

NCRP October 2014 Team Meeting Summary of Discussions

David Hulchanski, Jessica Carrière & Emily Paradis

October 16-17, 2014

The Neighbourhood Change Research Partnership held two meetings on October 16-17, 2014 in Toronto: a Research Day to share findings, and a team meeting to share updates from the six CMAs, finalize research plans and methodologies for cross-CMA research, discuss policy implications, and plan the dissemination of scholarly publications emerging from the research. *Presentations, papers, and documents can be found in the Research Team Documents area of the website.*

Attendance

Board Members

Barb Besner (United Way Winnipeg), Jino Distasio (U Winnipeg), Kathleen Gallagher* (OISE/UT), David Hulchanski (PI, Toronto), Michelynn Laflèche (United Way Toronto), David Ley (UBC), Damaris Rose (INRS), Paul Shakotko (United Way Halifax), Ivan Townshend (Lethbridge), Alan Walks* (Toronto).

Research Advisory Board Members

Larry Bourne (Toronto), Tom Carter (U Winnipeg), Bill Michelson* (Toronto).

Partners & Guests

Israt Ahmed (Social Planning Toronto), John Campey* (Social Planning Toronto), Janice Chu* (United Way York Region), Maureen Fair (West Neighbourhood House), Louay Eskandar* (Peel Region), Kevin Farrugia* (Peel Region), Tim Frakes* (York Region), Scott Graham (Social Planning and Research Council of BC), Leanne Holt (Federation of Canadian Municipalities), Elise Hug* (City of Toronto), Natalie Hui* (York Region), Mat Krepicz* (City of Toronto), André Lyn* (United Way Peel), Sean Meagher* (Public Interest Research), Lisa Oliveira* (Housing Services Corporation of Ontario), Lynne Woolcott* (West Neighbourhood House).

Academic Co-Investigators & Collaborators

Rosemary Gartner* (Toronto), Richard Harris (McMaster), Xavier Leloup (INRS), Nick Lynch (U Victoria), Byron Miller (U Calgary), Sheila Neysmith (Toronto), Howard Ramos (Dalhousie), Daniyal Zuberi (Toronto).

Staff & Students

Jessica Carrière (PhD Candidate, Toronto), Amanda DeLisio (PhD Candidate, U of T), Manaal Fahim (PhD Candidate, Toronto), Craig Jones (PhD Student, UBC), Kathleen Kinsella* (PhD Candidate, McMaster), Andrew Kaufman (Research Associate, Institute for Urban Studies, U Winnipeg), Nishi Kumar* (Undergraduate student, Toronto), Richard Maaranen (NCRP data analyst), Lauren Nolan

(Research Associate, Nathalie Voorhees Centre, University of Illinois Chicago), Tneshia Pages* (Graduate student, Ryerson), Emily Paradis (NCRP project manager), Kyle Peterson* (PhD graduate, U Calgary), Dirk Rodricks (PhD Candidate, OISE/UT), Greg Suttor (NCRP rental housing researcher), Glynis Tabor* (Undergraduate student, Toronto).

** attended October 16 Research Day only*

1. Summary of Decisions, Action Items and Next Steps

Next NCRP meeting and Research Day

The next NCRP meeting has been scheduled for May 7-8, 2015 in Toronto. The October 16 Research Day included nine presentations from ongoing and completed NCRP projects, and drew a full house of invited community partners, policy actors, collaborators and students. This successful model will be incorporated into future team meetings. We will also engage a broader audience at future meetings via an evening public event, and make the Research Day available as a webinar.

Cross-CMA project on rental housing

Plans were presented for ongoing work in the cross-CMA project on rental housing. A national NCRP working group has met twice, and Greg Suttor has been hired to lead this work. Special cross-tabulations on housing from the 2006 census have been ordered, to be used for a broad overview of trends as well as CMA-specific parallel reports similar to the 3-cities reports. Working group discussions have revealed a cross-CMA theme of rooming houses and other non-standard units. This group and CMA teams will propose studies on other housing-related issues.

Other cross-CMA projects in development

Preliminary work towards two potential cross-CMA projects was presented. Sheila Neysmith is conducting an analysis of data relating to the theme Aging in the City, with results and plans for further research to be presented at the next NCRP meeting. A second project examining the influence of community-based organizations on collective efficacy in neighbourhoods is currently developing tools that can be used for in-depth neighbourhood case studies. The team also discussed potential cross-CMA initiatives on urban Aboriginal issues, and potential areas for collaboration between the NCRP the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

Mid-point of project and moving forward

NCRP is approaching its mid-point: we are now halfway through Year Three of a seven-year project. The mid-term report to SSHRC is due in fall 2015. About \$650,000 has been spent or allocated, leaving \$2 million in the project's budget. Years One and Two were focused on bringing together CMA teams and completing initial analysis of income trends. Twelve project sub-grants have been funded through the internal NCRP approval process. With a solid team in place and the trend analysis complete, the NCRP is ready to embark on more ambitious local and cross-CMA projects, with significant funding attached. CMA teams should seek new scholars and partners with expertise in the key NCRP theme areas. Co-investigators and partners are encouraged to develop proposals in discussion with local CMA teams.

Publication and knowledge mobilization

The first major NCRP publication will be an edited collection on comparative analysis of neighbourhood trends in Canada. The core project team will develop and circulate a draft outline and book proposal for submission to partner Oxford University Press, and chapter authors will be identified. Other areas of focus for edited collections could include rental housing and aging in the city. A draft framework has been developed to assist local teams in planning for knowledge mobilization and policy impact; a final version will be circulated to CMA teams.

2. NCRP Research Day, October 16 2014

Agenda Item 1. CMA Neighbourhood Trends, 1970-2010: Presentations

Halifax, Howard Ramos

The Halifax team continues to explore dichotomies between the socioeconomic conditions that have emerged through CT level analyses versus DA level analyses. CTs may obscure ‘polarized adjacencies’ – spatially proximal clusters of contrasting conditions that are revealed at the DA level.

Incongruities in the findings have prompted Howard Ramos’ qualitative, survey-based study of perceptions of change in Halifax neighbourhoods in order to identify areas that are undergoing change and assist in developing city-defined neighbourhoods for the first time. The team has also drawn up a SSHRC proposal in order to extend this work to other small Atlantic cities.

Winnipeg, Jino Distasio

Winnipeg has undergone a slow growth trajectory over the past few decades that distinguishes it from other CMAs. The city has also been a site for sustained tripartite government intervention, which has been the financial source for much of the recent growth and development that has occurred over recent years. There is also less income polarization in Winnipeg as the highest incomes are comparatively lower (e.g. in 2006 the average income of the highest-earning CT in Toronto was 25 times that of Winnipeg’s). The city’s unique neighbourhood compositions have been captured by the team’s ‘prairie city’ typology, characterized in part by Aboriginal urbanization and concentrated/racialized poverty in the core, and comparatively wealthy, low-density exurban enclaves immediately adjoining the City of Winnipeg’s municipal boundaries.

Calgary, Ivan Townshend

Analysis of neighbourhood trends in Calgary from 1970 onwards has revealed a steady decline in middle-income tracts, and a relative increase in the share of low-income neighbourhoods across the city. Inequality and income polarization is substantial. Income figures in wealthier neighbourhoods have doubled—particularly in exurban areas—while poverty has deepened in low-income areas. City 3 (neighbourhoods whose income has decreased 10% or more relative to the CMA average) accounts for more than half of all census tracts and 60% of the city’s population. City 1 and City 2 are similar in social variables but significant demographic and social differences are associated with City 3. The team is cautious in interpreting these trends vis a vis individual income figures: Cities 1, 2, and 3 are not necessarily high, medium and low-income.

Hamilton, Richard Harris

Hamilton's high rate of increase in income inequality has made it one of Canada's most polarized cities, with Canada's highest level of spatial segregation of the lowest-income group. From 1980 onwards, lower income groups concentrated in the "lower city" around the downtown core. Since 2000, income decline has expanded eastward into the inner suburbs. Incomes have increased in western suburban areas, as well as the post-amalgamation exurban areas. Overall, changes in the Hamilton CMA as a whole are very focused on the city, and differ considerably from the stability of other parts of the CMA such as Burlington. These differences may be linked to transit. With recent expansion of commuter rail service has come gentrification of the formerly low-income downtown core, and policy discussions of revitalization of downtown.

Agenda Item 2. Comparative Overview & Key Themes of CMA Trends

Based on the morning's presentations and the prior reports from Montréal, Toronto and Vancouver, three discussants identified key comparative themes and discussed directions for further research.

David Hulchanski

The NCRP is in the midst of reviewing trends in high-, low-, and medium-income neighbourhoods for all 8 CMAs (including Hamilton and Ottawa). Alan Walks is exploring increasing inequality and polarization in Canadian CTs and CMAs since 1970, with a focus on cross-CMA trends. This research has shown that 65-70% of CMAs have experienced decrease in middle income neighbourhoods. Toronto and Calgary are experiencing the greatest levels of inequality and polarization, mirroring more extreme trends in Chicago. Moving forward, there is a need to explore other variables besides income in understanding cross-CMA socioeconomic change. Protective factors that enable some CTs and CMAs to resist inequality and polarization trends should be explored, as should policy implications and recommendations for policy change. For example, what are some policies that could address the decline in middle-income groups?

David Ley

Interpretation, explanation, and consolidation are challenges facing the NCRP work moving forward.

Interpretation

- Poverty vs. 'low-income': Maps may tend to oversimplify actual trends that are occurring: people interpret areas shaded in brown as 'poverty'. Many of these trends are relative, and local knowledge is needed in order to make better sense of the maps.
- Decline in aging suburbs: To what extent is decline related to aging, and will this trend increase as baby boomers become income-poor but asset-rich? In these areas, do lower incomes related to exit from the labour force mask wealth, in particular homeownership equity?
- Subgroups and scale: As cities get larger, subcultures / subgroups become more visible. In smaller cities, heterogeneity is in smaller groups and scales, less visible for mapping. Does this contribute to appearance of middle-income census tracts decreasing in number?

Explanation

- *Hard Times* (<http://bookshop.theguardian.com/hard-times-20.html>), authored by a UK Guardian journalist in conjunction with a UK-US research team, has popularized recent trends in income and labour force change in both countries. Canada is in need of an equivalent, and remains lacking with respect to labour data.
-

- How do we explain the similarities between Chicago and Toronto, and what does this say about national variation? Or are these processes explicable with standard housing market theories about large cities: filtering down in City 3 and upfiltering in City 1?
- Which processes do we seek to explain, and how do we prioritize them?

Consolidation

- The team has collected a very large volume of material, and there is a need to consolidate this material before the analysis expands to other cities.
- As the mid-term review nears, the team must move toward formal academic publications.

Damaris Rose

Peer-reviewed publications are necessary not only for the upcoming SSHRC review, but also for establishing credibility with policy actors. The great breadth of material that the team has produced must be divided into manageable issue-areas for explanation and consolidation. This may require the team to move away from the idea of a 'mega-comparison' between all CMAs, which would necessarily be too descriptive, or too specialized. Comparisons of clusters of CMAs experiencing similar trajectories (e.g. Montreal and Winnipeg, Toronto and Vancouver) may be the best way forward. In doing this, the team must also consider the dissimilarities and contextual factors that distinguish each individual CMA from the rest.

In interpreting results, more attention should be paid to the periodization of trends, such as suburbanization in the 1970s, deindustrialization in 1980s, and extreme polarization emerging in the 1990s. Moreover, the scale of analysis should be considered, as the CMA is necessary from an empirical standpoint, but is not a standard scale of intervention for policy actors. Similarly, poverty prevention and reduction is of more interest to policy actors than 'inequality'. How might the team package findings in a way that is accessible and can be taken up by government?

Discussion

The labour market is a key factor in income polarization and inequality, but the team is not strong in economic and labour market analysis. Each CMA should explore ways in which to incorporate data related to the labour market, precarious work, the decline of organized labour, deindustrialization, etc. Small-geography data on cost of living is also lacking. NCRP would contribute a missing socio-spatial lens to analysis of the labour market.

Each CMA research team should develop a strong sense of how Canada's three-tiered policy matrix contributes to conditions at the local scale. How do policies either facilitate or inhibit opportunities in specific neighbourhoods? It is also important to look beyond housing costs, transit, labour and income and consider additional factors like language, culture and the availability of certain types of social infrastructures in determining where people choose to live, for example young families' locational choices related to educational district quality and school closures.

Census mapping may omit certain populations, such as those who are homeless or have no income. Qualitative research will help to create a more accurate portrait of each neighbourhood. Winnipeg's new report offers a good example of the integration of data and ethnographic narrative.

Agenda Item 3. The Evolution of Canadian Discourse on Urban Neighbourhoods since 1900, *Richard Harris*

This paper explores the changing discourse applied to Canada's urban neighbourhoods since 1900. Among social reformers, planners, and policy-makers, discourse involving neighbourhoods has

peaked at times when inequality and social cohesion are at the forefront of collective interest. The 'neighbourhood' has traditionally been a poorly-defined term that is both subjective and dependent upon changing socio-spatial dynamics. In the field of social work, definitions of the neighbourhood have been linked to class and 'othered,' problematic urban spaces. The formal recognition of the importance of neighbourhoods in Canada emerged in the 1970s with reports such as Marvyn Novack's 1979 *Metro Suburbs in Transition* report. More recently, the rise in the discourse of neighbourhoods and "community building" is associated with a targeting of social infrastructure funding and the roll back of government services.

Agenda Item 4. Framing NCRP Research Initiatives

Measuring Income Inequality and Polarization in Canada, Alan Walks

This report examines changes in income inequality and income polarization in Canada's largest CMAs over the period 1970 through 2005. Income inequality and polarization are distinct concepts with different measures. The paper introduces the coefficient of polarization (COP), a new measure of spatial polarization or income segregation. In all CMAs, polarization is growing faster than inequality; for example, Vancouver appears relatively equal but is more polarized than Montreal.

Rental Housing Dynamics in Canada's Lower-Income Neighbourhoods, Greg Suttor

This draft paper explores the ways by which housing system changes, and forces operating across urban areas, are key drivers of neighbourhood change in Canada's lower-income neighbourhoods.

Key findings reveal that the overall age profile of rental housing in Canada is an artifact of large-scale mid-century rental development. As the construction of new rental has declined across Canada's major urban centres, the need for more rental units is met through filtering over time. This has led to the spatial concentration of affordable units, and the subsequent stigmatization of the neighbourhoods in which these units are available. These findings highlight the sustained impacts of Canada's housing regime history, and the role of the rental apartment sector in the concentration of poverty in urban areas.

Discussion

Rental housing construction in Canada has declined due to the convergence of income decline and a decline in the demand base. In the 1970s and 80s, major changes to the tax regime occurred alongside a shift in consumer demand toward the condo sector. Condos became more viable in terms of value and risk assessment for developers. This poses new challenges as the share of low-income earners rises. In Toronto, for example, the dynamic of an annual net increase in low-income renters with no new affordable rental supply explains qualitative trends such as overcrowding and doubling-up within rental units, or living in non-standard units. Overall trends in upfiltering and downfiltering play out very differently in each CMA.

Agenda Item 5. Presentations of NCRP Research

The Temporary Neighbourhoods of Homeless Youth, Kathleen Gallagher & Dirk Rodricks

This research has been conducted using performance methodology, in partnership with a youth shelter in Toronto's REXDALE neighbourhood and Project: Humanity, a theatre collective. Researchers conducted weekly workshops with youth aged 16-24, including a workshop incorporating a "value line" on participants' experiences with police. Workshops were videotaped and coded using a video analysis software. Provisional findings reveal internal divisions within the

shelter, involving a hierarchy between the 'school side' and the 'non-school' side. Key thematic observations include the interplay of hope and resilience; race, space and school; the experience of being 'othered,' including by law enforcement measures such as Stop and Search; and subjective definitions of 'neighbourhood' related to stigma and inequality.

The Emerging Vancouver Skytrain Poverty Corridor, Craig Jones

This paper focuses on recent development activity within the Maywood / Richmond Park neighbourhood of Burnaby, BC. The neighbourhood sits on a transit corridor that has recently been rezoned as part of the new 'S zoning' initiative, involving a density bonus program. Affordable housing is being demolished and replaced by condominiums, which raises the question of whose needs are being catered to in the push to increase 'density' across Vancouver and its suburbs. The financial pressures faced by the municipality drive decisions to increase the tax base. Density policies are similar to mixed income policies, in that they may have the adverse affect of pushing out low-income residents. These displaced people often move farther out of the core, where there is less street life, and less walkability.

Discussion

These qualitative studies that drill down into local realities offer some input to the challenges of interpretation, explanation and consolidation. Such studies also lend urgency and specificity to policy discussions.

3. NCRP Team Meeting, October 17 2014

Agenda Item 1. Welcome; agenda review

After an introductory go-round, members presented brief updates on activities in their organizations and CMAs.

Evaluation of NCRP Research Day

Those present agreed that the Research Day was productive and should be a feature of future NCRP meetings. The range of presentations provided an overview of trends across the CMAs, and began to reveal the complex relationships between macro-level phenomena and micro-level experiences. Developing these connections was a key objective of the NCRP proposal, and one which reviewers raised concerns about. Yesterday's presentations point to successful methods for pursuing this ambitious agenda. This focus will be strengthened if future Research Days include discussion of practice and policy implications following each cluster of presentations.

The number of attendees was appropriate for enabling fruitful discussion, but team meetings should continue to include a public event to reach a larger audience. Dissemination of Research Days could be broadened via video-recording or webinar technology.

Budget

At the mid-point of Year 3, about \$650,000 has been spent or allocated, leaving about \$2 million in the budget. Activities in the first two years of the project have been relatively low-cost: data analysis, start-up of CMA teams, and modest local projects. Now it is important to expand CMA teams, develop more ambitious local projects, and plan large cross-CMA comparative studies.

The current working budget is based on projections made at the outset of the NCRP. In Year 4 we will conduct a detailed review of spending, and re-allocate remaining funds for the remaining years of the project.

Major amounts spent and allocated so far include project subgrants funded through the NCRP Board approval process, core NCRP costs including management and data analysis, and the costs of team meetings. The subgrant approval process has worked smoothly, and the modest projects funded so far have been approved by email. Larger projects are likely to require Board discussion. As permitted by the NCRP Governance Agreement, the PI has approved some subgrants below \$5000, as well as additional allocations to support the development of larger projects such as the cross-CMA program of research on rental housing.

Agenda Item 2. NCRP Cross-CMA Research Agenda: Updates and Next Steps

Private Sector Rental Housing Working Group, David Hulchanski & Greg Suttor

A working group with representatives from all CMAs has met twice by teleconference to plan a cross-CMA program of research on rental housing. The group has agreed to use the Rental Housing Disadvantage Index (RHDI) developed by Richard Maaranen as the basis for analyzing and comparing rental housing across CMAs. Because of problems with the NHS, this analysis can only be conducted up to 2006. A number of outputs are planned:

1. The framework paper presented at yesterday's meeting by Greg Suttor;
2. CMA reports presenting an overview of rental housing, similar to the "3-cities" trend reports;
3. A comparative analysis of rental housing across 8 CMAs (including Ottawa and Hamilton) drawing upon the RHDI;
4. Focused studies of selected neighbourhoods with high RHDI in each CMA;
5. Local and comparative qualitative studies of key issues and trends, such as rooming houses and other non-standard rentals;
6. An edited book on rental housing in Canada.

The ISA international conference on housing in September 2015, hosted by NCRP co-investigator Janet Smith, offers a potential venue for presentations and a meeting of this group.

Discussion

Social housing is an important component of the rental housing system but can't be distinguished using census data. Test comparisons using Toronto data show that there is little difference on most variables between high RHDI areas with a high proportion of social housing and those with mostly private rental. CMA teams do need to know where cooperative, non-profit, and public housing is located, but local case studies will focus on private rental in high-RHDI CTs. The expiry of federal operating agreements for social housing is an emergent issue with major implications.

Neighbourhood Collective Efficacy Working Group, Maureen Fair & Jessica Carriere

Members of Toronto's Collective Efficacy Working Group presented a project initiated by community partners, whose first phase is underway. The project examines how practices, mechanisms, activities, and roles of community-based organizations (CBOs) in disadvantaged neighbourhoods influence collective efficacy. Drawing on the work of sociologist Robert Sampson and others in this area, the project has defined collective efficacy as the active or latent ability of community members to agree upon, and take action to pursue, collective goals in support of equity and social justice.

The project's first phase includes a literature review and key informant interviews with CBO staff in three Toronto neighbourhoods, to develop three tools for use in subsequent in-depth case studies:

1. an inventory of CBO practices that may inhibit or enhance collective efficacy,
2. an instrument for identifying and measuring indicators of collective efficacy in a neighbourhood; and
3. a typology of CBOs and other actors, in order to better describe the unique constellation of organizations and practice models in each neighbourhood.

In exploring the contributions of CBOs to collective efficacy, the objective is to move beyond popular discourses of 'mutualism', 'localism', 'social capital' and 'social innovation' in public services in order to begin to describe and identify the work that CBOs *actually do* to create and sustain collective efficacy within neighbourhoods.

Discussion

NCRP team members expressed strong interest in and support of this project. Several partners and co-investigators have done work in this area. United Way Halifax has been conducting a similar study of CBOs and may wish to collaborate with the Toronto team. In Toronto, Judith Taylor (U of Toronto, Sociology and Women's Studies) is exploring a CBO-led response to 'dirty diesel' trains.

Some concern was expressed regarding overlap with concepts covered in the vast body of research around social capital in Canada. Some work should be done to clarify the methodological approach, intended outcomes, and what's to be included in the organizational typology following the initial phase of the research.

Aging in the City, Sheila Neysmith

Sheila Neysmith and Richard Maaranen have recently received census cross-tabulations for the over-65 population in all NCRP CMAs, and will be producing maps, graphs, and analyses over the coming months. Preliminary analysis of census and tax-filer data for Toronto shows a broad dispersal of people age 65 and over across the CMA. This population is very segmented, and it is difficult to produce a demographic portrait of this group as a whole; however, more than 25% of people age 65 and over are living alone, and 72% of those living alone are women. The various policy implications associated with large numbers of senior women living alone in the city is a key consideration.

Partner Diane Dyson (Woodgreen Community Services) has led a recent large survey of more than 800 older adults in Toronto's East York area. A literature review has been released, and a report is planned for publication in the coming months.

Discussion

Emergent socio-spatial issues include immigration and housing. Change is anticipated in the growth and location of aging newcomer populations across Canada in the wake of recent policy changes on family reunification. Toronto anticipates an increase in older adult renters as baby boomers age; this raises concern regarding the affordability and availability of housing.

While initial analysis is being carried out by the core NCRP team in Toronto, CMA teams should seek co-investigators with expertise in aging to lead local and cross-CMA analysis. In Winnipeg, Aboriginal communities are experiencing social isolation and suburbanization of older adults. The FCM is currently working on older adult housing and income figures using 2011 NHS data. This research is incorporating transit data.

Agenda Item 3. Development of Other Thematic Areas

Urban Aboriginal Research, Jino Distasio

The draft Winnipeg 3-cities report includes Evelyn Peters' broad introduction to urban Aboriginal issues in Winnipeg. Aboriginal peoples account for approximately 15% of Winnipeg's population. Members of the team recently conducted a project that tracked over 600 Aboriginal individuals over a longitudinal period in order to understand individual circumstances that contribute to population flux in prairie cities, and presented policy and program options to support urban movers. The research team continues to study the landscape of social services, community-based organizations, and community mobilization around urban Aboriginal issues in Winnipeg. There is an opportunity to partner with Kinew Housing, a long-standing organization that builds affordable off-reserve housing in Winnipeg and is now facing the end of subsidies due to the termination of federal operating agreements. Implications of the termination of these agreements for Aboriginal housing providers require further study.

Discussion

Hidden homelessness and dynamic migration patterns of urban Aboriginal populations in prairie cities present a barrier to the development of viable policy responses.

The broader NCRP should look at themes and topics related to urban Aboriginal populations. What would engagement with this research area look like? Who is currently working on relevant issues? Who might be invited to contribute to this work, and how? What data sets do we have access to, and how might this research be of use to Aboriginal communities?

The FCM and NCRP Agendas, Leanne Holt

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities represents 2000 municipalities across Canada, 90% of Canada's population, and all CMAs are represented. The FCM agenda is driven by the municipal sector and directed at collaboration with the federal government. A key item on the agenda involves the persistent downloading and devolution of funding and administrative responsibilities from upper levels of government to municipalities, and new potential tools that municipalities may make use of in order to deal with the strain. Public transit, housing and social infrastructure remain key issues. The FCM is currently working on a paper in collaboration with Steve Pomeroy on the domino effect of the expiration of the federal affordable housing operating agreements potential impacts on the rental housing sector. Members are also pushing to have urban Aboriginal issues brought to the fore.

Discussion

It is time to think about how to begin to disseminate NCRP finding to policy actors. FCM's annual conference in Edmonton, June 2015 presents an opportunity to do this.

Agenda Item 5. Knowledge Mobilization and NCRP Impact, Emily Paradis & Michelynn Lafleche

Policy impact planning is traditionally thought to be out of the realm of academic control; however the NCRP proposal clearly aims for policy impact. NCRP activities and objectives are situated at a number of stages in the policy process, including the identification of policy-related problems, the generation of evidence, the identification of successful policy and program interventions, and advocacy for policy change. Theory of change is a key consideration, but has been under-articulated by the NCRP. We need to consider how policies and programs change, what influences these

changes, what actors are involved, and how stakeholders and those directly affected can best be engaged in the process.

A draft checklist was presented that can assist the NCRP in articulating policy impact goals and directing research and knowledge mobilization activities accordingly. This tool will be refined and circulated to CMA teams, in order to develop a local knowledge mobilization strategy.

Dissemination is deeply linked to the local context, raising questions such as what forms of information will be most accessible to the communities and actors local teams are trying to reach. CMA and project teams should document the various ways in which research is being disseminated.

Agenda Item 6. Research Publication Plans and Next Steps

Mid-Term Report to SSHRC

The mid-term report to SSHRC will be due in fall 2015. The precise timeline and requirements are yet to be defined. The core NCRP team will prepare and circulate templates for documenting research activities and knowledge mobilization outputs. The draft report will be presented for comment at the next NCRP meeting. Given the slow start in some CMAs and with larger cross-CMA projects, it will be important to pick up the pace in the next six months in order to demonstrate forward momentum in the mid-term report. Scholarly publications are also a priority for the immediate future. A plan for securing the required 35% in cash and in-kind contributions must be in place for this report; current projections suggest this will not be a problem.

Use of the National Household Survey

Evaluation of NHS income data at the CT level demonstrates that it is unreliable and therefore can't be used by the NCRP. Analysis of CT-level data on specific Visible Minority variables in Toronto shows that these, too, can't be trusted to provide an accurate picture of current trends. Other analyses, such as a recent paper by the Wellesley Institute

[<http://www.wellesleyinstitute.com/publications/the-colour-coded-labour-market-by-the-numbers/>], are showing similar results. It may be possible to use specific variables at large geographies; NCRP will evaluate these possibilities on a case-by-case basis. The project is purchasing 2012 CRA income data in order to update income trend maps. While CRA data include age and gender as well as income, they offer no information on other important factors such as immigration, visible minority groups, Aboriginal identity, family status, or housing.

A concern is that in the absence of other data sources, cities are using NHS data at the CT level without caveat. For example, Montréal recently published a report based on NHS data.

With a change in government in the 2015 election, it would still be possible to reinstate the census for 2016. NCRP will continue to work with partners to advocate for the reinstatement of Canada's scientific, mandatory census.

Research Publication Plans

Oxford University Press is an NCRP partner. The Partnership Grant proposal included a plan to publish three or four edited collections through OUP's peer-reviewed process. The first of these will be a collection on comparative analysis of neighbourhood trends in Canada, including the Harris paper on the evolution of Canadian discourse on urban neighbourhoods and the six CMA 3-cities reports. Larry Bourne has offered to write a conceptual overview of neighbourhood dynamics. The first step will be to develop a common chapter template, prepare a book proposal for OUP, and identify chapter authors. Topics for subsequent collections could include rental housing in Canada, and aging in the city.

The question of open access was raised. NCRP will make all project reports open-access and will seek an agreement with OUP on this issue as well; however, with regards to journal articles, a tension remains between the “gold standard” publications necessary for academic credit, and new open-access journals. Many established journals now also offer open-access publication but at a high cost to the author. The next NCRP meeting will include a detailed discussion of this issue, including budgetary commitments for supporting open-access publication.

Next Meeting

The next NCRP team meeting will be scheduled in April or May. Once again, the first day will be dedicated to presentations of NCRP research. Topics for discussion will include publication plans, an NCRP conference, the SSHRC mid-term report, and the further development of new cross-CMA research.