



UNISDR Scientific and Technical Advisory Group Case Studies - 2014 Promoting inclusive engagement and community disaster resilience in Québec City

The problem

Disasters and large scale emergencies have the potential to create a substantial gap in the ability of people to prepare for, respond to, and recover from adversity¹.

Community engagement is a central component of disaster resilience^{2,3} but in most communities, there is no consultation between emergency planning and social services, health, and community organisations. Moreover, there are few evidence-based interventions that have demonstrated effectiveness in fostering community resilience. In Québec City as in other urban centres, emergency preparedness efforts have struggled to link high-risk population groups and community associations with disaster management and multi-sectorial expertise.

The science

Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is a partnership approach that engages community stakeholders to contribute their expertise to better understand and take action on complex health and social issues⁴. The *Enhancing Resilience and Capacity for Health* (EnRiCH) project is a CBPR initiative to develop, implement and evaluate an inclusive collaborative asset-mapping intervention that could contribute to resilience and adaptive capacity^{2,5}. An important feature of the intervention framework was the emphasis on inclusive engagement of high-risk populations in contingency planning and asset mapping^{4,6}.

The EnRiCH Community Intervention Protocol consisted of two distinct components. The first was the asset/needs assessment session to complete a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), using the Structured Interview Matrix (SIM) as a facilitation technique for inclusive dialogue between community partners⁷.

The second component was the Collaborative Asset Mapping Task to engage partners in the creation of a database of assets in their community. The CHAMPSS Functional Capabilities Framework was introduced as a classification system for identifying community services and programs addressing the functional needs and capabilities of individuals^{1,2}. These categories are: Communication, Housing, Awareness, Mobility and transportation, Psychosocial, Self-care and daily living tasks, and Safety and security (CHAMPSS).

The application to policy and practice

A significant implication that resulted from the EnRiCH collaborative asset-mapping intervention in the Québec City community was the merging of The EnRiCH Project and “le projet K”, a local initiative developed by the Municipality of Québec City to enhance the population’s resilience to disasters.

As a result of this merger, formal agreements with 211 and other key community players have been established to develop action plans targeting specific objectives such as:

- Assisting community-based organizations in building their own business continuity of operations plan;
- Mapping areas of vulnerability and services according to the CHAMPSS Functional Capability Framework to adequately reach out and support high-risk population groups;
- Managing spontaneous volunteers in a state of emergency;
- Establishing inter-sectorial coordination mechanisms.

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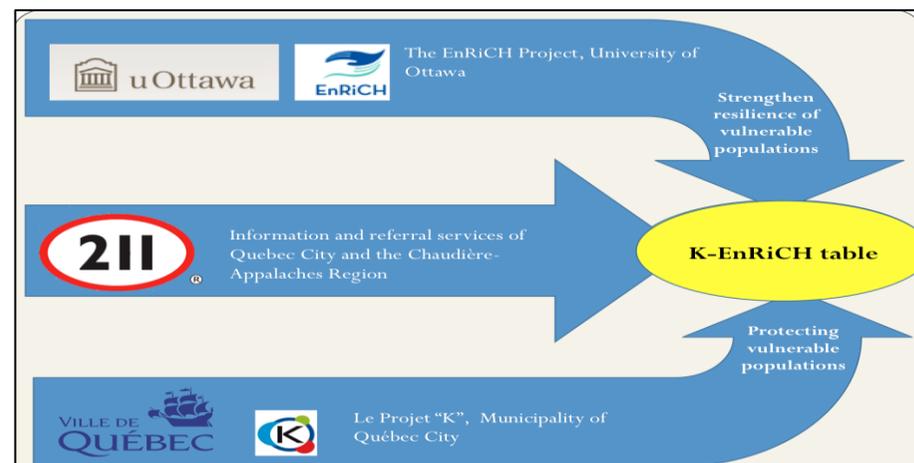


Figure1: The merger of The EnRiCH Project and the City of Québec “Projet K”⁷.

Did it make a difference?

The emergency planning and response in Quebec City, now includes community groups as active partners. The collaboration helped to create an integrated planning table, which included city authorities, 211, social services and the community groups that provide services to high-risk populations.



Figure 2: The CHAMPSS Framework⁸.

Since the EnRiCH Community Intervention in Québec City, there was a major fire during which municipal authorities worked closely with community organizations to respond⁹. In conversation with a security advisor from the Municipality of Québec City (Paré, N. oral communication, 26th March 2014), this event showed responders the need to strengthen support services for certain CHAMPSS categories, and highlighted the important contribution of high-risk groups, particularly immigrant populations, to enhance resilience.

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