

# Community-University Institute for Social Research



## Partnering to Build Capacity and Connections in the Community

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## **Executive Summary**

This report is a summary of the review process undertaken to evaluate the impact CUISR has had over the past five years on its stakeholders and the community. The evaluation was to focus specifically on three areas: (1) impact on research linking community and university partners; (2) effectiveness of knowledge transfer and knowledge sharing between community and university partners; (3) impact on training of students, community-based researchers and wider community. Information for this report was gathered primarily through interviews and informal discussions with community group representatives, researchers, staff and CUISR leaders. Board minutes, publications, newsletters, and conference and workshop proceedings were also reviewed.

The Institute has facilitated numerous opportunities for community stakeholders to create, share, evaluate and apply knowledge that supports the development of social policy and programs. The six principles of inclusiveness, accessibility, transparency, mutual learning, adaptability and collective vision were used to evaluate CUISR's processes for actively engaging the community and University in a research partnership. Interviews with stakeholders revealed that many community groups applied for research funding through CUISR because of the simplicity of the application process and support and feedback received in completing the application. CUISR is described as unique in its willingness to work with community groups on research issues of interest to the community yet remain impartial in the research process and outcomes. Involving clientele in the research process gave a voice to those directly affected by community services. The philosophy of participatory processes and research partnerships between academics and the community was found to be widely supported by community-based organizations and identified as a priority for future CUISR work.

A community capacity model was used to identify four expected capacity outcomes associated with the work CUISR does. The impact on the community was evaluated based on capacity to create and adapt to change; to create and maintain a vital civic culture; to maintain and enhance economic vitality; and to take control and responsibility for governing processes. CUISR offers researchers and community groups the opportunity to undertake applied research and gain an understanding of the complexities of social research. Research

projects have explored quality of life topics that raise awareness of social issues and in doing so quantify and qualify the issues facing the community. Many of the student researchers involved found the experience solidified their commitment and interest in furthering community-based social research and all agreed the experience had improved their research skills and understanding of research processes. Researchers and community groups valued the networking and relationship building that occurred as a result of the research they had done. For some students, relationships were established through CUISR with community groups and academic advisors that led to subsequent employment and research work. Community groups identified the research had influenced their policies and activities.

CUISR has attracted diverse interest groups and citizens interested in improved social research that addresses quality of life issues. CUISR has become accountable to the community for open and participatory decision-making processes and that the processes it employs build research capacity within the community research partners. Stakeholders believe research results have not been fully utilized by the community research partners and the community at large. CUISR must partner with the community to extricate research results for public consumption. There are currently no mechanisms in place to gauge the extent to changes in attitudes and policies are occurring that will improve quality of life.

## **CUISR Background**

The Community-University Institute for Social Research (CUISR) was established in 2000 as a result of ongoing discussions by the multi-sector Saskatoon Quality of Life Roundtable. The Roundtable brought together government, public service, private sector, University of Saskatchewan and community-based stakeholders interested in developing indicators that will guide public and private actions to improve the quality of life for people living in the Saskatoon area. In December 1999 a grant from the federal government through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada – Community University Research Alliances (SSHRC-CURA) in the amount of \$591,000 provided the funding necessary to establish CUISR

The Institute is a partnership between community-based organizations (CBOs) and faculty and graduate students from the University of Saskatchewan. The mission Statement of CUISR is "...to serve as a focal point for community-based research and to integrate the various social research needs and experiential knowledge of the community-based organizations with the technical expertise available at the University. It will promote, undertake and critically evaluate applied social research for community-based organizations, and serve as a data clearinghouse for applied and community-based social research. The overall goal of CUISR is to build the capacity of researchers, community-based organizations and citizenry to enhance community quality of life.". This mission is reflected in the objectives established at the inception of CUISR: 1. To build capacity within CBOs to conduct their own applied social research and write grant proposals. 2. To serve as a conduit for the transfer of experientially based knowledge from the community to the University classroom, and transfer technical expertise from the University to the community and CBOs. 3. To provide CBOs with assistance in the areas of survey sample design, estimation and data analysis, or, where necessary, to undertake survey research that is timely, accurate and reliable. 4. To serve as a central clearinghouse or data warehouse, for community-based and applied social research findings. To allow members of the University and CBOs to access a broad range of data over an extended time period.

To achieve these objectives, CUISR established three focused research modules in the areas of Community Health Determinants and Health Policy, Community Economic

Development, and Quality of Life Indicators. All research was to focus on creating and maintaining healthy, sustainable communities. The Community Health Determinants and Health Policy module was developed to facilitate and conduct collaborative research focused on improving community health. Working with CBOs and community members, research in this module is expected to contextualize existing knowledge about the determinants of health and health-related decision-making and apply that knowledge to enhance health in local communities. The Community Economic Development module was established to bridge the policy gap between supply-oriented and demand-oriented approaches to economic development through research, training and the provision of services. The Quality of Life module focuses on evaluating quality of life and its determinants in the community, the use of quality of life indicators by government and community sectors and how this use actually changes policies and actions.

CUISR's governance structure includes a Management Board composed of two Co-Directors, one from the community and one from the University, and six Co-Leaders, one community and one University representative for each of the three research modules. An Advisory Council with members from the University and community was established to support the Management Board in developing overall policy direction for the Institute. Community Advisory Committees provide guidance and advice to each of the three research modules. CUISR staff consists of one full-time Administrative Assistant responsible for administrative functions (including website maintenance and resource room librarian) and Management Board support, two half-time Community Research Liaison Officers, a part-time Policy Action Researcher and a part-time Editor. Offices are located on Cumberland Avenue near the University and at St. Paul's Hospital.

### **Research and Knowledge Transfer**

As a research institute, CUISR supports Saskatoon-based community agencies and institutions in conducting research and has conceived and undertaken research related to quality of life such as the two Quality of Life surveys. Research is the catalyst for acquiring, transferring and applying knowledge to develop appropriate social policy and programs. Researchers within each of the modules examine the dimensions of quality of life and the results are integrated through CUISR to provide an analysis of the common social and

economic issues. The integrated results are communicated within the Community and the University in a number of ways to ensure that research makes a difference in the development of services, in the implementation of policy, and in the lives of the people of Saskatoon and Saskatchewan. This work brings together community groups responsible for providing social and public services with trained academics and graduate students from the University. Expected research outcomes include products such as publications, reports, grants applied for and secured, and contracts signed.

### **Capacity Building**

Equally important are the indicators of research uptake and influence in the community, including an increase in the number of research projects commissioned or contracted specifically for policy-making purposes, enhanced utilization of research findings in community-based programming and policy making, and an increase in community agencies' commitment to research. By offering research opportunities in the form of sabbaticals, teaching release or employment for students interested in applied research the capacity to undertake community-based research is facilitated. Publications and public forums are just two of the ways that research outcomes are shared so that CUISR's work can act as a building block for future research and build the capacity of community groups.

### **Review Process**

The research grant proposal included a commitment by CUISR to undertake a comprehensive, critical evaluation and assessment of the impact CUISR has had on its stakeholders and the community at large over the five-year period that CUISR has been in existence. Specifically three main areas were to be studied: (1) impact on research linking community and university partners; (2) effectiveness of knowledge transfer and knowledge sharing between community and university partners; (3) impact on training of students, community-based researchers and wider community. In January 2004 a Review Steering Committee consisting of the two CUISR Co-Directors, one module Co-Leader and an independent university researcher with knowledge in evaluation was established to develop guidelines and direction for the review process. A Research Evaluator/Research Outcomes Analyst was hired in February 2004 to undertake the evaluation of CUISR's work. As part of the review process a total of 27 interviews were undertaken with community group

representatives, researchers, staff and CUISR leaders. Interviews were conducted in three formats to accommodate the needs of the interviewee. The majority of interviews were conducted in person or by phone with three respondents providing written feedback to the questionnaire developed to guide the interview process. Interviews lasted between 45 and 120 minutes. In addition board minutes; publications; newsletters; the Institute's web site; and conference and workshop proceedings were reviewed. A number of CUISR's brown bag lunches and public forums were attended and information gathered from stakeholders in attendance. This report summarizes the results of the review process.

### **Framework for Evaluation**

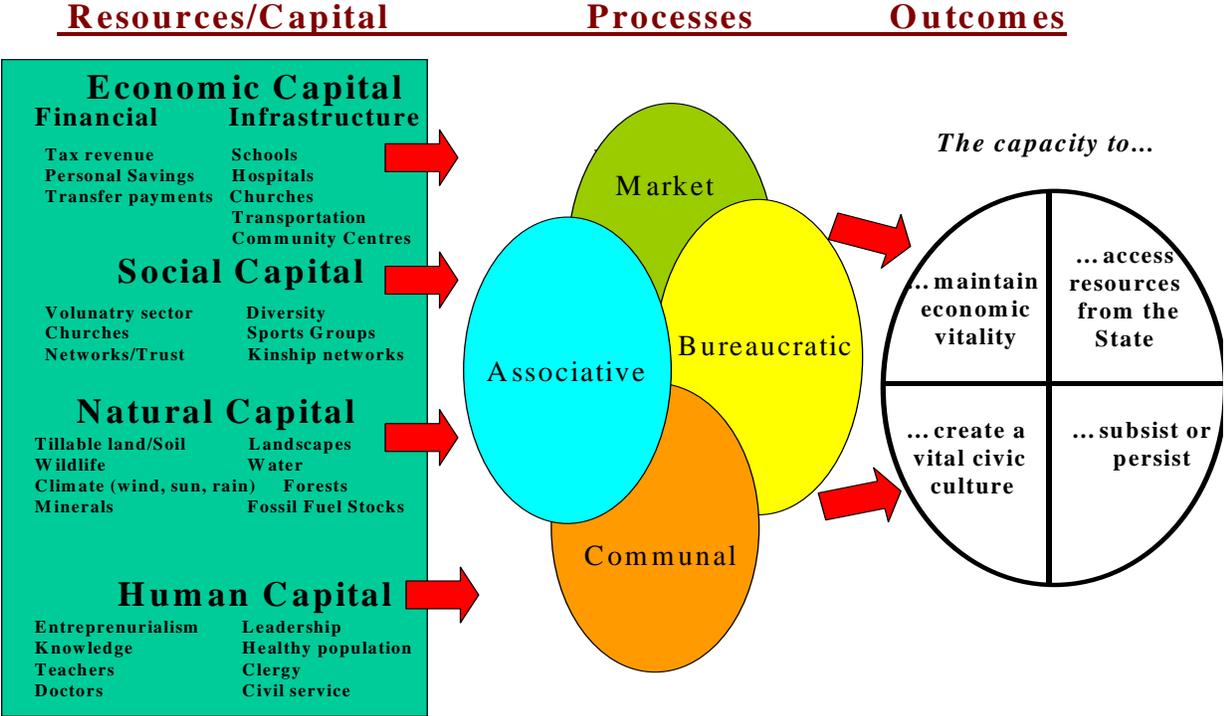
CUISR's goal is to strengthen the capacity of researchers and community organizations/individuals to improve the quality of life for the citizens of Saskatoon. CUISR has advocated that social research is best undertaken as a partnership between community-based organizations and members of the university community. To promote and support community-based research requires the processes employed facilitate the building of linkages between various community members in a way that is respectful of the diversity of needs and knowledge that stakeholders bring with them. The success of CUISR is therefore in part measured by its ability to undertake activities and implement processes that actively engage all stakeholders interested in improving and sustaining quality of life for the citizens of Saskatoon. Information gathered through interviews and informal discussions with CBOs, researchers, university faculty and CUISR leaders has been used to substantiate the impact CUISR has had on its stakeholders and the extent to which the Institute's activities have achieved the desired outcomes. The framework for evaluating both processes and outcomes has been chosen based on established models for community-based programs and analysis.

### **Capacity of University and Community-Based Organizations**

CUISR's overall goal is to build the capacity of researchers, CBOs and citizenry to enhance quality of life. Community capacity has been defined as "the collective ability of a group (community) to combine various forms of capital within institutional and relational contexts to produce desired results or outcomes." (Beckley et al, 2002). Beckley et al. (2002) developed a model of community capacity that identifies four types of capital stock or resources that can be combined through relational processes to create four different kinds of capacity outcomes.

Figure 1 illustrates the community capacity model. The four types of capital are economic, social, natural and human. The capacity outcomes desired from this capital include (1) capacity to maintain or enhance economic vitality; (2) capacity to access resources from the state; (3) capacity to create or maintain a vital civic culture; (4) capacity to subsist or persist. This definition of capacity is useful because it is action oriented and can be applied to organizations and institutions. The community capacity model is used here as a framework for evaluating CUISR’s contribution to building community capacity through the key stakeholders interested in improving the quality of life for the citizens of Saskatoon.

**Figure 1: Community Capacity Model (Beckley et al., 2002)**



**Human Capital**

Human capital refers to education, job experience, acquired skills, and the health of individuals (Beckley et al, 2002). CUISR research work has contributed to the development of human capital for both the researchers and the community organizations involved. Human capital has been facilitated both through the research process and outcomes. Of those

interviewed, almost all believed that the research work they had done with CUISR had improved their research skills.

The research outcomes provide both individual and organizational learning opportunities. Many of the research projects CUISR undertakes involve the collection of primary data that is valuable to the organization's and community's understanding of social issues. Often the data that is being collected has not been previously documented and so aids in the creation of "new knowledge" about a specific social issue. For example, the child poverty project that looked at child and family poverty in Saskatoon provided a detailed neighborhood analysis of child poverty in the City. The information gathered through this study had never before been quantified and qualified. A number of the community groups interviewed identified the brochure-style child poverty report card as an extremely valuable awareness and advocacy tool. The brochure is used regularly by a number of community organizations that deal with poverty issues. This kind of information is an important source of learning that is shared by the community partner with other community organizations and with the academic community through CUISR's research reports. This sharing of the information results in a broad-based educational component to the work CUISR does.

All of the intern and sabbatical researchers agreed that undertaking the research project improved their research skills significantly. For many of the researchers, the CUISR project represented the first opportunity to be involved in an applied research project. Specific skills acquired included interviewing, survey writing, critical thinking, communication, interpersonal, project management, networking, and research methodology. Many of the students placed great value on the opportunity to have something published.

All researchers interviewed agreed that the CUISR work they had done had impacted their ability to undertake other research and learning opportunities. They were very appreciative of the opportunity to do an applied research project through CUISR and believed the work was a tremendous learning experience. Several identified their research work with CUISR influenced their decision to pursue research in a related field as part of their academic careers. The comments by the researchers suggest that CUISR has been highly successful

in developing research skills and offering a valuable learning experience to students and community members undertaking research projects.

Two community groups interviewed talked about the value they placed on having access to a university student with research skills and academic training in a related field. They believed the knowledge, input, experience and perspectives of the student brought value to their organization and their involvement with the student was a worthwhile experience. For a number of the researchers their CUISR work led to subsequent research employment with the CBO partner. The CBO saw value in hiring someone with research experience and knowledge of their organizational culture. This employment was a direct result of the working relationship established through the CUISR project.

Of the 9 community organizations interviewed, 8 indicated the research experience they had with CUISR improved their organization's understanding of the processes and complexities of undertaking research. Several individuals identified that their personal research skills had improved and they valued the opportunity to learn something about the "language" used in research. A number felt that the experience had given them the confidence to apply for and undertake subsequent research projects. CUISR has recently developed a guide for the writing of proposals that helps CBOs in the development of research grant applications. Overall, the CBOs interviewed felt their staff gained knowledge about research processes from their work with CUISR.

The community's ability to act as a full partner in the research is dependent on their familiarity and comfort level with the processes employed. When they understand the processes, the community group is empowered and begins to feel more control. One student, who worked with a CBO first on a CUISR project and was subsequently employed by the community group for a research project, noted the change in the organization's understanding and involvement in the research. After the first experience, the organization became more confident and directive in the subsequent research it undertook. The ability of the CBO to undertake this second research project was directly attributed to the organizational learning that had occurred as a result of the CUISR project. Another community group identified the CUISR project they were involved with created an interest in research and a commitment to

improving the research skills of their staff. From the outcomes of the CUISR project, the Board of the organization saw the value of research as a communication tool and as a means of documenting and substantiating the effectiveness of the programs they offer.

A number of CBOs cited a desire for more opportunity to directly participate in the research process. It was suggested the research work should allow time for the researcher to transfer research knowledge to the CBO and consult with them during the process. When the researcher did not work in the office of the CBO there was some sense the community group was “isolated” from the research and was not always aware of what was going on.

CUISR has been instrumental in developing human capital through its employment. The Institute’s small staff takes on multiple roles that offer valuable opportunities for learning and skill development. Staff members believe this is an attractive quality of employment with CUISR and many feel they have benefited from their involvement with the organization because of the diverse work responsibilities their jobs have offered.

### **Social Capital**

Social capital refers to assets that take a social form like those developed in organizations, collective activities, networks, and relationships (Reimer, 2002). Social capital is not intrinsic to an individual but rather relational and results from the interactions between people. Social capital is an asset that can be used to create social capacity. Social capacity is the ability to organize assets and resources to achieve desired outcomes (Reimer, 2002).

With few exceptions, the individuals interviewed or spoken to informally through this review process talked about the value they placed on the networking opportunities provided by their involvement with CUISR. Working together builds trust and understanding. Many of the students who were involved with the research projects indicated that one of the significant skills and opportunities the project had given them was networking. They learned through the research process how to network and found doing this gave them valuable contacts within the community. For some, these relationships were subsequently used to obtain employment or to do more social research. Those from community organizations involved with a CUISR research project found the opportunity to meet and work with other CBOs and

individuals from the University community very beneficial. These networks strengthened the organizations and the personal relationships established were transferred to other situations and used to create new alliances. One interviewee recalled a community member being asked to be involved in the leadership of a community advocacy group as a result of working on a CUISR committee. This community member had skills and perspectives that were identified as being valuable in furthering the work of the community group and as a result of relationships established through the CUISR committee became involved in other related community work. A community group interviewed had contacted the individual faculty members the group had gotten to know through their work with CUISR for the purpose of soliciting donations. The personal relationship with these individuals contributed to the favorable response the organization received from the University community.

A group of community representatives that were brought together by CUISR to act as an advisory committee for a large research project, subsequently went on to collaborate and collectively develop other research questions. The process was enabling for the community members involved. The community stakeholders were described as reluctant initially to participate but took ownership of the project results and used them to create tools for social change. The self-esteem of the community members was enhanced by being actively involved in the process and the group went on to develop another research proposal on their own. This proposal was at first rejected by CUISR but the Management Board communicated the need to work on the proposal and resubmit it. With the help of some new committee members with strong research skills, they were successful in a subsequent application and this process was empowering for the community representatives involved.

In one instance, a CUISR project is credited with helping a group of organizations identify and resolve a number of important issues that was preventing them from fully cooperating in the research process. By working through these issues with the community groups, CUISR was instrumental in building trust between the CBOs involved. The project brought community stakeholders together in a collaborative and positive way. The community group partnering in the project believed the immediate impact of the research was better cooperation and communication between these organizations working for common goals in

the community. It is anticipated that the trust will be transferred to other situations where collaboration by these groups is needed.

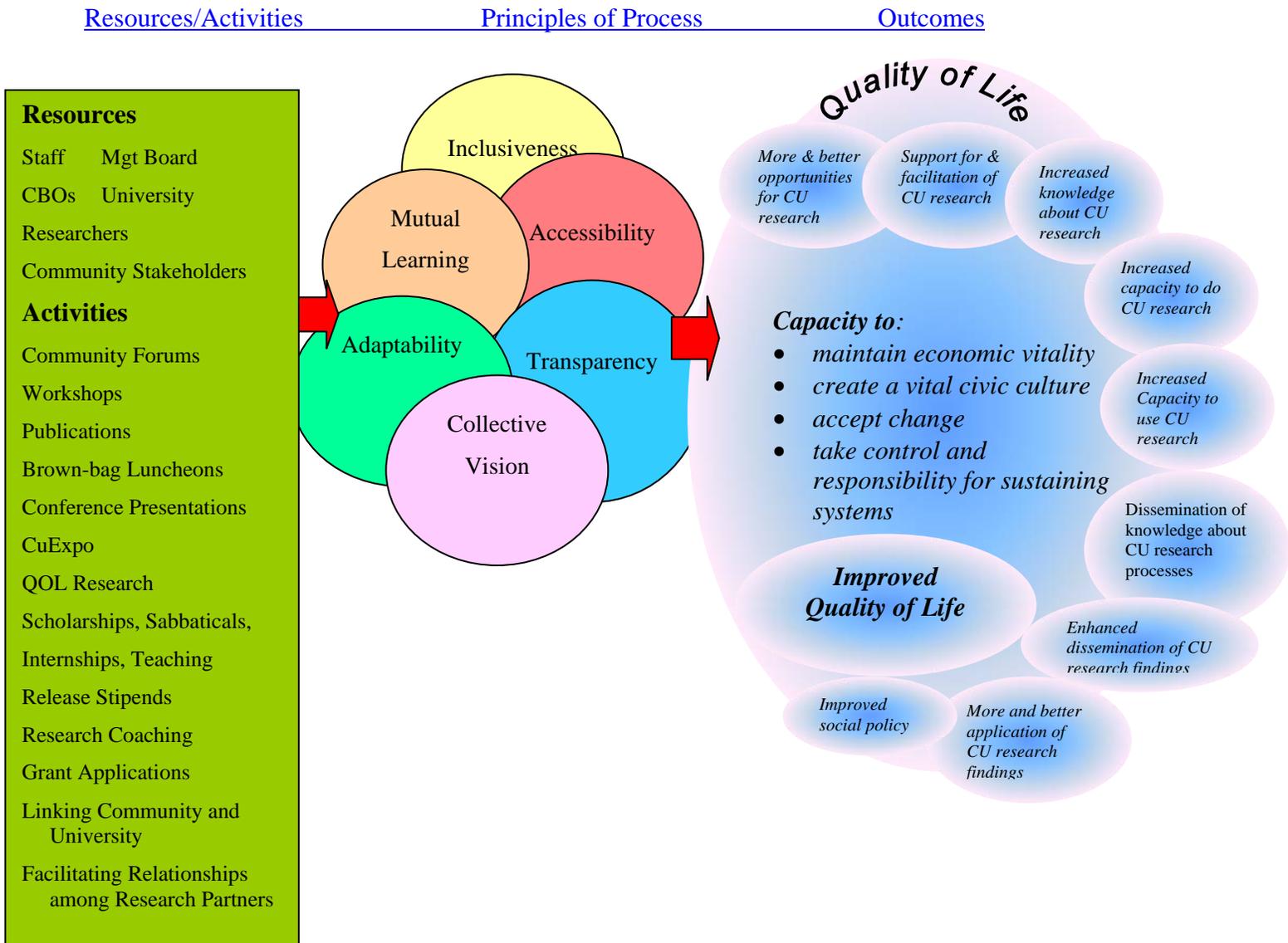
### **Economic Capital**

Economic capital refers to both physical and financial assets. CUISR has provided funding to community groups for social research. Many CBOs identified not having sufficient funding to allocate money for social research. Almost all indicated they would not have undertaken the research project had it been necessary to fund it through internal sources. Through the Institute, community groups gain access to the university's skilled labor and professional research support at a very low cost. A community representative suggested CUISR was capable of producing quality research results inexpensively compared to private research consultants. One CBO stated that before CUISR existed they could only identify research questions or ideas but never considered pursuing them. Now when such ideas arise they immediately contact CUISR to discuss the feasibility of doing the research.

### **Natural Capital**

Natural capital has been identified as being key to enhancing positive community capacity outcomes (Beckley et al., 2002). Natural assets include water, arable land, air quality and green spaces. CUISR has acknowledged the contribution natural capital makes to quality of life by funding several studies that look at natural resources. Four research projects funded by CUISR explore the relationship between different forms of natural capital and quality of life. Saskatchewan River Basin-Wide Survey of Residents' Attitudes Towards Water Resources and the Environment, Respiratory Illness in Saskatoon infants: The impact of Housing and Neighbourhood Characteristics, Development of Ecological Community Profiles in 5 Saskatchewan Communities, and a current project Eco-Trust Feasibility all look at the importance of different forms of natural capital. This awareness and study of natural capital and how it impacts quality of life is an important contribution to improving community capacity. Figure 2 shows the application of the capacity model to the work that CUISR has done.

**Figure 2: CUISR Capacity Model**



**Activities**

To date, CUISR has hosted several workshops, five community forums, the CUExpo and 30 brown bag luncheons. A brown bag luncheon is hosted each time a research project is completed. The researcher presents a summary of their findings and in informal round table discussion and question period follows. The CUExpo hosted in May 2003 attracted approximately 450 participants. Community forums have covered topics ranging from discussions about the content and format of the Quality of Life Survey, to Quality of Life

policy and action priorities, to the examination of the Community Action Plan Information System (CAPIS). Staff and Board members have accepted over 50 opportunities to speak about CUISR's work at conferences and workshops hosted by other organizations interested in quality of life issues. Appendix 1 provides a brief summary of CUISR events.

CUISR coordinated the two city-wide quality of life surveys and research activities, publicizing and sharing the findings with interested stakeholders. The first survey was undertaken in 2002 and the second survey in 2004. Citizens have been asked in the survey about their satisfaction with a variety of personal, neighborhood-related and city-related aspects of quality of life and the results shared with interested stakeholders. This information has been used to assess the satisfaction of Saskatoon residents with their quality of life. With two surveys now complete it is possible to benchmark and compare the change in perceptions of quality of life over the two-year period. This analysis is currently underway.

CUISR is responsible for recruiting and matching academic researchers with community partners undertaking research projects. A total of approximately 90 research grant applications have been received over the 5 years that CUISR has operated. CUISR has awarded 10 research scholarships, 18 community sabbaticals, 44 internships and 7 teaching release stipends. CUISR staff, board members and associated faculty members have supported this research by providing administrative support, technical advice and coaching to both researchers and CBOs as needed. When multiple community research partners are involved in a specific project, CUISR has acted as a facilitator, bringing these stakeholders together to coordinate efforts and promote networking and cooperation amongst them. Research activities have resulted in 37 publications that are available on the Institute's web site. CUISR continues to apply for applicable grants from other sources, partnering with other groups where appropriate to secure funding that will support community-based social research on an ongoing basis. To date CUISR has been involved in preparing eight funding applications and been successful in obtaining \$1,304,500 cash and \$1,891,000 in-kind dollars. (See Appendix 2). This evaluation begins the process of documenting and benchmarking the impacts and outcomes of CUISR's work.

## Principles of Process

Moving institutional-based activities and decision making into the community is a difficult task. When participatory decision-making from diverse stakeholders is desired, the processes employed are critical to the success of the program. Moote et al. (2001) offer a framework with which to evaluate the processes used to engage the community in participatory decision making, research and ownership. Fundamental to participatory decision making is an understanding of the need for respect for diversity and an appreciation for the knowledge of others while sharing views. For a program to be community-based it must find ways to embrace diverse cultures and social groups within the community and remove power imbalances. Six key dimensions of successful community-based initiatives have been identified: inclusiveness, accessibility, transparency, mutual learning, adaptability and collective vision (Moote et al., 2001).

At inception CUISR established guiding principles for undertaking research that would ensure accountable, objective reporting of results and facilitate collaboration between participants. The processes employed by CUISR were as important to the Institute's founders as the outcomes. The ten principles established for CUISR and its participants included:

- (1) Participants agree on the vision, mandate, goals and holistic approaches (of the Institute);
- (2) Participants are committed to making contributions in various forms, as necessary, to support the vision and goals;
- (3) Participants will engage in open communication, sharing knowledge, rationales and decisions, and actively listen to all diverse/divergent points of view;
- (4) Participants are committed to learning together and building knowledge together;
- (5) Participants recognize and have methods to resolve conflicts;
- (6) Participation is evolving and dynamic, open to new partnerships;
- (7) Participants will be responsive to community and university needs, concerns and pursuit of knowledge;
- (8) Participants recognize how each person contributes to making the Institute greater than the sum of its parts;
- (9) Participants work cooperatively and are responsible to reach 'best' solutions through consensus decision-making. Where consensus cannot be reached, majority vote will be used as a decision making mechanism;
- (10) Participants will be open to multiple methods and approaches.

These 10 principles correlate closely with the six key elements of successful community-

based initiatives identified by Moote et al. (2001) and are used here as a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of CUISR's processes.

### **Inclusiveness**

To be effective community-based processes must engage all stakeholders and give them equal voice and participation regardless of their size or influence in the community (Moote et al., 2001). Inclusiveness is not measured by the number of participants but rather by the representation of the diverse interests and views in the community and respects the spectrum of traditions, cultural concepts and self-determination of community groups. The processes must be open, encourage participation, and respect diverse forms of knowledge systems. Those providing leadership must be careful not to rely only on established and visible representatives of the community such as local government or business groups. These structures do not always represent the diverse cultural and social milieu of the community. A truly inclusive process creates increase public support for the processes, outcomes and ultimately the goals of the organization (Shindler and Cheek, 1999). When the efforts of stakeholders result in tangible outcomes it builds a sense of ownership amongst those involved and demonstrates accountability (Shindler and Cheek, 1999).

CBOs vary in their objectives, financial support, human resources, experience, education and skills. Creating processes and structures that meet the diverse needs of Saskatoon's community groups is difficult. One of the community groups interviewed stated they were attracted to apply for funding from CUISR because of the community-university partnership model used. Amongst community groups and researchers this philosophy of partnering with the community for the purpose of conducting social research is unique and a welcome change from the autocratic investigator-subject relationship many community groups have experienced in the past. CUISR has facilitated and supported the establishment of true partnerships between the academic world and community groups. Community forums open to community groups, university faculty, and the public have been hosted to give a voice to the stakeholders concerned about Saskatoon's quality of life. CUISR Co-Leaders have attended meeting and workshops on quality of life issues both locally and nationally to gather information and promote the work of CUISR. Community research partners have ranged from large publicly funded organizations such as the City of Saskatoon and the Saskatoon

Health Region to small groups representing cultural, social and economic minorities in Saskatoon such as the Islamic Association of Saskatoon and Gay and Lesbian Health Services.

CUI SR has worked hard to create communication processes that reach all stakeholders. The CUI SR web site has recently been revised and portrays an image of professionalism and openness. The CUI SR bi-annual newsletters and notification of the brown bag luncheons are sent to more than 500 people/organizations. The newsletter is distributed via e-mail to all CBOs in the CUI SR database with a notification that additional hardcopies are available free of charge. The University's list-serve system that reaches all staff, faculty and students is also used to distribute the newsletter. Hard copies are mailed to all administrative personnel including the University President and vice-presidents as well as deans and department heads. All newsletters are posted on the CUI SR web page. Notification of upcoming Brown Bag Luncheons are distributed using the university list-serve and CUI SR's database of community organizations and stakeholders. These events are advertised in On-Campus News, Cityside on Shaw TV, CFQC TV community events, and posted on-line in the University's Events Calendar, City highlights, and the CUI SR home page. One-page summaries of each research project are developed and distributed electronically to those in CUI SR's database. Hard copies are available through the CUI SR resource centre and outreach centre. All research publications are available for downloading at the CUI SR web site and at the University and City libraries. CUI SR has partnered with the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix to distribute quality of life surveys and publish information about the Institutes activities.

To date, a total of 170 organizations have been identified as having an interest in the enhancement of quality of life conditions in Saskatoon (CUI SR, 2004a). These groups are part of the CUI SR database used for communicating with stakeholders. This database is utilized not only to communicate CUI SR activities but the actions and events of all community organizations. CUI SR staff forward messages to their extensive list of contacts promoting public speaking engagements, fund raising events and conferences for their community partners. In this way CUI SR acts as a conduit for communication amongst community-based organizations and those interested in social issues in Saskatoon. One of the challenges for

CUISR in fulfilling this role is keeping this database current. Although it is a time consuming process to review and update the list of contacts staff time is regularly committed to this activity.

Even with CUISR's extensive list of contacts several of the individuals interviewed were not aware the research publications were available on-line for downloading. Some were not being notified of CUISR conferences or community meetings. It may be that these communications go to someone else in the organization and are not passed along or it may be that only certain e-mail messages are opened and read thoroughly by these individuals. Finding ways to communicate with dispersed stakeholders is difficult and people often need continual reminders of the resources available to them. One way to possibly improve exposure is to advertise all CUISR activities and publications in each communication issued. For example almost everyone contacted received notice of the Brown Bag Luncheons. These notices could include a standard advertisement of the CUISR web site and the information available there as well as any upcoming CUISR events.

CUISR's leadership team includes community members from the City, Health Region and Quint Development Corporation. With the exception of Quint, these community representatives come from large publicly funded organizations. These public organizations have a vested interest in the well being of the community and therefore value the opportunity to be actively involved in an organization who's primary objective is to improve the quality of life in Saskatoon. Large organizations have the expertise and financial means to actively participate in the management of CUISR while many smaller groups do not have adequate manpower to make this kind of commitment. As a result it is difficult for them to participate in the leadership of CUISR on an ongoing basis. A number of the community groups interviewed argued that these large organizations do not depict the typical CBO, which is substantially smaller in terms of size and resources. This leads to questions as to whether CUISR's leadership is truly community-based and is able to represent the needs of the smaller community organizations. Comments made by participants in a strategic planning session suggest that the management and governance structure of CUISR is a concern to some stakeholders and should be reviewed (CUISR, 2004b).

With small CBOs facing time and financial constraints the issue of how to improve their representation in the decision making process is a difficult one. One consideration is more use of advisory committees where the time commitment is limited yet offers these smaller groups a voice in the process. Another suggestion made was to allow smaller organizations willing to commit to the leadership of CUISR the opportunity to apply for an honorarium for their participation.

There is concern CUISR receives the “credit” for the research done through the publications. CUISR is an organization of both the community and university but the publication, often authored by a university student or faculty may be perceived as a university report. Consideration might be given to changing the cover and/or title page of the publication such that it identifies the community group involved. Wording such as “CUISR in partnership with ...” might be viewed as more inclusive. Another option is to include the name of the community group in the authorship. Joint media releases or CUISR attendance and/or support for CBO events related to the research publicly acknowledges the research partnership.

CUISR’s original mandate defined community as extending beyond Saskatoon. Although the results of the research CUISR has done have useful applications outside of Saskatoon, the research itself has been primarily focused on issues that affect the city of Saskatoon. A few projects, like the United Way’s “211” Saskatchewan Feasibility Study, involved a program that would potentially offer services to all residents of Saskatchewan. Stakeholders has suggested that broadening CUISR’s role geographically to include more rural areas should be a priority for the future (CUISR, 2004b).

### **Accessibility**

To ensure inclusiveness, processes must be accessible. Moote et al. (2001) point out that access is often defined narrowly as receiving an invitation and having the resources (human and financial) to attend meetings. They argue that this definition must be expanded to customizing the process to meet the diverse needs and communication styles of all stakeholders. If affected community groups are unable to actively participate because of knowledge or communication barriers, then it is the process that has failed. Participation

methods must be appropriate to the identifiable stakeholders because they signal to community groups their standing and legitimacy in the process (Moote et al., 2001). It is important to understand and acknowledge the informal information system used by many community groups. Informal cultural networks and personal contact and recruitment by familiar and trusted sources are often the most effective way to recruit participation (Moote et al., 2001).

A number of the CBOs interviewed indicated the reason they chose to apply for funding from CUISR was because of a prior involvement with the Institute. Some had been part of a CUISR subcommittee or sat on a working committee associated with a CUISR research project. This personal contact with CUISR seemed to give the CBOs a sufficient comfort level and knowledge base to apply for funding for a research project. Some admitted their reason for applying to CUISR was simply that they wanted to do something with CUISR and so sought out an appropriate project. This implies that some community organizations saw value in cultivating a relationship with CUISR rather than just as a source of financing research. CUISR needs to continue to take every opportunity for personal contact with community representatives so that the network of relationships is strengthened and continues to grow.

Location is an important determinant of attendance. CUISR has hosted a number of events in Saskatoon and finding appropriate space that is accessible by all stakeholders is a challenge. Conferences and workshops are often held downtown in the Centennial Auditorium. This central location is accessible by car or bus from almost all areas of the city but parking can be costly. Brown Bag Luncheons are primarily hosted in the Community Village close to downtown. Parking is free and many community groups either work from this building or work with agencies that reside there. This location is close to the University campus. CUISR tries to hold some meetings downtown while others are hosted on campus so that the convenience, or challenges, of location is shared between the community and University. Recently a strategic planning meeting was hosted on campus in an effort to attract academics to the session. The campus may be an unfamiliar and intimidating environment for community members and parking is limited but it is convenient for faculty and

students. CUISR has to ensure that the location chosen for events are friendly and accessible to the stakeholders it is trying to attract and include in the process.

The majority of those interviewed stated that one of the primary reasons they applied for funding through CUISR was the simplicity of the application process. CUISR is described as approachable and has a user friendly application process compared with other funding agencies. Only one CBO felt the process was too complicated and time consuming and would therefore not apply again in the future. A large CBO that has never directly applied for funding from CUISR suggested that it was the time and resources to undertake the application process and support a research project that prevented them from applying. CBO staff hours are fully consumed by programming issues and there is little time to plan and undertake strategic research initiatives. This community group suggested making funding grants available specifically for the development of research proposals would be beneficial to generating more community research projects.

Records of CUISR's application review process indicate those who have been refused funding are offered support in revising their proposals and encouraged to make future submissions. CUISR board members and staff have worked with community groups on refining and improving a number of rejected proposals that were subsequently approved. CUISR's willingness to work with community groups in the application process provided these organizations with the support necessary to gain access to research funding. This process is a valuable learning experience for community groups in both the development of a clear research question and in writing a successful funding proposal.

### **Transparency**

Processes need to be understandable to all stakeholders (Moote et al., 2001). The roles and responsibilities of all parties must be clear at the outset if a trusting and productive relationship is to be established and maintained. Moote et al. (2001) suggest that the complexity of institutions such as a university make them confusing and inaccessible by many community groups. These organizations often have internal cultures with specialized information and jargon that discourage the sharing of knowledge by all interest groups and created community mistrust for such institutions. Organizations desiring community

commitment must be willing to share with all stakeholders their administrative processes. Only if the community understands the abilities and constraints of the institution and its processes can there be an informed and productive working relationship.

“Non-majority cultures or working class people from any background may be skeptical about participation process, particularly if they have a history of exclusion, oppression or being used as pawns.” (Moote et al., p.103, 2001)

CUISR wants to reframe the relationship between community groups and academic researchers. Traditionally community groups have felt very much like the specimens or subjects of research rather than a partner. CUISR has been working very hard to change this image. The balanced leadership structure that involves both community and University demonstrates commitment to including the community as a partner in the process and helps to ensure the perspective of the community is represented. Many of the community groups interviewed felt the research projects they had been involved in could be described as a true a partnership with the University although for some University is defined as CUISR rather than the larger academic population. These community groups described themselves as having minimal research experience and were very appreciative of the support that CUISR had given them throughout the process. Getting to know individuals from the academic community was described as being a very valuable adjunct to undertaking the research project. The technical advice received from University faculty and students was instrumental in completing their research work and often a useful learning experience for CBO staff.

The funding for CUISR flows through the University and as such many community groups see the ultimate “control” and authority over CUISR programs and processes residing with the University. This may help explain why many individuals view CUISR as an academic organization and community groups consider themselves to be external to the process rather than taking “ownership” for CUISR activities. Of those researchers and CBOs interviewed, 12 felt the research process could not be described as a partnership with the University. Several described CUISR as a source of funding similar to a government agency offering grants. For a number of student researchers there was very little contact with CUISR and a more direct relationship with the community group in an employer and employee type

relationship. Others felt they did not receive expected academic advice for the research process and therefore did not feel the University community has played a role in the work done.

From the interviews it was evident that a number of community groups have limited knowledge about CUISR and the activities it undertakes. Several CBOs and researchers said that outside their own project, they knew little about the other activities and resources CUISR offered. These individuals were not aware that the research documents were available on the CUISR web site for downloading. One CBO involved in a scholarship research project was not receiving any information on CUISR events and was surprised to learn about the Brown Bag Luncheon Series. To improve awareness of the diversity and depth of CUISR's work a written summary of CUISR activities and resources could be distributed to researchers and CBOs when each project is started.

Over half of those interviewed felt that the research responsibilities of all parties were made clear at the outset of the research project. Of these individuals a number stated problems regarding the clarity of the project did arise after they began the project. In most of these situations, CUISR staff and leaders were instrumental in resolving the difficulties. Although for most the requirements of the project were clear, many of the individuals interviewed were not initially told about the obligation to present at a brown bag luncheon and felt discussion of the expectations of this presentation should be part of the project orientation process.

CUISR has been working to establish itself as an unbiased independent research institution. What is unique about the Institution is that it is willing to work with community groups on the research issues of interest to them, yet remain impartial in the research process and outcomes. Many of the CBOs value the ability to access third party academic research. They believe stakeholders and funding agencies look more favorably on research that has been done independently by an academic-based organization. This gave better credibility to the outcomes of their research project compared to undertaking the work themselves. One community group believes by involving CUISR in their research conflicts of interest were identified that would not have been possible had the work been undertaken internally and therefore the quality and credibility of the research had been improved. When a research

project affects a number of community stakeholders third party financing from CUISR may help remove biases and perceptions that one community group is controlling the process through the funding.

A number of CBOs and researchers voiced concern over reporting relationships including confusion over responsibility for the supervision of the student researcher. With CUISR “employing” the student a number of community groups were unclear about the supervision of the student, whether CUISR or the CBO was responsible for overseeing the research work, and who would take the lead role should some sort of disciplinary action be necessary. Student interns voiced similar concerns, being uncertain about with whom they should discuss research and any interpersonal problems that might arise. One student mentioned having altered the interview questions when it was noted that certain respondents were particularly sensitive to the content. When asked about the protocol for such changes the intern indicated they had been given no directive on handling such matters and the CBO was not consulted.

Graduate students are conscious of the importance of receiving ethics approval before conducting any sort of primary data collection. Student researchers wondered about the application of the University’s ethics guidelines to the work CUISR does. These individuals felt there were no clear guidelines or protocol for researchers to follow and so were concerned there might be repercussions related to the approvals and consents for the information they had collected. Student and other inexperienced researchers do not have the expertise to deal with these types of situations and would prefer clear, written guidelines to follow. Research protocol would also be helpful when working with community organizations that may inadvertently influence the research process because of divergent expectations or specific agendas.

There are a number of CBOs that have had several different projects approved by CUISR. These organizations have mandates that are closely related to CUISR’s quality of life objectives. One CBO believed funding approval was dependent on the ability of the organization to write a grant application that meets the expectations of CUISR leaders. Those with experience writing proposals and knowledge of what “works” with CUISR have

been highly successful in receiving approval for a number of projects. Small CBOs may not have the staff or expertise to write research proposals and this may put them at a disadvantage in the application process or discourage them from applying at all. CUISR must continually monitor whether its processes and activities make funding equally accessible to all community groups.

### **Mutual Learning**

Mutual learning is best achieved through collective action (Moote et al., 2001). To be effective, program processes must promote inclusive and interactive learning among participants (Moote et al., 2001). Emphasis must be placed on activities that encourage participation by all interested stakeholders and ensure their perspectives are valued and considered in the decision making process. Community context in terms of social values, needs and knowledge must be considered. Shindler and Cheek (1999) point out that education is more likely to occur through personal interactions than by anonymous information delivery.

Community-based knowledge must be respected and valued and considered a resource on the same level as institutional or academic expertise. When mutual learning is occurring a civic science can be created. Gray et al. (2001) describe a “civic science” as formal science that is informed and respectful of local knowledge. Research processes based on a civic science involve and respect community people and their knowledge systems while promoting the exchange of information and learning (Gray et al., 2001).

CUISR is committed to offering students the opportunity to learn through hands-on involvement in applied research. The internship program matches graduate level students with community groups for the purpose of undertaking community-based research. Students who have been involved in internships with CUISR speak positively about the learning experience they had. A number of students interviewed stated they were attracted to CUISR by the opportunity to do paid research and academic writing. Several saw it as an opportunity to do qualitative rather than the quantitative research usually available to University students. In addition to learning about research processes a number of those interviewed spoke about gaining community or local knowledge from the project. These

individuals believe they gained valuable insight into how community organizations work. This understanding created an awareness and appreciation for the complexities of community-based research. For many students it strengthened their commitment to continuing to do community-based social research. This provides evidence that the processes CUISR is using are contributing to the development of a “civic science” that will be employed by the social researchers of tomorrow.

CUISR has an important role to play in disseminating information about research into the community in a useable format and at the same time bringing local knowledge back to the university so that the creation of a civic science for social research is facilitated. The Institute has established a library of publications related to social research and community quality of life issues. CUISR provides easy access to the Institute’s educational opportunities by posting electronically proceedings of all conferences and workshops they host. CUISR’s staff and management team have taken advantage of speaking opportunities at events hosted by community and academic groups to share information about the Institute and the research work done.

A number of student researchers identified their relationship with the project faculty advisor was key to completing the research and enhanced the learning experience. The opportunity to establish relationships with other academics was identified by a number of student researchers as an important benefit to working with CUISR. Several students indicated their work with a faculty advisor led to an ongoing research relationship with this individual and they saw this as a valuable outcome of their work with CUISR. One researcher from a community organization identified their organization now had an ongoing working relationship with a faculty member as a result of the CUISR project and that this individual continued to provide advice and support to this community group.

One concern related to offering research opportunities to students is these individuals may not have the experience and skills to undertake applied research. In the few cases where CBOs raised concerns over the quality of the research work done or about their relationship with the researcher it was directly related to the researcher’s skills and ability to work with the community or a problem with communication. Throughout the interview process the need to

ensure student researchers had the skills to collect primary data from the community was repeatedly raised. Those who were not satisfied with their researcher often felt the individual was not able to work effectively with the clientele of the CBO. Community groups are aware working with marginalized groups requires an understanding and respect for these individuals. CBOs worry that their relationship with their patrons and clients may be irreparably hurt if the researcher's contact with these individuals is not a positive experience. One CBO believes the community group's reputation, not only with the individuals interviewed but also with the whole community, is on the line when they allow researchers to work with their clients. Since these research projects are often the students' first opportunity to undertake applied research, they too have a reputation at stake. If students are not able to meet the expectations of the community group their ability to do future community research or gain employment with a CBO may be diminished. This would suggest orientation, research support and mentorship for student researchers is very important.

A number of student researchers raised concern over access to academic advisors for their work. Good academic support is an important component to the student's learning experience. Students want advice and support in the development of research tools and in the writing of the report. These activities can take significantly longer when the researcher has no prior experience. Given the time constraints on the research project, advice from someone with experience can help to quickly resolve problems encountered by a student. Academic advisors who agree to act in a supervisory position to researchers must be aware and agree to commit the time to supporting students through the research process. The responsibilities and expectations of the advisor must be clear to all parties. One intern interviewed suggested regular scheduled meeting with the faculty advisor would have been helpful. Academic support enhances the learning experience and provides a non-monetary benefit to students participating in the research. This is a significant commitment on the part of a faculty member and CUISR will need to work with these individuals to ensure this work can be mutually beneficial. Access to data for further research and authorship may be ways that academics can benefit from involvement in community research projects.

Assigning community mentors who have experience with community-based research to support and guide students may also be appropriate. One researcher from a community

group was disappointed when the promised opportunity for mentoring did not occur. This individual felt the personal learning experience would have been greatly facilitated by a community mentor. CBOs identified mentorship as a way to ensure researchers are supported in working with marginalized groups in the community. Problems working with these groups might have been avoided had there been an experienced community person available to offer advice and support. Mentorship from the community actively involves the community in the research process and demonstrates to the students and other researchers, the importance of undertaking research that is informed by local knowledge.

Several CBOs felt the intern did not invest enough time getting to know the organization or did not spend time communicating the research processes to the community group. CBOs and researchers cited a lack of time for the community to learn about the research processes and for knowledge transfer to occur. Almost everyone consulted believed there was not sufficient time and money allocated for students to undertake the research project. With few exceptions, the money ran out well before the work was complete. In some cases this was because of unforeseen complications in completing the data collection process or because of a discovery that the research question needed to be revised, but often it was simply that there was insufficient time to prepare, undertake and document the research. Often community-based research involves the collection of primary data through surveys and interviews with marginalized groups that may be difficult to contact and must be visited individually to gather the required information. This is a time consuming process.

One researcher questioned whether community groups requesting research projects fully understand what is involved in undertaking the research. Much of the work community groups do is based on personal relationships and there is an expectation that the researcher will spend time with the CBO learning about its culture and sharing knowledge about the research process. Researchers often feel pressed for time to complete the actual work and so may not spend time developing a relationship with the organization. This can lead to the organization feeling alienated from the researcher and the research process.

All research projects should allow for the development of strong working relationships between the CBO and researcher. The learning experience of the student and the CBO was

greatly enhanced when the researcher spent time getting to know the organization. If researchers are inexperienced, it is difficult for them to know how much time should be spent with the CBO developing a relationship. CUISR may want to offer some guidelines in this area and ensure that this issue is raised during initial meetings between the researcher and CBO so that the expectations in this regard are clear to all parties involved.

One CBO voiced concern the student did not complete the report to the organization's satisfaction because there was not sufficient time to go through this process. Given that most researchers have very little experience, it might be appropriate to offer some guidelines on the time that needs to be allocated to the various steps (e.g. survey design, data collection, report writing) in the research process. This might be helpful to CBOs in developing research proposals and in monitoring the allocation of time during the project. CUISR should consider reviewing the time and dollars allocated to research projects involving primary data collection to ensure the funding is sufficient.

Relationships between the community groups and those students undertaking the research as part of their thesis research tend to be more remote. Those researchers interviewed who undertook the research as part of their graduate program admitted to having very little communication with CUISR and the CBO. These individuals saw the CUISR project as a means by which to finance their thesis work and the CBO was involved as a sponsor of the research rather than as an active partner in the process. All admitted that the work was taking longer than expected and the scholarship recipients interviewed believed that this was a disappointment to the community group with which they worked. One CBO interviewed voiced disappointment in the communication process and admitted they would not participate in any further research projects because of their experience. CUISR may want to ensure there is regular, perhaps even scheduled, communication between the CBO and the researcher in these relationships. Initial meetings between the parties involved in the project might be an opportunity to establish communication expectations with CUISR taking an active role in monitoring the fulfillment of these commitments.

There is a perception among many community organizations that the knowledge transfer that is occurring is one way from the academics to the CBO and that this educational process

needs to be two-way. What seems to be missing is a feedback mechanism in the research process informing the community of the local-knowledge transfer that is occurring and the impact community groups are having on the researchers they work with. This kind of feedback is likely to have a positive impact on the community's willingness to participate in research projects. A CBO raised concern over not receiving any feedback on the student's research experience. The community group was interested in knowing the intern's perspective on the process.

Perhaps a debriefing process where researchers and community organizations talk with CUISR staff about their experience would be beneficial to improving the research process and could be offered as feedback to the community organizations and the researcher. This kind of reflection is an important component to the adult learning process (Mackeracher, 1996).

Involving the community, as resource people and presenters at CUISR workshops and conferences is one way they can share their experiences and knowledge with one another and the academic community. This kind of participation reinforces that local knowledge is valued. If community organizations perceive themselves as having a positive impact on social research processes, they will have a vested interest in partnering with CUISR and will share these positive experiences with other community organizations.

### **Adaptability**

Processes need to be flexible because of the complex and dynamic nature of social systems (Moote et. al., 2001). Innovation and flexibility improve the quality of decision making (Shindler and Cheek, 1999). Continual monitoring of outcomes is necessary so that the institute and its activities remain responsive to the diverse needs of the various interest groups. This monitoring of practices is best done collectively by all stakeholders so that the interests of all groups are addressed. Monitoring requires the establishment of reporting mechanisms and processes that facilitate timely corrective action when needed (Gray et al., 2001). More importantly, what is learned from monitoring must be incorporated into future actions and decision making if trust and commitment among the stakeholders is to grow.

This review process demonstrates CUISR's interest in benchmarking the activities, output, impact and outcomes of the Institute for the purpose of improving processes and responsiveness to the stakeholders it serves. CUISR leaders have shown a keen interest throughout the review process in receiving all forms of feedback and are open to input from all stakeholders. CBOs cited CUISR's philosophy of respect for civic knowledge is one of the reasons they have had such positive research experiences. Formal monitoring and reporting mechanisms have not been established by CUISR but are expected to be part of the outcome of this review.

CUISR has worked with community groups to improve access to research dollars. CUISR has been flexible in defining CBO staff to include volunteers and allowing community groups to use these individuals as sabbatical researchers. Relieving staff persons for the purpose of filling a sabbatical research position is a concern for many CBOs. It is difficult for community groups with few staff to replace these individuals on a temporary basis. By employing volunteers to do the research it is possible for community groups to utilize individuals with a knowledge of and vested interest in their organization without sacrificing continuity within their organization. This willingness to work with CBOs has given CUISR credibility within the community. CUISR needs to make sure that it communicates these options to all community groups that apply for funding. Discussions with a number of CBOs revealed they would have considered applying for sabbatical funding had they been aware that using a volunteer in a sabbatical position was an option.

CUISR has been very flexible with community groups and researchers in the time to undertake and complete the research and subsequent report. Almost all of the individuals interviewed identified their project took longer than expected. Many of the individuals interviewed appreciated the willingness of CUISR to work with them to resolve issues related to the research process and outcomes that often meant either materially changing the process and outcomes of the research or delays in delivering the agreed upon research results. These comments provide evidence that CUISR is aware of and responsive to the uncertainties and complexity of community-based social research.

Completing the reports in a timely manner is an ongoing concern to CUISR. Staff spend considerable time monitoring the writing and reviewing of reports. CUISR currently has difficulty getting reports finalized by researchers. Often the researcher is a graduate student working concurrently on an academic thesis. The CUISR work is often taken as a source of revenue or the opportunity to work on a project related to the researcher's area of study. By the time the research is complete the funding has often run out and in some cases the student has taken on other paying work that must be attended to while completing the report. For those continuing with further studies, the project may have been a summer job and if the project runs over the expected time frame they must juggle finalizing the project with their academic writing and work. Given that the research reports are an important deliverable of the research process and one of the primary ways that the research findings are shared and disseminated, it may be necessary for CUISR to set some rules for the reporting process. Once the funding has been paid to the researcher there may be no incentive for an individual to complete the work. A number of the researchers and CBOs interviewed suggested that a portion of the research funding should be held back as an incentive for the researcher to deliver the final report.

An academic reviewer, often a co-leader for the module is required to read the report prior to publication. These individuals face a multitude of demands for their time making it difficult to get the reviews done in a timely manner. For community groups who need the final report as a supporting document for a funding application delays by their academic partners can be frustrating. CUISR leaders struggle with the issue of prompt academic review of the research reports and are currently trying to address the problem by involving more individuals from the academic community in the review process. CUISR may want to consider establishing a list of six to eight academics for each module that can be called upon to undertake the review within a specified time frame.

The community partner is also given the opportunity to review and approve the final report. Community groups may not have sufficient manpower to review the work in a timely manner and it can take months to get the report back from the CBO. If the CBO has the results of the research there may be no incentive to prioritize reviewing the formal report. Timelines for the review of the report by the CBO should be set and enforced. It may be necessary to have

the community group forfeit their right to edit the report if not completed within the agreed upon time frame.

### **Collective Vision**

A clear, shared vision that represents the interests and values of all stakeholders is essential if all interested groups are to be vested members of the process (Moote et al., 2001). Trust and commitment are the foundations for collective action. Leadership must be creative and able to build bridges between different interests and perspectives, facilitating the establishment of networks between interest groups and strategic partners. Good leadership and participatory processes and decision making contribute to long-term relationships among stakeholders and build trust in the institutions (Shindler and Cheek, 1999).

CUISR has exemplary leadership. Dr. Jim Randall is credited with being instrumental in working with the community and other stakeholders to establish CUISR. Until his departure from the University of Saskatchewan in 2003, Dr. Randall was a valuable ambassador for the work CUISR does. As the founding academic Co-Director of CUISR he is described as being committed to the CUISR mandate and capable of providing explicit leadership and direction to staff. The Institute's community Co-Director, Kate Waygood is highly respected within the community and has given the organization credibility with CBOs. This has gone a long way to establishing trust in CUISR and created confidence the research undertaken is respectful and inclusive of the community.

Dr. Nazeem Muhajarine, the current University Co-Director has worked directly with a number of community research partners requiring his academic expertise and mediation skills. Two CBOs interviewed cited that Dr. Muhajarine was instrumental in resolving key issues that arose related to their research project describing him as professional, helpful and respectful. One researcher commented the leaders and staff of CUISR are very committed to the process and philosophy of community-based research and this makes working with CUISR very attractive to students.

The commitment of the Management Board and staff to the mission and goals of CUISR are unquestionable and this dedication has attracted the support of many community leaders and

groups. CUISR has consciously established one Co-Director from the community and one from the university to provide balanced leadership to the organization. At its inception in 2000 each of the three modules has both a community and university Co-Leader as well as a four adjunct Co-Directors. Of these 12 individuals, 7 continued to be involved with CUISR and provided stable leadership to the organization until 2003 when one of the Co-Directors left. This continuity has facilitated the development of CUISR as a research institution and provided valuable guidance to staff. Presently 5 of the original leaders continue to be involved in the governance of CUISR. These individuals are able to provide exemplary leadership to the organization because of their wealth of experience and expertise.

All of the Management Board members are fully employed in other capacities within the University and the community and are therefore very busy. With limited resources, CUISR has relied heavily on the expertise and contribution of the Management Board. In addition to their governance functions, Board members provide guidance to community groups throughout the application and research process, represent CUISR at community and academic workshops and meetings, act as advisors to student and community researchers, and review all research reports. These are time consuming activities and those who have been involved since inception are to be commended.

As with any new organization, as it grows, so do the demands on the leadership. Involvement with CUISR is a huge commitment and one that is not taken lightly by those involved. This may explain some of the current difficulties in maintaining and recruiting new directors to the organization. With a small group of individuals trying to perform a number of leadership functions in addition to their full-time employment responsibilities there are times when the administrative processes of CUISR move slowly.

There is evidence that relying on CUISR co-leaders to review the research reports has at times slowed the publication of these documents. The reports are an important outcome of the research process and CUISR may need to find a way to include more individuals in the reviewing of these documents to reduce the burden on its leadership. Because directors do not work out of the same office as the staff, and have many other commitments, there have been difficulties for staff getting timely feedback on certain issues. Staff are understanding of

the demands on the voluntary leaders of CUISR, however communication on leadership issues has at times been limited leaving staff feeling anxious and frustrated. CUISR directors acknowledge these difficulties and are currently trying to recruit more resource people to assist in the governance and administration of the organization. The establishment of written protocols to guide the activities of staff may be helpful.

Those interviewed described staff as helpful and supportive. The majority of respondents indicated they received appropriate administrative support for their project from CUISR staff when they asked for it. One student, who had experienced some initial problems working through the research process with the community partners, felt CUISR took full responsibility for resolving the issues with the community groups and the individual felt very supported. In the past staff turnover has been an issue in the management and tracking of research projects.

There has been considerable discussion surrounding the appropriateness of the three research modules of health, economic development and quality of life. At a strategic planning meeting held with stakeholders in June, 2004 there was strong support for reviewing and revising the research modules (CUISR, 2004b). Two additional modules were suggested: environmental issues and policy integration. The issue of whether quality of life should be an umbrella theme that encompasses all modules has been raised. The strategic planning meeting also revealed that there are diverse opinions about what CUISR has meant to the community in the past and what role it should play in the future. Securing funding through public sources was identified as a priority. Broadening the membership or inclusiveness of CUISR was important as was expanding CUISR's role in supporting community groups in utilizing research findings.

CUISR funds and facilitates research for the purpose of achieving improved social policy and ultimately a better quality of life for the residents of Saskatoon. Using research to support social change may be difficult for CBOs who have limited human and financial resources to evaluate, interpret, and implement the research findings. Many CBOs operate with few paid staff and have little research experience. Understanding and interpreting the results of their research project can be a challenge. The relationship between the research findings and

program or policy decisions may not be immediately clear to the CBO. Time and financial resources must be dedicated to “mining” the research data so that it can be fully utilized by the CBO and other stakeholders. For community groups that undertake a research project for a specific purpose other possible quality of life applications of the research may not have been explored. It may be appropriate for CUISR to allocate resources to working with community groups to evaluate the research findings and assist them in understanding the implications of the information gathered.

A first step in clarifying the relationship between research and social change is to include discussion of program and policy implications in the application process. CBOs should be asked to identify the anticipated implications of this research and how they would use the research findings within their organizations to impact social change. By asking community organizations to think about the implications and implementation of research outcomes CBOs may be able to clarify their research question and better understand the application of research to social change. Stakeholders attending the Strategic Planning Session identified CUISR involvement/assistance in research implementation as a future priority (CUISR, 2004b).

Trust was identified by a number of CBOs interviewed as very important in establishing a partnership between the community and University. For community groups trust is established through personal working relationships with CUISR leaders and staff. Being visible in the community and participating in a variety of community activities signals to the community CUISR has a vested interest in their social objectives. A number of CBOs indicated they do not see CUISR represented at their gatherings and feel that more visibility in the community would build bridges and develop the trust needed for collective research and action.

### **Expected Impacts and Outcomes**

The anticipated outcomes of CUISR’s activities identified in the capacity model include: increased capacity to do community-based social research; more and improved opportunities to do community-university research; increased knowledge about community-university research processes and relationships; improved ability by university and community to utilise

research findings and disseminate results; more sharing of information and knowledge of research processes between research partners; and establishment and strengthening of networks and partnerships amongst CBOs and with the academic community. These outcomes provide the foundation for the attainment of other objectives including enhanced application of community-university research findings and improved social policy.

### **Capacity to Create Change**

For those who live on the margins of the market economy, the capacity to subsist involves being able to establish and access networks that provide the basics for existence such as food, shelter and clothing (Beckley et al., 2002). Safety, security and health are valued outcomes (Reimer, 2002). Many of the community groups that CUISR has worked with have as their mandate capacity building related to these fundamental issues. Research projects have explored quality of life topics related to housing, access to food and health for marginal groups within Saskatoon. CUISR research has raised awareness of these social issues and in doing so has been able to quantify and qualify the subsistence issues facing the community. Recommendations arising out the research build the capacity of community groups and the community at large to deal with these issues. The knowledge gained from the work done feeds back into improved understanding and skills to create human capital that can be used to create change resulting in further positive social outcomes. The Child Poverty project is an excellent example of where the community came together to deal with a subsistence issue and became empowered by the experience to the extent that they were able to use their new found skills and knowledge to achieve other related social goals. A project that looked at access to food for Saskatoon's inner city neighborhood was instrumental in the development of a multi-agency proposal for an inner city grocery store. Research processes that facilitate networking between community groups and actively engage marginal groups in a meaningful way are empowering for the community and generate social capital that has been used to achieve other outcomes and goals.

### **Capacity to Create and Maintain a Vital Civic Culture**

Social capital is closely linked to the capacity to create or maintain a vital civic culture. It refers to the capacity to come together in a public forum to undertake social activities and achieve social goals (Beckley et al., 2002). The social capacity framework suggests that

capital can be combined through a number of processes to create valued outcomes such as economic prosperity, social and political inclusion, environmental stewardship, social and self-worth, health, safety/security and social cohesion (Reimer, 2002). All of these outcomes are important components of quality of life.

The researchers and community groups interviewed talked about the networking and relationship building that occurred as a result of the research they had done and how these relationships were subsequently used to work together on other goals. Community groups believed by including the recipients of community services in the research process these individuals are given a voice and this can be empowering for marginalized groups. One CBO identified involving their clientele in the research project provided the opportunity to get to know these individuals. This relationship building between the organization and its patrons was an unanticipated but very positive outcome of the project. The self-esteem of the community has been enhanced by participation in the process. The consultation process leads to communication that promotes social inclusion and social cohesion. When these outcomes are achieved, capacity building extends beyond the community organization to the community at large.

A student researcher commented on the personal respect received from the community partner. This individual appreciated that the CBO valued and respected the researcher's input on the methodology and research processes. As a result, the researcher felt more involved in the process than anticipated and felt a vested interest in the completion of the project. The experience has reinforced the student's commitment to continued involvement in community-based social research through the university.

Those interviewed were asked about the impact the research had on the community groups involved. Many of the community groups stated the research had influenced their policies or activities. Some had made programming changes as the result of feedback from their clientele. The research process was identified as being a community development tool because it brought together service providers and users as partners to examine social problems and identify solutions. In one instance the research process had helped to develop trust between a group of community organizations improving their ongoing working

relationship. Through their involvement in the research process, these CBOs were able to identify a number of new research questions and projects they plan to collaborate on in the future.

Almost everyone interviewed believed the research done had met, and in many cases exceeded, the expectations of the community partner. For some, it was the process rather than the outcome of the research that was capacity building. One community organization stated the research methodology skills and knowledge acquired through the CUISR project had a huge impact on the group and had spurred a program evaluation. For this group, the research process created awareness of the relationship between program design, environment and outcomes, improving the capacity of the organization to deal with the problem it was facing and to apply this new knowledge to other programming issues.

### **Capacity to Maintain and Enhance Economic Vitality**

The capacity to maintain or enhance economic vitality is related to economic development activities and is often measured in terms of community wealth and employment (Beckley et al., 2002). Capacity to access state resources refers to the ability to attract government-controlled resources and funding through programs and infrastructure. For non-profit CBOs, government funding is often closely linked to the organization's capacity for economic vitality. The capacity to attract funding from public and private sources is key to the continued provision of community services.

The work CUISR has done with local community groups directly impacts their capacity for economic survival. Many CBOs have identified the research project with CUISR has improved their capacity to attract and obtain financial support from other sources. One of the concerns raised by many community organizations is that it is very difficult to obtain funding that looks at social issues or that tries to provide evidence of the value of the work done by a non-profit community organization. As one individual put it " If you cannot say that the activity you are going to undertake will result in "x" number of jobs, government won't fund it." Community groups must be able to quantify and qualify the benefits for clients and stakeholders to receive grant funding for their activities, yet they cannot obtain the money necessary to document this value. This is where CUISR's funding and research projects

have been very valuable. CUISR funding has allowed community organizations to gather important information and data that provides support and justification for program delivery and funding requests. For example, CUISR's funding of a sabbatical position for the Saskatoon Communities for Children provided the foundation for developing a Common Functional Assessment tool subsequently supported by a government grant program.

Raising community awareness of the CBO and the work that it does can impact the ability of the community group to attract operating funds. A community representative stated third-party research done by CUISR gives community groups credibility with funders and donors. One research pointed out the increased community awareness of the organization and its activities that resulted from the CUISR research project significantly benefited the CBO. This awareness is anticipated to result in greater support for the organization's work. In some instances, community groups said they were able to lever the funds provided by CUISR to get "matching" or additional funding from another source to do the research project. The project would not have proceeded without this additional financial support. READ Saskatoon identified sponsorship for their project from other sources was dependent on securing funding from CUISR.

CUISR projects have allowed community groups to do background or preliminary stakeholder consultation large programming issues. For example the "211" Saskatchewan Feasibility Study done by the United Way offered the opportunity to consult with the community and gather valuable feedback before a capital intensive project was undertaken. The United Way representative felt this consultative process would not have been as extensive without the project. Similarly the Saskatchewan Economic Development Association used CUISR funding to do a survey of their membership and gather feedback on a specific economic development model. The project was intended to gather information on how the voluntary Association could better serve its membership. These types of projects make it possible for community groups to assess the impact of any changes before large investments associated with implementation are made. By gathering information from stakeholders these community groups are able to provide public and private funders with evidence of the anticipated response to programming changes.

## **Capacity to take Control and Responsibility for Processes**

Many community groups are dependent on government funding and have close working relationships with publicly funded institutions such as social services. Therefore public policy decisions that govern social programs and funding have a significant impact on the ability of CBOs to achieve their goals and provide appropriate services to the community. Through research, networking and collective action on social issues the community is empowered with knowledge and skills that allow it to have a more significant influence on social policy and ultimately the quality of life for the citizens of Saskatoon.

The research work community groups are undertaking in partnership with CUISR is providing valuable information about the needs of these organizations and the communities they serve. Knowledge becomes a powerful tool for facilitating change. A number of community groups identified the research work they undertook with CUISR provided them with a better understanding of their role in the community, creating a foundation for changes and improvements to their services and their relationships with other community groups and services. The community is beginning to feel a sense of ownership and control over the processes that determine social policy and influence quality of life.

## **Recommendations**

At CUISR's inception 5 years ago, community and academic stakeholders established the goal of building the capacity of researchers, community-based organizations and citizenry to enhance community quality of life through a research partnership between the community and the University. In doing so, CUISR attracted diverse interest groups and citizens from the community and University committed to quality of life issues and interested in improved social research. CUISR has advocated open and participatory decision-making processes and is accountable to these stakeholders for this. As vested stakeholders in the success of CUISR and the achievement of its goals, those interviewed offered a number of recommendations for improving the processes used to undertake research and create linkages between the community and University.

One community representative pointed out that although the original quality of life advisory committee included people who live in poverty, this representation no longer exists. This

committee was put together to engage the community and CUISR must carefully monitor its membership to ensure it is inclusive of all stakeholders.

A number of individuals interviewed felt the responsibilities and expectations of the research partners were not clear at the outset of the project. An easy to read manual that would guide community groups through the proposal process and outline the expectations and responsibilities of all parties would be beneficial. Many of the community groups felt there was not sufficient knowledge transfer about the research process occurring. One community researcher held workshops with community groups to talk about the research and the research process in an attempt to build capacity in the community. Given the significant number of individuals who voiced concern over the time and dollars allocated to the research projects, CUISR should consider reviewing and developing guidelines for the allocation of the project time. Researchers and Community organizations often have very little research experience and would benefit from an estimate of the time that should be allocated to the various stages of a research project.

Developing a written research protocol has been identified as very beneficial to both researchers and the CBO. The inexperience of many researchers makes this kind of written guidance very important and a valuable learning tool. Issues of authorship, data ownership, responsibility for discipline, control of CBO and researcher over the research process, and ethics in administering surveys are concerns that could be addressed in the manual.

The question of who owns the research results and data was brought up a number of times throughout the review by both researchers and community groups and there were diverse opinions regarding this issue. One researcher would like to have used information gathered during a research project for an academic publication but was not sure whether this use of the data would be permitted. A community group interviewed believed CUISR owned the research data and felt this was not appropriate. Others believed the community partner who commissioned the project had ownership of the data and access to these data by the academic community was raised. Given the importance placed on publications and access to data sources by the University and ethical and confidentiality concerns of community

groups, this issue of ownership needs to be discussed, clarified, and then communicated clearly to all stakeholders.

The development of a code of ethics for dealing with community groups would be helpful for both researchers and community organizations. This kind of a document would reassure community groups they will be dealt with in a respectful and consistent manner and make clear to all stakeholders the etiquette that will be followed in conducting research. A code of ethics for community-based research would be a valuable contribution to the development of research partnerships between the community and University.

Feedback from the strategic planning session hosted by CUISR suggests that increased support for graduate students in undertaking community-based social research should be a high priority for CUISR (CUISR, 2004b). All students offered employment as a researcher with CUISR should be required to attend an orientation that prepares them for conducting applied community-based research. Academic advisors and those from the community familiar with community research can partner in developing and delivering this orientation. A community and academic mentor should be assigned to support the researcher as needed and as part of the application process community groups should be asked to identify how they will support the researcher and the research process. A program called ICUSP already exists for supporting community practicums for students and might offer an opportunity to partner in orientating students for community work. Students are likely to see value in this educational opportunity and consider it one of the benefits of working with CUISR. Community Groups and faculty members may be encouraged to work with CUISR when this kind of training is available and mandatory for researchers.

Project evaluation and debriefing sessions for each research project were identified as valuable opportunities for the research partners to reflect and learn from the research process. It was recommended CUISR consider hosting a larger version of the Brown Bag Luncheon annually where several research projects are presented at once. The community organizations would be able to get together and discuss how they have applied their research findings and the impact this research has had on their organization. These kinds of sharing

opportunities enhance mutual learning and knowledge transfer for the research partners and community stakeholders.

## **Conclusion**

Through discussions with the CUISR board a number of desired outcomes related to building capacity were identified as being appropriate to evaluate at this time. Some of CUISR's long-term goals such as improved health for the community were deemed to be difficult to quantify or qualify at this point in time. The desired impacts on CBO and University stakeholders that CUISR identified as achievable given the activities that had been undertaken to date include: (1) creation of new knowledge; (2) improved understanding of the processes and complexity of social research; (3) increased capacity to do research or research skill development; (4) application of research to CBO activities and policy implications; (5) communication and dissemination of research findings to the appropriate stakeholders.

## **Creation of New Knowledge**

CUISR has established a project review and approval process that facilitates the undertaking of research that has the potential to create new knowledge. A number of individuals interviewed believe that from the information and data gathered as a result of the CUISR project they obtained new knowledge about their own processes, service outcomes, clientele and in some cases the larger community they serve. New knowledge can have a multiplier effect if the results of research are properly disseminated and applied within the appropriate community organizations. It is this application and use of the research outcomes that has been identified as an area for improvement. CUISR needs to develop mechanisms that will ensure the maximum benefit is obtained from its research work.

## **Improved Understanding of the Processes and Complexity of Social Research**

CUISR has contributed to improving for both the research community and community-based organizations the understanding of the processes and complexities of social. Many of the researchers and community representatives interviewed identified their improved understanding of both the processes and complexity of community-based research as among the most important outcomes and benefits of participating in a CUISR research project. For some there was an expectation that more time would be dedicated through the research

project to improving both the researcher's and the community partner's understanding of the processes involved. As CUISR's spectrum of research experience grows it is anticipated the Institute will be able to develop tools and mechanisms that improve the contribution made in this area.

### **Increased Capacity for Research and Research Skill Development**

The issue of CUISR's decision to focus its research and funding on the City of Saskatoon has been raised. CUISR in its initial application for funding to establish the Institute stated "... the mandate of CUISR will very quickly extend to the entire province." As CUISR goes through the review process there is value in revisiting the initial proposal and commitments made by the founders of the Institute to consider whether CUISR's mandate has changed or how to ensure a provincial scope for the future.

CUISR has to ensure that the processes it employs build research capacity within the community research partners. Community groups often lack research skills and the research process can be very intimidating to them. The result was that when people had sufficient knowledge, they felt they could contribute to the process. CUISR has an important support and facilitator role to play in community capacity building. This knowledge transfer and capacity building needs to be a component of every research project. Proposals need to identify how this capacity building will occur and researchers need to take responsibility for consulting with the community group on the research process and explaining the steps necessary to complete the project. A community-based mentoring program would facilitate this process.

### **Application of Research to CBO Activities and Policy Implications**

It is the application of the research findings that is ultimately going to be the catalyst for social change. Action on research is an important goal of CUISR. It should not be assumed that community groups have the resources and skills to utilize and disseminate the research results. Discussions with stakeholders suggest that the research work undertaken to date has not been utilized to its full capacity by the community research partners and the community at large. Currently there are no tools to gauge the degree to which community groups are using

CUISR research and changes in attitudes and policies are occurring that will improve quality of life.

### **Communication and Dissemination of Research Findings to Appropriate Stakeholders**

CUISR has worked hard over the past five years to improve the communication and dissemination of the community's research findings. In the formative years CUISR focused on undertaking research and training student researchers. Like any new organization, the Institute's ability to communicate effectively has been a function of its resources, experience and network of contacts which have all grown considerably over the past five years. Staff attention to developing the library and web site provides examples of CUISR's understanding and desire to make improvements in this area.

Beyond the communication of research findings there is a role for CUISR in disseminating and distilling research results for public consumption in partnership with the community. One community representative suggested that CUISR needed to do a better job of "telling the story" that comes from the research work it does such that it becomes actionable. At the strategic planning session a participant summed this up well "The purpose of CUISR is to get good information to the community so that it can make good decisions". CUISR's partnership with the community should not end with the research itself.

CUISR has to be very proactive in seeking out opportunities to involve representatives from diverse community groups in the work that it does. CUISR does a huge service to the community by inviting its representatives to participate in decision-making through advisory committees. For the community groups included, it is an opportunity to establish a political network, and the participatory process fosters an understanding between community members and the University. The individuals involved are empowered and gain self-esteem from the voice they are given. Relationship building needs to be an ongoing priority if trust and credibility with the community are to be maintained.

### **Concluding Remarks**

In the past, the community has often felt like the subject, rather than a partner, in academic research. The community believes CUISR is trying to change this and could in future take an

active role in developing the research tools necessary to improve and facilitate community-based research. Community groups are looking to CUISR for leadership in this respect and have expectations that it can make a difference. If CUISR is successful, this will have a positive impact not only on the work of CUISR but the entire social research community.

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## CUISR: A CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR EVENTS

## APPENDIX 1

### **1998:**

- Monthly meetings of ad hoc Quality of Life Roundtable, with representatives drawn from SDH, City of Saskatoon, Saskatoon Tribal Council, Quint Development and academics from Geography, Community Health & Epidemiology

### **Early 1999:**

- Draft of proposal to establish a Community-University Institute for *Survey* Research, subsequently changed to CUISocialR.

### **August 1999:**

- Establishment of Initial Mission Statement, Goal, Objectives and Guiding Principles.

### **September 1999:**

- Submission of SSHRC-Community-University Research Alliances proposal (J. Randall as P.I. and University Co-Director, K. Waygood as Community Co-Director).

### **December 1999:**

- Successful: Announcement of SSHRC-CURA success - \$592K funding over 3 yrs. from SSHRC, \$1.3 million in total in-kind and cash support from partners and University.

### **March 2000:**

- Hired Administrative Assistant; Held community Meeting/Planning Session to get ideas on community research agenda and inform others of progress (N=47)
- April, 2000: Adjudication and award of first round competition for Community Research Sabbaticals (N=1), Internships (N=4), Teaching Release Stipends (N=1) and Scholarships (N=2).

### **Summer 2000:**

- Brought together and provided administrative support for the group that prepared the “Bridges and Foundations” Aboriginal Housing CURA. (Successful)
- Supported Networks of Centres of Excellence “WATERnet” proposal for node at U. of Sask. (unsuccessful at proposal stage)
- Submitted CAHR “Early Childhood Development” LOI (unsuccessful at LOI stage) and supported CAHR “InMotion” proposal (successful).
- Distributed 1<sup>st</sup> Newsletter, established website.

### **October 2000:**

- Adjudication and award of second round competition for Community Research Sabbaticals (N=2), Internships (N=5).

### **November 2000:**

- Official Opening of CUISR Offices and Resource Centre.
- QOL Community Forum (N=85) to assist in drafting QOL Telephone Survey.
- Conducted QOL Telephone Survey in partnership with Saskatoon Star-Phoenix newspaper

### **January 2001:**

- Release of 26 pp. insert on QOL in Star-Phoenix delivered to 76,000 households
- Community-University Research Liaison hired.
- HDHP assimilation work begun (Tracey Carr)

### **February 2001:**

- Sponsored Mayor’s Civic Forum, “The Four Capitals” presentation by Dr. Trevor Hancock to Saskatoon business leaders.
- Adjudication and award of third round competition for Community Research Sabbaticals (N=0.5), Internships (N=8), Teaching Release Stipends (N=2) and Scholarships (N=4).

### **April 2001:**

- Meetings with CURA leaders at Winnipeg and Waterloo to provide advice and seek opportunities to collaborate (see INE LOI in Dec., 2001). Literature review of Regional Economic Development Authorities begun in partnership with Centre for the Study of Cooperatives (N. Fernandes)

### **May 2001:**

- Awarded \$28K from Centennial Summer Student Employment Program

### **Summer 2001:**

- University Council officially approves CUISR as a formal institute at the University of Saskatchewan.
- Sponsored 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Prairie Urban Congress in Saskatoon (municipal govt. & CBO representatives from 5 largest Prairie cities)

- Successful: Awarded \$42.5K from Western Economic Diversification to establish “Housing and Development Resource Centre”
- Second CUISR Newsletter distributed

#### **October 2001:**

- Provided administrative support for SSHRC Social Cohesion proposal (M. Reed as P.I.). If successful, CUISR will receive \$20K/yr. to administer the research program (Unsuccessful).
- QOL Module hosted Community Policy Workshop (N>100) to present QOL results and develop Community Action Plan. Production of Briefing Paper: “Building a Caring Community: Quality of Life in Saskatoon.”
- Adjudication and award of third round competition for Community Research Sabbaticals (N=1), Internships (N=5).
- Presentation of “Lessons Learned” session at Canadian Public Health Assoc. conference
- Hired Library Technician on 6 month contract to develop Resource Centre (funded by WEDC grant).

#### **November 2001:**

- Started monthly Brown Bag Luncheon series – presentation of internship research reports. Guest speakers: Wendy MacDermott and Sue Delanoy, Saskatoon Communities for Children.
- Distributed 3<sup>rd</sup> Newsletter.
- Saskatoon Community Development Society Annual General Meeting (Poster Presentation – Karen Topolinski)

#### **December 2001:**

- Submitted Letter of Intent for Initiative on the SSHRC - New Economy Research Alliance (\$900K) with academic and community partners from Saskatoon and Kitchener/Waterloo/Cambridge (J. Randall as P.I. – under review)
- Listed as Partner in CIHR Health Training Centre grant proposal submitted by SPHERU. If successful, CUISR will receive \$10K/yr. x 6 yrs. to administer internship competitions, and an additional \$10K/yr. x 6 yrs. for program funding to QOL and Health Determinants modules (under review).
- On-Line Catalogue of documents launched through CUISR website
- First meeting of the CUISR Advisory Council consisting of community and university leaders, Chair: Phil Richards, City Manager, City of Saskatoon.

#### **January 2002:**

- First meeting of the Planning Committee for CUexpo, an international conference subtitled, “Community-University Research: Partnerships, Policy and Progress” to be held May 8-10, 2003.
- Submission of grant proposal to Health Canada (Canadian Population Health Initiative) to continue QOL initiative beyond 3 yrs of SSHRC funding (A. Williams as P.I – unsuccessful).
- Brown Bag Luncheon #2 (Quality of Life Reporting System project presentation) attracts guests from SIPP at the University of Regina. Guest Speakers: Bill Holden, City of Saskatoon and Bonnie Janzen, CUISR Intern Researcher
- Publication of peer-reviewed articles from QOL research in special issue of Canadian Journal of Urban Research (other manuscripts under review)

#### **February - May 2002:**

- Development of Marketing and Communication Plan to disseminate the knowledge gained within the CURA to the local community and to seek further support for CUISR.
- Opening of the Housing and Development Collection and on-line library catalogue.
- Adjudication and award of fourth round competition for Community Research Sabbaticals (N=3) , Internships (N=4), Scholarships (N=2), Teaching Releases (N=1) 5 applications deferred pending conditions being met.
- Presentation of research results (2 papers) at international conference; Association of American geographers (J. Randall)
- March 7 – Brown Bag Luncheon #3 (Economic and Social Impacts of the Saskatoon Farmer’s Market) Michael Gertler, Center for the Study of Co-operatives, U of S, and Ramesh Mahabir
- April 18 – Brown Bag Luncheon #4 (Brightwater Science and Environmental Program Study) Louise Jones, Saskatoon Public School Division and Bev Kynoch, CUISR Intern Researcher
- May - Hiring of Rochelle Cote, graduate student, as CUExpo conference assistant
- May – Awarded \$3,500 from Centennial Summer Student Employment Program.

#### **June 2002:**

- June 6 – Brown Bag Luncheon #5 (Financial Costs of Homophobia in Our Society) Guest Speakers: Gens Hellquist, Gay and Lesbian Health Services of Saskatoon and Chris Banks, CUISR intern researcher.
- SSHRC on-site visit, Marc Renaud, President (SSHRC) and Pamela Wiggin, Vice-President Knowledge Products and Mobilisation (SSHRC)
- Fourth CUISR Newsletter distributed.

#### **August 2002:**

- New Administrative Assistant Evelyn Flynn commences employment.

- Editor, Neil Soiseth, hired on a half-time contract basis.

**September 2002:**

- Submission of SSHRC Community-University Research Alliances Completion Grant “Community-University Institute for Social Research: Assessing Partnerships, Policy and Progress.” (J. Randall – applicant) (\$200,000 for each of two years).

**October 2002:**

- Submission of SSHRC “Application for an AID to Occasional Research Conference and International Congresses in Canada Grant.” (J. Randall – applicant) (\$10,000)
- October 3 – Brown Bag Luncheon #6 (Neighborhood Quality of Life Indicators) Guest Speakers: Yinshe Sun (CUISR intern researcher) and Bill Holden (City Planning, City of Saskatoon)
- October 31 – Brown Bag Luncheon #7 (Projects for discussion: 3 Food-Related Research Studies) Guest Speakers: Karen Archibald, Child Hunger and Education Program and accompanying researchers
- Adjudication and award of fifth round competition for Community Research Sabbaticals (N=2 accepted, 2 pending), Internships (N=1 accepted, 4 pending internship applicants)

**November 2002:**

- Submission of HSURC Conference and Meeting Grant Application for “CUExpo International – Community University Research: Partnerships, Policy and Progress.” (\$5K)
- November 15 – Saskatoon Community Development Association Annual General Meeting, Kate Waygood presentation on CUISR/CUexpo
- November 28 – Brown Bag Luncheon #8 (Development of Community Profiles in 3 Saskatchewan Communities) Guest Speakers: Jo-Anne Richter, Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin and Shawna Quinton, CUISR intern researcher

**December 2002:**

- Successful: Official confirmation of SSHRC – CURA Grant Renewal - \$400K funding over two years from SSHRC, \$931K in total in-kind and cash support from partners and university

**January 2003:**

- Successful: Awarded \$5,000 by Health Services Utilization and Research Commission (HSURC) for “CUExpo International – Community University Research: Partnerships, Policy and Progress” Conference to be held May 8 – 10, 2003.

**February 2003:**

- Second meeting of the CUISR Advisory Council held on February 28<sup>th</sup> chaired by Tom Wishart, Dean and Assoc. V-P Research, Graduate Studies.
- New research liaisons, Kama Soles and Maria Basualdo, commence employment in a 50/50 job share position.
- Successful: Awarded \$10K by SSHRC for “Application for an Aid to Occasional Research Conference and International Congresses in Canada” for “CUExpo International – Community University Research: Partnerships, Policy and Progress” conference to be held May 8 – 10, 2003.
- Successful: Submission of CIHR “Request for Support of Workshops or Symposia” grant application for CUexpo Conference (\$10K).
- Adjudication and award of sixth round competition for Community Research Sabbaticals (N=1), Internships (N=3), and Scholarships (N=2 Masters, 1 Ph.D.)

**March 2003:**

- Media conference on “CUexpo International - Community University Research: Partnerships, Policy and Progress” at Delta Bessborough (March 26).

**April 2003:**

- Brown Bag Luncheon #9 (Housing Needs Assessment for People with Disabilities at the Northern Saskatchewan Independent Living Center) Kama Soles, CBO rep and project research intern.
- Brown Bag Luncheon #10 (Nutana Collegiate Student Profile Analysis – Notes toward a “How-To” Manual). Guest speaker: Ron Berntson, Librarian/Technology Leader, Nutana Collegiate and CUISR Researcher.

**May 2003:**

- “Cuexpo International: Community-University Research: Partnerships, Policy & Progress” conference held May 8-10, 2003. Delta Bessborough, Saskatoon, SK.
- Judy Rebick, “Coming Down from the Ivory Tower – Opening up the University.” (CUexpo speaker)
- Stephen Lewis, “Universities in the World of Change: Global Issues – Local Impact.” (CUexpo speaker)
- Brown Bag Luncheon #11 (When a Partner has Multiple Sclerosis: Exploring the Influence of Attachment on the Experience of Caregiving.” Guest speaker: Karen Litke, CUISR Scholarship recipient.

**June 2003:**

- Successful: Awarded \$10K by CIHR for “Request for Support of Workshops or Symposia” for CUexpo International Conference.

**July 2003:**

- Dr. Jim Randall resigns as University Co-Director and the assume the position of Dean, College of Arts, Social and Health Sciences, University of British Columbia. Dr. Nazeem Muhajarine assumes position of University Co-Director.

**September 2003:**

- Brown Bag Luncheon #12. (Evaluation of the Saskatoon Post-Partum Depression Support Program). Guest speakers: Angela Bowen and Kyla Avis, CUISR research interns.
- Adjudication and award of seventh round competition for Community Research Sabbaticals (N=1), Internships (N=4), and Teaching Releases (N=1).

**October 2003:**

- Successful: Submission of SSHRC general research grant “Tracking Quality of Life in Saskatoon.” (A. Williams, P.I.) (\$245K)
- Brown Bag Luncheon #13 (Common Functional Assessment & Disability-Related Agencies and Departments in Saskatoon) Guest Speaker: Wendy MacDermott, Saskatoon Communities for Children.

**November 2003:**

- Brown Bag Luncheon #14 (Grandparent’s Raising their Children’s Children) Guest Speakers: Brenda Anderson and Dorothy Bird. CBO: Grandparents Involved Full-Time (GIFT).

**January 2004:**

- Brown Bag Luncheon #15 (Lessons Learned: Applying for a CUISR Research Grant) Guest Speakers: Panel of community members (Karen Archibold, Laverne Szejvolt, Wendy MacDermott, Angela Bowen, Sheri Benson) and CUISR representatives.
- Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation awarded \$30K to a newly formed research partnership to develop a long-term study on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FAS and FASD). The funds were awarded through the Community-University Institute for Social Research (CUISR) to the research partners, including: University of Saskatchewan Department of Family Medicine, Community Health and Epidemiology, Pharmacy and Nutrition, Psychology and Pediatrics, along with members of First Nations government and council, Prince Albert Grand Council.

**February 2004:**

- Brown Bag Luncheon #16. (Aboriginal Women Share Their Stories in an Outreach Diabetes Education Program). Guest Speaker: Mary Patricia-Dressler.
- Kate attends first meeting of “Social Accountability in Medicine” – interdisciplinary cross-campus committee hosted by Dean William Albritton.
- Brown Bag Luncheon #16. (Aboriginal Women Share Their Stories in an Outreach Diabetes Education Program). Guest Speaker: Mary Patricia-Dressler.

**March 2004:**

- Brown Bag Luncheon #17. (Assessing the Impact of the Good Food Box Program). Guest Speakers: Marilyn Brownlee and Allison Cammer.

**April 2004:**

- Brown Bag Luncheon #17. (Assessing the Impact of the Good Food Box Program). Guest Speakers: Marilyn Brownlee and Allison Cammer.
- Successful: “Tracking Quality of Life in Saskatoon.” (A. Williams, P.I.) \$215K over three years plus \$44K in-kind and cash support from partners and community.
- Letter of Intent: “Strengthening the Circle: Preventing FASD through Partnerships and Research. (CIHR). \$5K seed money from Office of the Coordinator for Health Research.
- Quality of Life in Saskatoon: telephone survey conducted by Anderson Fast and Assoc.

**May 2004:**

- Brown Bag Luncheon #18. “(re)Writing our Futures: Improving Health through Literacy Activities.” Guest Speakers: Lynne Townsend (student intern) and READ Saskatoon (CBO).
- Quality of Life in Saskatoon: focus groups.

**June 2004:**

- Brown Bag Luncheon #19. “Healthy Mother Healthy Baby.” Guest Speaker: Angela Bowen (student intern).
- Dr. Allison Williams resigns from the management board to assume position with McMaster University.

- *Saskatoon Children and Youth: A Series of Forums* kicked off June 1<sup>st</sup> with the “Quality of Life Action Forum” at Centennial Auditorium.

#### **July 2004:**

- Brown Bag Luncheon #20. “Project Integrative Wraparound (IWRAP) Process Training.” Guest Speaker: Dinah Amankwah (student intern).

#### **September 2004:**

- Brown Bag Luncheon #21. “YWCA Shelter Evaluation.” Guest Speaker: Julia Bidonde and Ben Daniel (student interns).
- Internships: 1 approved, 1 pending. Teaching Release: 1

#### **October 2004:**

- Presentation on depression during and after pregnancy held at Mayfair church. Presenter: Angela Bowen (RN), Intern and Ph.D. Scholarship Recipient and Nancy Klebaum (RN) and supervisor of Healthy and Home, Saskatoon Health Region and a past participant of the post-partum depression support program. (Mental Health Awareness Week).

#### **November 2004:**

- Brown Bag Luncheon #22. Focus Group – Mentorship in Saskatoon. Guest Speaker: Derek Tannis (student intern). CBO: Volunteer Saskatoon.
- Brown Bag Luncheon #23. “Collective Kitchens in Three Canadian Cities: Impacts on the Lives of Participants.” Rachel Engler-Stringer (student intern). CBO: Child Hunger and Education Program (CHEP).

#### **December 2004:**

- SSHRC-CURA LOI submitted. “Building the Social Ecology of an Inclusive Community.” (D. Pushor, Education, P.I., Nazeem Muhajarine, Kate Waygood).
- Brown Bag Luncheon #24. “Direct Care Personnel Recruitment, Retention, and Orientation.” Song Li (intern). CBO: Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Council (SARC).
- Brown Bag Luncheon #25. Community Needs Assessment for Youth and Children with Addiction Issues. Wendy MacDermott (sabbaticant). CBO: Saskatoon Communities for Children.

#### **February 2005:**

- CUISR Open House: new offices in R.J.D. Williams Building.

#### **March 2005:**

- Successful: SSHRC-CURA LOI, “Building the Social Economy of an Inclusive Community.” (D. Pushor, Education, P.I., Nazeem Muhajarine, Kate Waygood). \$20K for grant development
- Brown Bag Luncheon #27: “Mentoring in Saskatoon: Working Towards a Meaningful Partnership.” Derek Tannis (intern). Volunteer Saskatoon, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, Canadian Paraplegic Association, Restorative Circle of Justice and Catholic Family Services. (CBO partners).

#### **April 2005:**

- *Working Together for Change: community based research on women, poverty and public policy* at Mayfair United Church. Joint presentation with Prairie Women’s Health Centre of Excellence (PWHCE)
- Brown Bag Luncheon #28: “Neighbourhood Quality of Life Indicators.” Yinshe Sun (intern) and City of Saskatoon (CBO).
- Grant Application: SSHRC-CURA Social Economy. “Linking, Learning, Leveraging: Social Enterprises, Knowledgeable Economies and Sustainable Communities.” (Lou Hammond Ketilson, P.I) (Grant Value, if successful, \$350K per year for five years).
- Third meeting of the CUISR Advisory Council held on April 26<sup>th</sup> chaired by Tom Wishart, Dean and Assoc. V-P Research, Graduate Studies and Research.

#### **May 2005:**

- Quality of Life Community Policy Forum, Centennial Auditorium, Saskatoon, SK. This is the fifth in series of community forums in the area of Quality of Life.
- Brown Bag Luncheon #29: “How Green Spaces Influence a Community’s Quality of Life.” Karen Lynch (intern). City of Saskatoon (CBO).

#### **June 2005:**

- Brown Bag Luncheon #30: “Saskatoon Charging and Disposition Patterns under Section 213 of the Criminal Code.” Leora Harlinton (Researcher). Elizabeth Fry Society (CBO).

#### **September 2005:**

- CUexpo 2005: Community-University Research Partnerships: Leaders in Urban Change. Winnipeg, Manitoba. September 15-18, 2005. (CUISR held first CUexpo International in 2003).

## CUISR RESEARCH FUNDING

## APPENDIX 2

Grant/Contract Title	Funder	Amount	Funding Period	Principal Investigator(s)/ Applicant	Other Investigator(s)/ Applicants/Notes
Creating a “Community University Institute for Social Research”: a partnership to forge healthy, sustainable communities through research.	SSHRC	\$592,000 funding over 3 years from SSHRC; \$1.3 million in total in-kind and cash support from U of S and partners	1999-2002	J. Randall	<b>A. Williams, C. Neudorf, J. Waldram, L. Hammond Ketilson, N. Muhajarine, R. Labonte, K. Waygood</b>
Housing and Development Resource Centre	Western Economic Diversification	\$42,500	2001	J. Randall	
Community-University Institute for Social Research: Assessing Partnerships, Policy and Progress (CURA Completion grant)	SSHRC	\$400,000 over two years; \$547K in total in-kind and cash support from U of S and partners	2003-2005	J. Randall, <b>N. Muhajarine</b> Co-Principal Investigators	<b>L. Hammond Ketilson, A. Williams, C. Neudorf, L. Duczek, L. Usiskin, W. Holden, K. Waygood</b>
Application for an Aid to Occasional Research Conference and International Congresses in Canada (CUexpo)	SSHRC	\$10,000	2003	J. Randall	
Request for Support of Workshops or Symposia (CUexpo)	CIHR	\$10,000	2003	J. Randall	
CUexpo International – Community-University Research: Partnerships, Policy and Progress Conference	HSURC *	\$5,000	2003	J. Randall	
Preventing FASD, caring for children with FASD through interdisciplinary research, community participation and interventions	Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation	\$30,000	2004	<b>N. Muhajarine</b>	D. Lehotay, P. Blakley, B. Beatty, G. Zello, G. Merasty, <b>K. Waygood</b> , J. Nanson, P. Butt, B. Merasty
Tracking Quality of Life in Saskatoon	SSHRC	\$215,000 over 3 years; plus \$44K in-kind and cash support from partners and U of S	2004-2007	<b>A. Williams</b>	<b>W. Holden, L. Hammond Ketilson, R. Labonte, N. Muhajarine, C. Neudorf, L. Usiskin, K. Waygood</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS AWARDED</b>		<b>\$1,304,500</b>	* HSURC monies are now administered by the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (SHRF)		
<b>TOTAL INCLUDING IN-KIND AND CASH SUPPORT FROM U OF S AND PARTNERS</b>		<b>\$1,891,000</b>			