. Who specialises in religious movements and “radicalization.” Dawson (2013) states,

The thing that seems to be emerging is we are dealing with primarily young men . . . who are really having trouble with identity issues. All young guys have trouble with identity issues. These guys are different. They have a good sense that the world is a disappointing place, the world is not what they hoped it would be. They are imbued with a sense they want to do what is morally correct. They are increasingly seeing the world as a corrupt place. They are looking for some way that they can find an identity, they can have some purpose. They may be in situations where they are lacking guidance. Then they are exposed to the jihadi narrative. They convert to Islam but maybe there is not much support. They are outsiders at the mosque. They are online and there is the lure and the appeal and the moral justification of defending Islam against outside forces that are committing atrocities. (Dawson quoted by Richmond and O’Brien, 2013)

Juneau-Katsuya, a former senior CSIS intelligence officer and a security expert stated the importance of understanding societal factors that contribute to “radicalization,”

Since 9/11, there have been 30 bombings in Canada — none related to al-Qaida. It seems every large political rally turns into a clash between extremists and police... We have extremists of all sorts, of all shapes, of all colours in Canada. We've got to try to understand how it's happening and more importantly the signs. We don't have enough research; we don't have enough understanding [...] Canada's a democracy where extreme views will always be expressed... But parents, other relatives, educators and friends need to know when and how someone is turning to violence. (Juneau-Katsuya, quoted by Richmond, 2013)

What can we learn from this?

This case addresses the difficulty of working within the so-called “pre-criminal” space when the person in question has not given any indication of conducting a violent attack. Community leaders are unable to keep track of all members and do not know what law enforcement knows, and law enforcement cannot act without enough information. Again, this case demonstrates a need for resources and initiatives to build stronger ties between community members, so it is easier for communities to assist distressed community members and help them access the resources they need (e.g. mental health support, spiritual guidance etc.).

The assessments from Juneau-Katsuya and Dawson point out the major societal factors that contribute to “radicalization” including the nature of political movements within Canada. The fact that “violent radicals” come from different ideological backgrounds could stress the need for more intercommunity work on “radicalization.” Sharing resources could help build stronger community ties and provide a more effective response to “radicalization.”

Conclusion

The incident in Algeria demonstrates gaps in community resilience, or a lack of resources to help those who have been drawn to violence. As demonstrated in all three cases, addressing “radicalization” usually starts at a personal level. In other words, it is usually those who are in close contact with the “radicalized” individual, such as friends, family, or fellow community members, who are the first to notice the change in their behaviour; because they have not plotted and or committed any crime yet, it is difficult to justify the involvement of law enforcement. Having said this, it is important for individuals within a community, or the individual's peers (as opposed to community leaders) to receive the proper training to help individuals who have been “radicalized” before they act. Though community leaders are also important, they may not have the same contact with an individual than the individual's peers within the community. It is also important to recognize that “radicalization” is not simply a “Muslim issue” and occurs in other religious and political communities. For this reason, it is also important to reach out to other communities in order to share strategies and gain new perspectives on dealing with “radicalization.” In addition to this, it may be helpful for some “radicalized” individuals whose “causes” may overlap (e.g. religious extremism and white supremacy). Overall, the London scan provides a lesson in the challenges of addressing “radicalized” individuals before they act.

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PART 2

INTERVIEWS/COMMUNITY INSIGHTS: NATIONAL OVERVIEW

Email questionnaires were sent to leaders and activists from the Greater Toronto Area, Ottawa, Edmonton, Calgary, Vancouver, Montreal and London. They had the following questions:

- What is your role?
- What are the major challenges facing your community?
- What resources are needed to face these challenges?
- How would you define community resilience?
- How do you build community resilience?
- Who in your city are important individuals and institutions working on community resilience?
- Are there research or institutional reports that address community resilience?

The interviews with community leaders and activists provided multiple perspectives on issues facing different communities. These issues included discrimination, unemployment, poverty, and criminal activity. Each participant provided a different definition of resilience. However, their definitions shared many similarities. For many, community resilience is demonstrated by how a community responds to crisis and change. Other leaders defined community resilience as what holds a community together and what makes it grow together to foster a sense of belonging. Overall, definitions of community resilience shared by each community leader emphasize the importance of building strong ties, which results in a stronger community response to major changes or crises.

Each leader suggested different methods of building community resilience including constructing individual resilience, developing strong ties across communities, and promoting empathy and understanding through honest communication. Most participants stressed the need for financial and human resources, institutions, and partnerships to develop more resilient communities that can effectively take on major social problems. Another common element to building community resilience was education; many leaders stressed the need of educational programs not only to equip future community leaders with certain skill sets, but also to build empathy and understanding.

These interviews also provided existing examples of resilience within communities across Canada ranging from organizations promoting intercommunity engagement through ideas and the arts like the *Silk Road Institute* in Montreal to public social spaces fostering community engagement like Celebration Square in Mississauga. Interviews with community leaders provided a glimpse into what is happening in communities across Canada, and what needs to happen in order to make these communities stronger.

List of Interviewees

Greater Toronto Area

- A.K
- S.Z

- C.C

Ottawa

- B.R
- J.L
- S.M
- H.V
- A.G

Edmonton

- O.Y

Calgary

- A.V
- P.C

Vancouver

- B.J

Montreal

- S.Z
- B.C
- A.S

London

- G.K

GREATER TORONTO AREA

What is your role?

A.K is an advisor for the *Communitas* project; he also does work for the city of Mississauga:

My role in my community, the city of Mississauga, is through a number of hats. I am a conversationalist, one who emphasizes the power of the narrative and how it relates to identity, belonging and diversity. Another role, or hat I wear, in the community, is how policy affects our spaces. It's not just policies from a municipal or by-law level but asking how do institutions, organizations, the corporate sector and our governments, of all levels, allow peoples to engage and interact with another that give authenticity for belonging. (A.K , November 5, 2014).

S.Z and C.C were participants in the *Community Resilience* project workshop for the GTA.

What are the major challenges facing your community?

S.Z identified a number of problems facing Muslim communities. As S.Z (2015) stated, As a member of the Canadian Muslim community, I would say that our biggest challenge is our inability to influence on issues that relate directly to Islam and Muslims in the post-9/11 world. Our lack of involvement or relationship with the media and political sphere renders our voice rather impotent when it comes to how people perceive us and the religion we adhere to. This is true for issues related to public safety and otherwise (S.Z , February 3, 2015).

C.C identified issues of inequality faced by professional women in Toronto. As C.C (2015) states,

Like most people, I belong to a number of communities. For the purposes of this exercise, I will speak to the community of brilliant and accomplished young professional women to which I belong in Toronto...Owing to the diversity of the community, individuals will face different challenges respectively. But in general, I would like to speak to the challenges posed by patriarchy, and the challenges posed by a hierarchical system far more comfortable with the status quo than integrating young people with new ideas in a meaningful way. As we advance in our careers, it will continuously be made apparent that young female professionals face very different challenges than young male professionals. We are not the future members of old boys' clubs... The barriers we face as young professional women are mutually reinforced by patriarchy and hierarchical systems that defend the status quo. (C.C, February 9, 2015)

According to A.K (2015), representation of minority groups in local politics is a major issue:

One of the biggest problems the city of Mississauga has is representation within its council. How do we achieve, or at least provide, more minorities with the right skill sets

to obtain a seat in council, school trustee and other municipally elected positions. In addition, how do we provide multicultural training for the current elected members of municipal politics to be accepting of change. (A.K, November 5, 2014)

Overall, the major issue each participant is dealing with are issues of inequality, be it sexism, unequal representation of minorities, or Islamophobia.

What resources are needed to face these challenges?

When asked how these issues could be addressed, each participant stressed the need for educating community members, community members getting involved with policy (through provincial or municipal government), and building institutions and structures to remedy these social problems.

According to S.Z (2015),

We need people who care to donate money, time, and resources to build institutions that not only help us become more influential on important policy matters, but is resourceful enough to give everyone involved certain incentives to keep participating. (S. Z, February 3, 2015)

For C.C, changes in policy and changes in social behavior are needed to address gender inequality. As C.C (2015) states,

We need internal and external structures that support unity; we need safe spaces to share stories; and we need allies who are willing to unlearn and unpack their biases and check themselves and their privileges. We need gender to stop being regarded as a fringe consideration, an add-on, an afterthought. We need female leaders who are not judged on their fashion choices but on their decision making abilities; we need rape jokes to NEVER be OK (and not just not OK to say – not OK to laugh at)... We need a more equitable gender and racial representation at City Hall; at the Provincial Legislature; and the House of Commons. We need more media coverage of campaigns spearheaded by courageous young women, such as the young women who are leading the We Give Consent campaign to have consent officially included in the sex education curriculum across Ontario. (C.C, February 9, 2015)

To A.K, educational programs and resources are needed for individuals to understand how the municipal government works and therefore encourage more participation in local politics. As A.K (2015) states,

Resources required are providing workshops, networking seminars and training on how governance works on the municipal level. It is also crucial for our trainees to understand how boards are structured. (A.K, November 5, 2014)

Overall, each participant emphasizes the need for educational programs to encourage participation in social change on a policy level (e.g. being active in politics at a provincial or municipal level) as well as changes in attitudes that encourage inequality (e.g. developing educational programs about consent).

How would you define community resilience?

Each participant was asked to provide a definition of community resilience. According to A.Z (2015) community resilience is "...the capacity of a community to withstand public misunderstanding and internal dislocations, the ability to control and regulate these negative forces, and to either change others or themselves for the better" (S.Z, February 3, 2015). According to C.C (2015), community resilience is...

...collectively learning and growing from experiences of pain and vulnerability and shame. Individuals who form a community may have experienced different pain, different hurt, and different sorrow; but by supporting one another, and learning and growing together, a community discovers its collective resilience. (C.C, February 9, 2015)

For A.K (2015) community resilience is "...the successful ability for a community to take on change, such as modernization, from within whilst remaining authentic to their identities." (A.K, November 5, 2014). Taken as a whole, each participant identifies community resilience as the way a community grows stronger while responding to crises and change.

How do you build community resilience?

Each community leader was asked to identify ways to build community resilience. According to S.Z (2015):

I think institutions are key, where people are given the opportunity to set up and participate in programs and initiatives that help them think through their own grievances and frustrations. These institutions also need to be equipped to deal with the public world, to influence public opinion, and to push for the best kind of public policy (S.Z, February 3, 2015).

According to C.C, understanding and trust are essential to building community resilience (C.C, February 9, 2015). As C.C (2015) states:

People need to actively listen to one another, and to figure out the myriad of ways in which members of the community prefer to communicate, which may change depending on the circumstances. For some people, sharing stories verbally is key; for others, sharing stories through (written, visual, spoken, movement) art is necessary for healing; for others, physical touch and non-verbal methods of communicating love are integral to unleashing resilience; for others still, sharing safe spaces such as houses of worship is essential, even if people are simultaneously engaged in solo activities like praying. The key is that there is no one size fits all method for building community resilience – the type of resilience that is built in a community is an organic and unique product of the community in which it is built. (C.C, February 9, 2014)

A.K. also emphasizes the importance of “spaces” for building community resilience and provides an example from a public square in Mississauga:

Building community resilience happens through a number of ways. One of which is allowing public spaces ownership to all. That sense of belonging and allowing an individual to feel a right to belong to their community is required to build community resilience. If we take an example, Celebration Square in the square one area is a wonderful example of how a public space is open to all. A number of events are held in the square, whether they be a film screening, festivals, political speeches, yoga or aerobic workshops. One of the most interesting things about this square is what happens either before or after the event. Parents bring their children to play, others bring their musical equipment to practise, some smoke the Arabic shisha/waterpipe, sports are played, etc. It is a place for all to come, feel welcomed and meet others. I think that the building of this public space is the perfect example of building community resilience. (A.K, November 5, 2014)

Overall, each participation stresses the role of “spaces” in fostering community resilience be it a community organization, public square, or safe space for people to heal.

Who in your city are important individuals and institutions working on community resilience? Are there research or institutional reports that address community resilience?

Participants were also asked to provide names of individuals and organizations working on community resilience and any major reports from local organizations addressing community resilience. S.Z (2015) provided a few examples from the Muslim community,

In the GTA, I would say the "Seekers Hub" initiative, led by Faraz Rabbani, is a good example of a place that provides resources for a better understanding of Islam. I would say that Abdullah Idris, the Secretary General of ISNA Canada is also an important leader in how the Muslim community functions. Rizwan Mohamed, Ihsaan Gardhee (NCCM)[*National Council of Canadian Muslims*], Imam Hamid Slimi, etc. are all pretty important. (S.Z, February 3, 2015)

According to C.C the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy is an important report addressing community resilience (C.C, February 9, 2015). C.C also believes that though many local organizations are focusing on community resilience, their approach can be limited. As C.C (2015) states,

Many mainstream think tanks and policy oriented organizations are focused on community resilience. While resilience can be defined in many different ways (environmental, emotional, spiritual, economic), and it is encouraging to see the current conversations occurring across this city on this topic, I fear that few organizations have been supported sufficiently in developing the capacity to discuss deeply painful issues that require immense amounts of community resilience. Tragic events are sensationalized, often victims are not even named, and then these life changing shocks become yesterday's news (C.C, February 9, 2015).

A.K (2015) identifies a few reports addressing community resilience: “United Way of Peel region has a number of reports that are interesting to look at - whether they be South Asian Women in the community or reports on multiculturalism” (A.K, November 5, 2014). With regards to individuals and organizations working on community resilience, A.K addresses the work of key public figures within the community:

I think when it comes to federal or provincial elections, there a number of key people who have persuasion in the community. These key people, who I will not name here, are also active in their communities to be a catalyst for change. Most importantly, these key figures understand how systems work so they can provide sound advice as to where to be active and explain to others which policies help a community prosper and which hinder its growth (A.K, November 5, 2014).

Conclusion

Each participant provided a different perspective on community resilience and though they came from different backgrounds and communities, there was a great deal of overlap in their responses. Participants identified educational programs and the development of inclusive spaces as important components to building community resilience. They also touched on themes raised in the media scan; for example C.C’s emphasis on building more community resilience to discuss painful or divisive issues relates to issues regarding the divisive frames used to discuss the Gaza conflict that often described it as a religious conflict. A.K’s discussion of individual involvement in local affairs is touched upon in the case of the Toronto Police’s PACER program which engages with communities representing black Canadian to address issues of inequality.

OTTAWA

What is your role?

Questionnaires were sent to B.R, A.G , H. V, J.L, S.M , and J.C. B.R and H,V were participants in the Ottawa Communitas workshop; H.V is also a teacher. S.M and J. L are on the advisory committee for Ottawa's Communitas project. A.G was a presenter at the workshop as well as a law student and activist within the Muslim community. J.C is also a community advocate within the ACB (African, Caribbean and Black) community "...and an ally for a variety of communities" (J.C, February 4, 2015).

What are the major challenges facing your community?

J.L, S.M and J.C noted that there were a variety of problems facing communities to which they belong. According to J.L (2014), problems in her community include, "gang violence, poverty, broken families, children growing up without structure at home, crime, teen pregnancy, violence against women and young girls. Children do not have safe spaces to play (parks)" (J.L, December 14, 2014). According to S.M , there are several problems facing the multiple communities to which she belongs. She (2014) states that:

There are various challenges in Ottawa, I identify as belonging to more than one community, and so there are various themes that sort of intersect. Some challenges I've recognized are issues of belonging, of loss of homeland, of identity, of opportunity, etc which then can lead to negative things. (S.M, February 2, 2015)

According to J.C, "The major challenges that are facing my community include job security, high incarceration rates, poverty, stigmatization, and various factors that affect their overall health" (J. C, February 4, 2015). Issues like the lack of safe spaces, stigmatization, and loss of identity tend to underlie wider problems facing the community like crime and gang activity.

B.R, A.G, and H.V identified problems facing their communities and problems in intracommunity relationships. According to H.R, "The major challenges facing my community involve people acting upon each other without trying to understand each other" (B.R, February 4, 2015). To A.G , there is a lack of resources to deal with problems facing Ottawa's diverse Muslim communities:

We face a severe lack of coordinated social services and efforts to address community needs are often hampered by the lack of resources dedicated to social affairs. We also struggle with giving adequate recognition to the need for long-term solutions to the disenfranchisement of many Muslim communities and the complete heterogeneity within segments of the broad Muslim community. (A.G, February 3, 2015)

According to H.V, there are problems with integration within Ottawa's diverse Muslim communities. As H.V (2015) states,

Integration and communication are required to overcome isolation and ghettoization. This, between various Muslim groups, and also with the greater regional, national, and international community. On the one hand, we have the Sunnis not talking to the Shia,

and the Shia not talking to the Sunnis ... Then, amongst Sunnis we have the issue of an "Arab" mosque, a "Somali" mosque, a "Pakistani" mosque, etc. We also have the issue groups ...not talking to each other, and each one claiming to speak for all Muslims in Canada. On the other hand, we have a new anti-terrorism rhetoric denouncing the evil of jihadism, Islamophobic cartoons in the name of free speech, and Muslims insisting on recreating existing services (like a food bank or a women's shelter) rather than working with, and improving, existing services. (H.V, February 4, 2015)

Taken as a whole, each community leader identifies major and often overlapping social problems facing their community. These problems could stem from issues of marginalization and the lack of intercommunity dialogue and engagement.

What resources are needed to face these challenges?

When asked how these issues could be addressed, most participants stressed the need for the development of intercommunity initiatives and educational programs. According to B.R, "There needs to be more practical education..." (B.R, February 4, 2015). According to H.V., not only was there a need for wisdom, there was a need for humility, "Patience and humility... a whole lot of humility, and a little wisdom, which sadly, can be hard to find in the climate of reactionary politics of this day and age" (H.V, February 4, 2015). According to A.G (2015), there needs to be "A strong coordinated social service element is important that needs to be legitimized and supported (with financial and human resources) from amongst Muslim organizations and individuals as well as local, provincial and federal governments" (A.G, February 3, 2015). According to J.L (2015), in order to face major challenges her community needs,

Attention from the municipality. Programs that could rehabilitate people back into the community. More community events. Programs to address gang violence. Free extracurricular activities for children from families living below the poverty line (art, sports, etc.). Neighbourhood watches. Training on event planning, conflict resolution, and leadership for youth. (J.L , December 14, 2014)

S.M states that there is no one size fits all solution but believes that major research projects like *Communitas* are helpful.

It's hard to figure out a blanket solution for all of the challenges in the Ottawa community, but a thing to help out with it would be think tanks and major research projects such as this. It helps narrow the issues a little bit, and allows community leaders to then create committees and small projects to tackle each issue one by one. Overall, the characteristics that are needed are determination, motivation, and the willingness to get things done. (S.M, February 2, 2015).

According to J.C (2015), in order to face major challenges her community needs, "Support from surrounding communities, access to information to better suit their needs... finances to support programs that will target the challenges my community faces (J.C, February 4, 2015). Taken as a whole, each leader stresses a need for programs that are not only tailored to specific issues, but

also programs that are collaborative and involve several community groups, government, researchers and other organizations.

How would you define community resilience?

Each respondent shared his/her definition of community resilience. Each one shared a different definition, but the definitions they shared tended to overlap. According to B.R. (2015), “Community resilience is the ability for a community as a whole to maintain composure and deal with any sort of threat” (B.R, February 4, 2015). To A.G. (2015), community resilience is, “A network of human relationships that can promote meaningful validation, recognition and response to any instance of harm or trauma on an individual or group basis” (A.G, February 3, 2015). H.V defines community resilience as, “The ability to work together to find creative solutions to problems” (H.V, February 4, 2015). To J.L (2015) community resilience is, “Learning how to come together to address issues, resolve conflict, and support one another” (J.L, December 14, 2014). According to S.M, “... community resilience is the way in which a community is pooling together their resources to strengthen their communities, and the ways in which each community overcomes the barriers and burdens placed on them (S.M, February 2, 2015). Finally, Colley defines community resilience as,

...the community’s ability to overcome unforeseen challenges. The ability to not lose faith, while difficult to come up with solutions to their problem. Where community members take active roles to encourage community members to work hard to overcome their challenges. Community resilience is seen when the pride of that community remains strong in the face of hardship (J.C, February 4, 2015).

Overall, to each of the respondents, community resilience demonstrates the strength of a given community and resilience is best demonstrated when a given community is facing a problem or a crisis.

How do you build community resilience?

Each participant also identified ways to build community resilience. According to B.R. (2015), “Community Resilience is built through education and the creation of stronger bonds within all the members of the community” (B.R, February 4, 2015). A.G (2015) believes that community resilience can be fostered...

By building meaningful relations within the community and by building and constructing a sense of reliance on one another within the community. A lot of this, in my opinion, comes down to the construction of a dynamic and vibrant identity of what we understand to be the Muslim community (A.G, personal communication February 3, 2015).

To H.V (2015) Community resilience can be built by “...first building ‘community, in a greater cooperative sense. That means breaking down the barriers of distrust...” (H.V, February 4, 2015). For J.L (2014) community resilience can be built by creating “Community events, neighbourhood events, learning about your neighbours, supporting community programming for youth, charity events” (J.L, December 14, 2014). According to S.M (2015),

The way in which I personally build resilience is by working with groups of other youth leaders who have strong skills such as passion, organization, delegation, etc. and work on long term solutions and analyses to strengthen our communities (S. M, February 2, 2015).

According to J.C (2015),

Community resilience starts from individual resilience. These same individuals are the ones to become community leaders that empower the rest of their community to act. You can build community resilience through the implementation of workshops that educate one's community and connecting with communities that may be undergoing the same challenges (J.C, February 4, 2015).

Taken as a whole, building community resilience for these community leaders not only involves social programs and resources, but also building stronger bonds within and outside of the community. As well, community resilience must be built on a micro level (individuals and smaller communities) in order to create a more resilient community as a whole.

Who in your city are important individuals and institutions working on community resilience?
Are there research or institutional reports that address community resilience?

The interviewees were also asked to provide names of individuals and organizations working on community resilience. B. R mentioned "The Ottawa Police and public leaders" (B.R, February 4, 2015). A.G. (2015) listed a few organizations in Ottawa's Muslim communities working on community resilience:

The Islam Care Centre, a number of individual Imams and national organizations like the National Council of Canadian Muslims and the Canadian Council of Muslim Women (especially through Community Resilience project) as well as media like the Muslim Link newspaper are helping to promote resilience (A.G, personal communication February 3, 2015).

H.V (2015) mentioned Project Communitas' National Coordinator, "There is a gentleman by the name of Stéphane Laurence-Pressault who is doing a wonderful job of introducing the community to the concept of resilience" (H.V, February 4, 2015). For J.L. (2015) "St. Laurent Complex, teachers at Queen Elizabeth Public School, Boys and Girls club on McArthur St., St. Mary's Home, St. Laurent library" (J. L, December 14, 2014), are organizations working on community resilience. S.M (2015) identified individuals working on community resilience on a spiritual level:

There are a lot of critical people and organizations in Ottawa that identify and work towards community resilience, to name a few, in terms of the (Islamic) spiritual aspect of resilience I would say many of the Imams I have encountered like Imam Zijad Delic, Imam Samy Metawaly, Imam Mohamed Jebara, Imam Sikander Hashimi, etc. Various cultural based organizations/institutions like the Somali Centre for Family Services, etc. (S.M, February 2, 2015).

J.C (2015) mentioned several organizations working on resilience:

Our CCSW Ottawa Team, Somerset West Community Health Centre have working on various projects of community resilience such as providing Entrepreneurial Workshops to the African, Caribbean, and Black (ACB) community for those that are interested in owning their own business - this workshop also directed interested participants to grants that were provided by a variety of government agencies and private organizations (J.C, February 4, 2015).

None of the respondents knew of any major reports on community resilience.

Conclusion

These community leaders provided different perspectives on community resilience, but their views overlapped in many cases; for example, most of the leaders saw community resilience as the ability to respond to threats or crises. The respondents also touched on some of the themes from the media scan, such as responding to crises in a reasonable manner, like Ottawa's police service and Muslim communities in the aftermath of the Ottawa shooting. They also emphasised the importance of collaborating with other organizations and levels of government, which was demonstrated by Aboriginal groups collaborating with provincial governments to address missing and murdered Aboriginal women. Community resilience, in this case, is having the capacity to respond to crises, and this capacity is built through the collaborative work of community organizations, governments, and individuals.

EDMONTON

What is your role?

Email questionnaire were sent to leaders and activists working in Edmonton and a response was received from O.Y. He is a chair of The Green Room, a youth program run by Islamic Social Services and Family Association (IFSSA), and he also serves on several community boards and teaches social entrepreneurship for an MBA program.

What are the major challenges facing your community?

According to O.Y, there are challenges with a sense of belonging, As O.Y (2015) states,

When the Green Room did an assessment, they found that there is a need for more youth drop-in programming based on research on youth development with a focus on belonging. This was after surveying several youth who were involved with their community and did not feel they belonged to any community (O.Y, January 13, 2015)

What resources are needed to face these challenges?

In order to foster a greater sense of belonging, O.Y believes that “We need relevant youth programming working on a personal development curriculum” (O.Y, January 13, 2015).

How would you define community resilience?

O.Y (2015) defined it as, “The ability to cope with and adapt to changing circumstances. It can be determined by how communities prepare people to adapt to changing circumstances” (O.Y, January 13, 2015).

How do you build community resilience?

O.Y(2015) stated that it is built by “Dynamic skill sets in the community preparing people for different careers as well as the development of toolkits, materials and resources for the community to access to build these skills” (O.Y, January 13, 2013).

Who in your city are important individuals and institutions working on community resilience? Are there research or institutional reports that address community resilience?

According to O.Y, there are several organizations working on community resilience in Edmonton. Some examples include “the Tarjuma foundation, IFSSA (Islamic Family and Social Services Association) from which the Green Room came and other city and academic institutions” (O.Y, January 13, 2013). With regards to research and institutional reports O.Y identified the Green Room’s needs assessment report from 2012, which features interviews of over a hundred people including youth, police and social workers (O.Y, January 13, 2013)

Conclusion

Overall, resilience in this case is built through education, skills development and fostering a sense of belonging. This relates to some of the themes on the media scan where initiatives like WrapEd, which was a collaborative effort of social, workers, cultural groups, and law enforcement to foster a sense of belonging in youth so they do not turn to gangs.

CALGARY

What is your role?

An email questionnaire was sent to leaders and activists working in Calgary and responses were received from A.V and P. C. A.V is a “Volunteer with Community Resilience project in Calgary, helping to organize and brainstorm for the sessions here” (A. V, January 5, 2015). P.C’s role is

...offering voluntary offering service to the WMI [*Western Muslim Initiative*] community, the New Muslim Circle community and to my family as well. I see myself as an informal spokesperson and informant on mental health and wellness, and as a promoter and initiator of creativity building and arts development (P.C, February 12, 2015).

What are the major challenges facing your community?

When asked to identify the major challenges facing their community, A.V was unsure and P.C (2015) identified a number of challenges facing the communities to which she belongs:

The problems are diverse and too many to list from amongst people from WMI and all involved or touched....so I'm not going to list all of them but some of what I've seen are finding mosque/Muslim spaces/events/ activities that are more inclusive of western culture and not just diverse immigrant culture. Islamophobia and feeling responsible to counter that. Struggles with issues affecting Muslims abroad as well as in our own city. With the New Muslim circle; I see a recurring issue is finding your own Muslim identity and not just adopting or assimilating another culture, feeling too much peer pressure and experiencing social alienation/poor integration with broader muslim communities. Women having a lot of issues with marriage, especially afterwards, getting married too quickly and to incompatible spouses who may be too traditional/or taking advantage of their naivety... and the repercussions it has negatively on their faith and practice and staying within the faith. Not enough resources or supports for converts who have mental health issues or just struggles; depression, isolation, poor self-esteem and confidence, not enough social support. (P.C, February 12, 2015)

What resources are needed to face these challenges?

P.C identified different resources to address each of these challenges. She states,

The resources needed to face Islamophobia would be training is needed in terms of how to do that and then for example funding to support people's projects. Same goes for the New Muslim Circle; more converts need to be trained as mentors for the newer/emerging converts (such trainings can be had at Taleef in Edmonton, or Zaytuna in San Francisco; money is needed to be able to attend these trainings and for accommodation) or for funding/support for some of the already trained mentors here in Calgary to be able to further train other converts here on how to mentor. We also need more training/research done for new convert females on how to approach/counsel them to be more informed before marriage. We need to teach people how to create better friendships, relationships,

how to build a small community of people who support and do activities together so converts feel less alone and isolated - once again we need training on how to do this, we need to learn the skills ourselves so we can impart them to others, and how to teach others such things (P.C, February 12, 2015).

Overall, P.C. , stresses the need for resources to facilitate support systems and the formation of stronger relationships through mentorship and education.

How would you define community resilience?

When asked to define community resilience, A.V defined it as “The ability understand each other, and to receive and honor Gods natural blessings” (A.V., January 5, 2015). According to P.C (2015) community resilience is

...that each member of the community is skilled in how to manage either crisis that comes their way, is aware enough and ethical/moral enough to not cause or create more trauma or pain or oppression and can come together to share resources, and activities to reach ultimate goals of wellness and thriving for all (P.C, February 12, 2015).

Both participants emphasize the importance of strong personal ties when defining community resilience.

How do you build community resilience?

According to A.V, community resilience is built by “Reduce Drug/Alcohol consumption. Honest communication, compassion to those in need. Protect the natural environment” (A.V, January 5, 2015). P.C acknowledges that community resilience can be built in a multitude of ways,

But to put it broadly; I would say that we need to teach people awareness and mindfulness skills so they are aware of their own motivations and desires, people need also a moral/ethical basis and framework - we all come from different beliefs and whatnot but there must be a basis of doing no harm to others that can be shared - we must ensure that the source of ethical/moral knowledge is free from corruption. People must be taught skills and literacy in many different areas that will enhance their development and empowerment. For instance, in Morocco, over 50% of people are illiterate, especially women, the more you increase literacy rates and then Quranic literacy it ultimately helps the women to raise better families and not be treated poorly so they become more resilient in that manner (P.C, February 12, 2015).

Each participant stresses the importance of compassion and understanding in building community resilience.

Who in your city are important individuals and institutions working on community resilience? Are there research or institutional reports that address community resilience?

A.V mentioned family, friends and the municipal government. In regards to written reports, A.V. stated that “City Hall released a document outlining budget plans for the municipal government, includes spending on Police and emergency services” (A. V, January 5, 2015). P.C (2015) listed several individuals and institutions:

In some of my communities; I believe that Western Muslim Initiative and the New Muslim Circle are organisations that are helping build resiliency. Also I do believe Alberta Health services is really doing a great job with their programs in mental health and wellness, and educational workshops to help empower patients to take better control of their lives and health. I also know Sameera is doing a good job with her outreach and development efforts through her work as an occupational therapist, Erin Vanderloop, her husband Anas, Chris Venus are doing excellent work with the outreach they've done with the New Muslim Circle as well as collaboration with WMI to help ensure they are social activities and alternative safe spaces for new emerging Muslims to find their own authentic Muslim voice and develop supports and relationships (P.C, personal communication February 12, 2015)

Conclusion

Taken as a whole, each leader highlights the importance of building empathy and understanding in order to foster community resilience. There is also an emphasis on building mentorship programs and support systems to help individuals and communities who are dealing with crises. This relates to themes in the Calgary media scan where various communities and organizations from different sectors worked together to prevent radicalization and to help those who are touched by this issue.

VANCOUVER

What is your role?

Email questionnaires were sent to leaders and activists working in Vancouver. A response was received from B.J who is a Community Advisor and a Masters' student in Engineering.

What are the major challenges facing your community?

When asked about the major challenges facing his community B.J (2015) stated, I think there is a lack of mobilization and programming; general community involvement, which is a symptom of a few things. One is a lack of knowledge and awareness of community building. They are not aware of the community. Also, we have a very transitional community. People come here, they move and they don't settle down. There is a high cost of living and thus it is a tough place for living. People mostly come here, gain experience and move away. The Muslim population isn't as large as other cities in Canada. In the wider community, income inequality and poor city layout are major challenges. These issues are real barriers for community engagement. People just can't volunteer because people are very busy trying to "make it." The high cost of living creates quite the sprawl and people end up very far from the city centre (B.J, February 3, 2015).

What resources are needed to face these challenges?

When asked to identify what resources are needed to deal with these challenges, B.J (2015) stated that,

We need a few more connectors in each community. These are people who are willing to make connections between people. I've met many people who are concerned about their community but for some reason their engagement is limited. Connectors are individuals who will draw links between people who are already here. This is what I am trying to do. By having a dialogue with people, you can prime a person in being connected to something. Specifically, within the Muslim community, there are a lot of internal politics and cultural baggage. The Muslim community needs to move beyond the mosque space. Expanding into schools, creating third spaces. The third space is very important. This is something that doesn't have a rigid leadership (i.e. an Imam) but there is still leadership in terms of youth. There are particular people in this space that are respected. Informal leadership. This is a place where people can go to connect and it is multipurpose; either network with other Muslims in the community but also having a safeness for the people who are on the fringes. Many Muslims in this community are distant from the religious community and have a hard time connecting with the mainstream community. We need human resources for this. (B.J , February 3, 2015)

How would you define community resilience?

According to B.J (2015) community resilience is "...what makes a community stick together in the face of any social ill or adversity" (B.J , February 3, 2015).

How do you build community resilience?

To B.J, community resilience is built on different levels. As B.J (2015) states,

There is an internal and individual aspect to it. A person needs to face what makes them feel uncomfortable. They need to rectify whatever is in their own control. On an external level, it is those people coming together and either informally or formally building those factors. This can be done through programs or just informally by connecting people together (B.J February 3, 2015).

Who in your city are important individuals and institutions working on community resilience?
Are there research or institutional reports that address community resilience?

B.J (2015) identified a few institutions that work on community resilience,

At an organizational level, the Muslim Food Bank in Surrey through their Hope program and the different programs they run through that project. They are working on social resilience, from addictions to helping the needy through food and connecting with existing social programs. The BCMA under the leadership Mufti Asim Rashid has done lots of work in the community (B.J February 3, 2015).

He also identified the University of British Columbia's Wellness and Resilience Centre as an institution working on community resilience. (B.J , February 3, 2015).

Conclusion

Taken as a whole, community resilience is not only built within a community, it is also built through making connections to other communities. This relates to themes in the Vancouver media scan, the "ethnic enclave" integration debate in particular, where individuals and organizations created initiatives like Cycling4Diversity in order to promote intercultural understanding and to build stronger intercommunity ties.

MONTREAL

What is your role?

Email questionnaires were sent to leaders and activists (A.S , S.Z , and B.C) in Montreal. A.S. considers herself “as both working with the youth, and an activist” (A. S, October 10, 2014). She is “an educator by profession” and a “tutor for teenagers at a non-profit organization (LAM), a curriculum specialist at Learning Bird, responsible for the communications for the Muslim organization ILM Foundation, and outreach coordinator for the Silk Road Institute” (A.S, October 10, 2014). S.Z is a member of the Montreal advisory group for Community Resilience project. B.C is a young activist within Montreal’s Jewish community, she is “...an educator of Jewish traditional studies and providing guidance for the youth” and has “... taught in several Jewish elementary schools for extracurricular activities (Bible Contest) and has assisted teens who go through the Jewish maturity rite, i.e. Bar/Bat Mitzvah” (B.C, September 28, 2014).

What are the major challenges facing your community?

When asked about challenges facing their communities, both A.S and S.Z stated that discrimination was one of the major issues facing Montreal’s Muslim community. As A.S states:

For Muslims, I believe the discrimination faced on us (not necessarily us here but worldwide and general misunderstandings) constantly are a source of inner agitation for Muslims trying to hold tight to their identity. They constantly feel they have to apologize for the actions of violent people abusing the name of the religion (A.S, October 10, 2014).

Montreal Muslims face some of the same issues as Muslims in other parts of Canada regarding discrimination and misunderstandings of their religion.

S.Z believes that reasonable accommodation debates and the Charter of Values have influenced discrimination towards Muslim Quebecers:

Quebec Muslims face the issue of discrimination in a more acute way than the average Canadian Muslim. The reasonable accommodation debates have been an ongoing societal discussion over many years. Some view them as starting in the late 90s (when hijab in schools were an issue), others pinpoint 2001 as a turning point, still others refer to the Bouchard-Taylor Commission of 2007 as a key point. Of course there was the recent *Charte des valeurs* (S.Z, October 8, 2014)

S.Z also mentions how these negative attitudes towards Muslims impact employment:

Negative attitudes play out in a measurable and detrimental way when it comes to the job search. Muslims have a higher degree of unemployment and underemployment. This is especially acute with Quebec Muslims from the Maghrib, where unemployment can reach as high as 30%. (S.Z, October 8, 2014)

S.Z also claims that second generation Muslims are in a similar situation, “despite the fact that they are locally trained and have local accents” (S.Z, October 8, 2014). S.Z regards employment as an important part of social integration and for this reason, it is important to address issues of unemployment within the Muslim community (S.Z, October 8, 2014)

For B.C, generation gaps within her community are a major challenge. According to Cahana,

The major challenges facing my community from my perspective is lack of cohesiveness, mutual-understanding and respect on an inter-generational level. There seems to be a growing gap between our grandparents and parents’ generation and ours. This primarily can be seen in terms of values, such as support of Israel (B.C, September 28, 2014).

Without mutual respect and understanding, it is difficult to discuss important issues like the nature of support for Israel, which is creating intergenerational gaps. Cohesiveness is an essential characteristic for any community. Taken as a whole, the issue facing each of the community leaders seems to be misunderstandings, both of the community by the general population and also within the community in regards to different generations.

What resources are needed to face these challenges?

When asked about how these issues can be addressed, A.S. and B.C placed an emphasis on education and dialogue. According to A.S., “Dialogue and knowledge” are needed for communities to face challenges like misunderstandings. A.S states,

Muslims need to equip themselves with confidence in their religion, and this means seeking that knowledge from reliable sources and silencing their doubts. They can intelligently refute false claims and, better yet, live by example, instead of constantly being on the defense (A.S, October 10, 2014).

Promoting religious knowledge from reliable sources can both educate those within the community and allow them to educate others in response to misunderstandings about their religion. For B.C , intergenerational dialogue is needed, she states “In my opinion there needs to be more discussion across generations and developing better mechanisms of communication” (B.C, September 28, 2014.) Again, emphasis is placed on building understanding within the community through dialogue.

S.Z states that “Funding is needed to have sustainable initiatives to address these issues. Otherwise, these concerns will continue to be addressed by volunteers, who will squeeze in this work in their spare time” (S.Z, October 8, 2014). Funding is important for sustainable initiatives as it allows for individuals to dedicate more hours to addressing problems like discrimination and unemployment.

What is community resilience?

Each respondent shared his or her definition of community resilience. Though they each had a different definition, there were many similarities. A.S describes community resilience as

The ability of a community to believe in its diverse segments and not easily divide over controversies and fear. The ability of a community to not only call itself such, but to feel like one - like a family. Where neighbors actually interact, check up on each other and share their experiences with each other. (A.S, October 10, 2014)

According to S.Z “Community resiliency is the ability of a community to constructively and effectively address and reorient itself in times of crisis” (S.Z, October 8, 2014). Finally, B.C describes it as

Resilience in a community comes from its members facing each other and understanding the internal and external pressures upon them as individuals and as a community. Instead of crumbling under the weight of these pressures, the community rises in strength from greater understanding. Community members contribute to the whole and in the end everyone is strengthened from this collaborative process. Being in a resilient community means that when you are in need, the community is especially there to support you and help lift the burden. (B.C, September 28, 2014)

In all three definitions, emphasis is placed on not only building understanding within the community’s diverse segments, but also collaboratively and proactively facing crisis and external pressure for the community to stay intact.

How do you build community resilience?

Each participant also identified ways to build community resilience. According to A.S, community resilience is built through,

Education - and I don't particularly mean schooling. I mean increase literacy. This starts from the home, for the children when they are young; they develop a love of reading, or reflecting, criticizing, empathizing (most important of all)... and with these skills come ideas that are discussed, debated, shared, etc. This creates a feeling of community, and when disaster strikes here or there, the actions of the people are calculated, rational, well-intentioned... and not reactionary ones of anger and revenge (A.S, October 10, 2014).

Teaching individuals to be critical, reflective, and empathetic at an early age can help create a stronger community and better equip them for times of crisis.

For S.Z community resilience

...is built through the development of organizations and individuals. Organizations must be ready to address challenges as they develop. Individuals within the community must develop their expertise. Also, the community must develop links with society-at-large and build social capital. This is done through effective use of the media, involvement in the political process, and partnerships with civil society organizations and key individuals. (S.Z, October 8, 2014)

In this case, community resilience is not only fostered within a community and individuals within it, but also through developing connections between society at large and other institutions like the media and civil society organizations.

For B.C , education and community supports are an important part of building community resilience,

Again, I think community resilience is built through education, discussion and an infrastructure of support. The community thrives, when its members feel that they can actively participate in its activities and dialogue. Of course, people need to be willing to volunteer their time, money and energy to make this happen effectively. (B.C, September 28, 2014)

Education and active participation by community members contributes to community resilience. Though the respondents' answers differed, there was a general idea that community resilience is built through a combination of education and skills development, intercommunity collaboration and the development of organizations dedicated to community resilience.

Who in your city are important individuals and institutions working on community resilience? Are there research or institutional reports that address community resilience?

The interviewees were also asked to provide names of individuals and organizations working on community resilience. A.S mentioned Community Resilience project and the Silk Road Institute, where she serves as an outreach coordinator. A.S states that The Silk Road Institute is "...an organization committed to building bridges across Montreal's diverse communities, through ideas and the arts" (A.S, October 10, 2014) A.S also mentioned the National Council of Canadian Muslims. S.Z stated that the Canadian Muslim Forum, Muslim Council of Montreal, Muslim Association of Canada, Amal Women's Centre, and MSAs (Muslim Student Associations) are all organizations working on community resilience. S.Z also mentioned several individuals working on community resilience: Samer Majzoub, president of the Canadian Muslim Forum, Kathy Malas, a speech language pathologist, and Salam Elmenyawawi, The Muslim Council of Montreal. B.C stated that The Federation CJA (Combined Jewish Appeal) in Montreal is a very important institution for the Jewish Community and that this organization has put on a number of successful events, helps members of the community find employment and helps families in need. None of the respondents knew of any reports. The websites for the organizations mentioned by the respondents were checked but no reports regarding community resilience were found.

Conclusion

These community leaders touched on some of the themes from the media scan, such as the importance of responding to crises, be it discrimination or generation gaps, in a peaceful and proactive manner. They also discussed intercultural/multi-faith initiatives like the Silk Road Institute working to foster understanding and cooperation between communities, which is similar to multi-faith events between Montreal's religious communities in opposition to the proposed Charter of Values. In this case, community resilience is not only responding to crisis, but connecting with other communities and civil society, as discussed by S.Z . Each respondent stressed the importance of developing organizations and educational programs as tools for fostering community resilience. With stronger programs and initiatives, communities are better equipped to respond to threats to social harmony and community resilience.

LONDON

What is your role?

An email questionnaire was sent to leaders and activists working in London. A response was received from G.K who is a “project assistant to Reclaim Honour, a community-based violence prevention project of the Muslim Resource Centre for Social Support and Integration” (G.K , February 5, 2015).

What are the major challenges facing your community?

G.K identified a number of major challenges including “Youth unemployment: A large section of the London population are recent university graduates who cannot find employment in their fields or otherwise”, “Poverty & food insecurity, Income disparity, Crime & drugs”, and “20% or 1 in 5 of London’s population are recent immigrants and refugees. The city needs to continue ensuring the integration and providing the necessary services and supports for these populations” (G.K February 15, 2015). G.K also noted that “A large percentage of the London population is aging and baby boomers: how must we restructure the city and its services to better accommodate this population?” (G.K, February 15, 2015).

What resources are needed to face these challenges?

According to G.K (2015) “Innovative solutions, Informed research and policies and collaboration across sectors and organizations to remove redundancies” (G.K, February 2015) are essential to facing these challenges.

How would you define community resilience?

G.K defines community resilience as “ ... a community’s ability to leverage its tools, skills, knowledge, connections and human resources to overcome its challenges and social issues” (G.K, February 2015).

How do you build community resilience?

When asked how to build community resilience G.K stated that,

A fundamental component of community resilience is the engagement of the community at large. In order to achieve such engagement, it is essential to structure the process as an invitation for community members, youth and organizations to be heard, get involved and make a difference. Community engagement will allow for more innovative and collaborative solutions. This is how community resilience is strengthened and fortified (G.K, February 2015).

Who in your city are important individuals and institutions working on community resilience?
Are there research or institutional reports that address community resilience?

G.K (2015) Identified one organization in London working on community resilience:

Pillar NonProfit (PNP) is an umbrella organization supporting nonprofit organizations in fulfilling their missions in the London community. Their vision is to increase and strengthen the impact of non-profit organizations. PNP is not specifically focused on “community resilience” per se, however I do find that it corresponds closely with the topic of community resilience (G.K, February 2015).

Conclusion

Similar to community leaders in other cities, G.K emphasizes the importance of building connections between individuals and organizations in order to create a collaborative response to different challenges facing the London community.

CONCLUSION

It is expected that the findings of this report will be of use to a variety of stakeholders. They include policy makers, politicians of all levels, law enforcement agencies, community leaders and activists, and journalists. The media scans and interviews of community leaders and activists in seven cities in four provinces provide insight into the ways in which the issue of community resilience and the threats to it are conceptualized and how responses to the threats are developed. The media scans revealed exemplary lessons in resilience, while others revealed areas for improvement. Although different types of incidents occurred in the communities living in different locations across the country, most of them had similar underlying issues, namely how communities respond to threats to community resilience and peaceful coexistence, and how communities work together.

One major threat to community resilience was the circulation of negative stereotypes, either by media organizations, politicians, or special interest groups to promote their own interests. Some community groups demonstrated the wherewithal to deal with this problem in an intelligent manner that avoided confrontation. It required extensive community engagement and dialogue with the organizations promoting the stereotypes. These efforts demonstrate resilience where responses to derogatory images not only work to dispel them, but also aim to build a sense of understanding.

Communities responded to issues of “extremism,” “radicalization” and gang membership by developing resources and supports to help families touched by this issue. Community resilience is a strong counterweight to this problem as individuals looking to join extremist groups are often seeking a cause or something larger of which to be a part. Building stronger ties within the community and reaching out to individuals feeling alienated makes it possible for those individuals to be integral to a strong community and make a difference. In a similar vein, gang issues were also prominent with gang violence in Vancouver and youth in Edmonton’s Aboriginal and refugee communities joining gangs. Programs responding to these provide an opportunity to strengthen cultural and community ties and to help individuals find meaning and a sense of belonging within their own communities.

Intercommunity collaboration was one of the most prominent findings of the media scans, revealing major strengths as well as areas for improvement in community resilience. Problems arose when people were engaged in controversial and often divisive debates. These incidents demonstrated a need for the development of common understanding and respectful engagement where each “side” avoids silencing other voices and using labels like “terrorist” to shut down conversation. When engaging in these debates, it is important that groups understand common ground shared by Canadians who are concerned about international issues and are exercising their rights to protest and express themselves freely. The occurrences in which faith communities often perceived as being opposed to each other actually worked in collaboration to protect each other were strong illustrations of how such engagement can work.

As many of the case studies from the media scan demonstrate, communities can, with greater intercommunity engagement, develop stronger responses to threats to community resilience be it gang violence, discrimination, or “radicalization.” When facing issues like these it is important to have a composed, empathetic and strong response.

The interviews with community leaders and activists provided insights into issues such as discrimination, unemployment, poverty, and criminal activity facing various communities. Whereas respondents provided varying definitions of resilience, their definitions shared many

similarities. For many, community resilience is demonstrated by how a community responds to crisis and change. Others defined it as what holds a community together and what makes it grow together to foster a sense of belonging. An underlying feature of the understanding of community resilience spoke to the importance of building strong ties, which result in a stronger community response to major changes or crises.

The leaders suggested different methods of building community resilience including constructing individual resilience, developing strong ties across communities, and promoting empathy and understanding through honest communication. Most participants stressed the need for financial and human resources, institutions, and partnerships to develop more resilient communities that can effectively take on major social problems. Another common element to building community resilience was education; many leaders stressed the need of educational programs not only to equip future community leaders with certain skill sets, but also to build empathy and understanding.

These interviews also provided existing examples of resilience within communities across Canada ranging from organizations promoting intercommunity engagement through ideas and the arts to public social spaces fostering community engagement. The interviews provided a glimpse into what is happening in communities across Canada, and what needs to happen in order to make these communities stronger.