

GPI Atlantic Interim Report to Business Action Program, National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention, NCPC

Project Title: *Creating a Peaceful and Secure Society: A Community Pilot Project in Rural Kings County and Industrial Cape Breton, Nova Scotia.*

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Overall Project Goals

This project tackles two very basic questions: How does a community know if it is becoming stronger, more peaceful and more secure, and how does it know what actions it should take to build on existing strengths, overcome weaknesses and make the community safer and more secure?

Crime rates often tell the story only when it is already too late and when victim losses have already been incurred. And crime statistics do not identify causes of crime. Communities need a way to track the social and economic causes of crime and to assess their own progress in overcoming those causes and creating the conditions for a more peaceful and secure society. For example, if a community found increasing rates of youth unemployment, child poverty, school dropouts, and teenage drug use, then it could predict potential future crime outcomes, and take timely action to overcome their causes.

Unfortunately, communities currently have no way to assess their strength and security in this way, or to identify the social and economic causes of crime in a systematic and timely way. If that information were available, communities could act effectively to meet identified needs, such as drug counseling, remedial literacy instruction, after-school programs, and job skills training that can benefit both teenagers and their communities.

The Genuine Progress Index provides a tool that can:

- assist communities in assessing their current strength and security,
- provide an annual measurement tool to assess progress towards greater peace and security,
- identify community strengths and weaknesses, and
- point to actions that can prevent crime and strengthen community.

The basic purpose of this project is therefore three-fold:

- 1) To develop and pilot such a Genuine Progress Index at the community level that includes information directly relevant to the social and economic causes of crime;

- 2) To work with two specific communities in collecting information, analyzing results, creating annual benchmarks of progress, and using the information to work with policy makers to enhance community strength and security and to prevent crime;
- 3) To produce a manual and information materials for communities throughout Canada that are interested in developing similar community indicators of peace and security.

Project Goals by Year

Year One

Two essential prerequisites are necessary for fulfillment of the goals stated above:

- 1) Communities and community organizations must be consulted and included as full project partners if they are later expected to use the results practically to influence policy. More than that: communities must identify for themselves what the appropriate indicators of community strength and security are for *them*.
- 2) Because the information described above is not currently available at the community level anywhere in Canada, it must be physically collected through a survey instrument. Once indicators are identified (#1 above), they must be turned into a practical measuring instrument and survey that is statistically valid and reliable, and that will produce results that are easy to understand and use. The survey must then be tested, revised and finally administered.

Both the consultation process (#1) and the development and administration of the survey instrument itself (#2) are considered in this project as awareness-raising learning experiences and community mobilization strategies. GPI Atlantic is not simply producing results that will then be handed to communities in finished form, but is involving the communities at every stage of the process, including all the details, so that there is maximum "buy-in" from the start.

This makes the process slower, but ensures that every step is also a community-building step. In short, the goal is to make the process itself the result. The creation of the community GPI should itself strengthen communities and encourage residents to work together constructively, efficiently, and cooperatively to enhance security and overcome the causes of crime.

To this end, specific year one goals for GPI Atlantic are:

- 1) To consult extensively with both designated communities on the purpose of the project and on specific indicator identification;
- 2) To create an effective and sustainable organizational structure for ongoing consultation and eventual policy use and application of results, including hiring of GPI project managers and staff in each community and creation of community steering committees;
- 3) To complete development, testing and revision of the survey instrument; to design a unique new database that will allow easy storing, processing and access to the data; and to begin administering the survey and collecting hard data.

Year two goals are:

- 1) to complete the survey administration,
- 2) to enter all data into the new database,
- 3) to work with communities in analyzing and actively using the survey results, and
- 4) to identify annual benchmarks of progress from among the results.

Year three goals are:

- 1) to institutionalize the process in both communities to ensure its continuity beyond the end of the funded project,
- 2) to consult with policy makers on ways to turn the GPI results into practical policy initiatives designed to strengthen the communities and promote greater peace and security, and
- 3) to develop a manual and information instruments that will be available to other Canadian communities interested in developing similar indicators of community strength, peace and security.

Year One Project Activities, Outcomes and Attainment of Goals to Date

1) Consultation and Partnership Development

Perhaps the major goal and accomplishment of the first year of the project is the creation of excellent community partnerships which will not only contribute greatly to the successful outcome of this project, but will ensure its long-term sustainability once the funding period is complete. Most importantly, the forging of these community partnerships is itself a community-strengthening process that has already produced outstanding discussions on justice and crime prevention issues. In addition, community meetings have identified indicators of peace and security, and produced direct input into the final questionnaire that is now being administered in both communities.

Key partnerships in both communities include the following individuals and organizations. Several of these are now on a steering committee that guides the project development. (It should be noted that GPI Atlantic on all occasions states that project funding comes from the National Crime Prevention Centre's Business Action Program, and this fact is also included on the front page of the survey currently being administered.)

Glace Bay

1. Cape Breton Regional Municipality Police

An excellent initial meeting between GPI Atlantic and Cape Breton Regional Municipality Police Chief Edgar MacLeod resulted in a full meeting of minds on the purpose and value of the GPI Glace Bay project. Chief MacLeod understands completely the social and economic determinants of crime, and is committed to a community

development approach to policing that seeks to tackle problems at the "front end" rather than merely by dealing with crime after the fact.

Chief MacLeod introduced GPI Atlantic to Glace Bay community police Sergeant Barry Gordon, who has gone out of his way to offer support, and who has met with the GPI Glace Bay staff to offer his assistance. Sergeant Gordon has been very helpful in assisting the GPI Glace Bay staff to understand emerging policing challenges in Glace Bay that have resulted from the economic downturn experienced as a result of the closure of the nearby coal mines and the high unemployment rate in the area. He has described significant increases in domestic violence complaints and reports of schoolyard bullying that he attributes largely to these economic difficulties and the desperation of many of the town's citizens.

At the same time, Sergeant Gordon has been an inspiration to the GPI Glace Bay team through his demonstrated commitment to community improvement, and particularly through his long-term work with the town's youth. He tirelessly organizes events for youth, including sports and group activities, and he actively fundraises for improvements to youth facilities and programs. In talking with Glace Bay citizens, it is clear that Sergeant Gordon commands enormous respect and love, and we consider him a pillar of strength and support for the GPI project.

In addition, through Sergeant Gordon's recommendations, we have had two GPI staff workers who have worked with victim services and volunteer community-based intervention teams that assist in cases of family violence in Glace Bay.

2. Glace Bay Community Health Board

GPI Atlantic made a presentation on the GPI Glace Bay project to the local community health board, which is now an enthusiastic supporter of the GPI project in the town. Health Board Chair, Mel Clarke, has come to GPI Glace Bay staff meetings, and we consult with him regularly for advice and assistance. The Health Board has told us that they badly need the kind of information on community strength and wellbeing that the GPI indicators will produce, and that this information is critical for improving the wellbeing of the town and its citizens.

3. Cape Breton Wellness Centre, University College of Cape Breton

Cape Breton Wellness Centre director, Stacey Lewis, and coordinator Jean MacQueen, have also been pillars of support for the GPI Glace Bay project. The Wellness Centre is now an official partner, and Ms. Lewis and Ms MacQueen regularly come to steering committee meetings, providing excellent advice and input into the project. The Wellness Centre has made a commitment to assist GPI Atlantic in reporting the survey results back to the community, organizing focus groups, and ensuring that the results are successfully used for policy development.

4. University College of Cape Breton

GPI Atlantic has had meetings with several academics at UCCB, who have provided excellent advice and assistance on technical aspects of administering the GPI Glace Bay survey. In addition, one UCCB professor, Dr. Peter MacIntyre, is a Glace Bay resident, and he has offered to act as an adviser and active steering committee member. Dr. MacIntyre teaches statistics and methodology at UCCB, and he has provided excellent assistance on technical matters. As a Glace Bay resident, he is also very personally supportive of the project and excited at the prospect that Glace Bay is taking the lead in this endeavour in a way that can benefit communities throughout Canada. In addition, the UCCB cooperative education program, under Mike MacIsaac, is interested in placing coop students with the GPI Glace Bay project, and applications for this purpose are now in process. The UCCB Market Research Centre under the direction of Dr. Frank Renwick is now assisting in the actual administration of the GPI Glace Bay survey.

5. Human Resources Development Canada, Glace Bay

Active and ongoing cooperation with HRDC has resulted in four labour market partnerships and one targeted wage subsidy program that have assisted GPI Atlantic in hiring and maintaining staff for this project, including testing the survey and carrying out actual survey administration. HRDC Glace Bay director, Kathleen MacNeil, is personally very supportive of the project and recognizes that it can produce great benefit for the community. As well, Floyd Reddick, an outreach worker with HRDC, has agreed to serve on the steering committee.

6. Nova Scotia Citizens for Community Development Society

NS Citizens for Community Development Society has also made a firm commitment to ensure the sustainability of the GPI Glace Bay project. The non-profit society participates actively in the project steering committee, is copied on all correspondence, and frequently offers advice and assistance. The society sees the GPI Glace Bay project as an outstanding community development tool that can be a model for other communities.

7. Cape Breton County Economic Development Agency

Several constructive meetings have been held with CBCEDA, which sees the Glace Bay GPI project as a key element in the area's economic development strategy. CBCEDA has expressed to GPI Atlantic on several occasions that the agency needs a measurement tool to assess genuine progress over time, and recognizes that the GPI can perform a key role in mobilizing the community and rousing commitment to strengthening and developing the community both socially and economically. The GPI Atlantic director and GPI Glace Bay project director have also attended CBCEDA functions in Glace Bay to maintain and foster this important relationship.

8. Glace Bay Citizens Service League

The Citizens Service League is the primary coordinator of voluntary work efforts in Glace Bay, with a staff of four overseeing the work of more than 300 volunteers on an ongoing basis. GPI Atlantic has met with the League's Board of Directors to explain the project and has garnered the strong support of the town's non-profit community-service sector. Indeed, the GPI Glace Bay office is now located in the League's centrally located "Town House", which ensures regular friendly contact with the key community agencies in the town.

9. Peers Helping Peers

This youth counseling organization played a key role in helping the GPI Glace Bay project get established by providing the initial office space, and assisting with basic project set-up and equipment. During the summer of 2000, when Peers Helping Peers does not use its office space, the group kindly allowed GPI Glace Bay to occupy the premises, and has provided significant in-kind support that helped us get started. When they came back to their office space in September, the Peers Helping Peers staff kindly helped GPI Glace Bay with the transition and move to the new office space in the Citizens Service League Town House.

10. Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation (a division of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)

GPI Atlantic has held several meetings with ECBC, and that group has also sent its representatives to meet with GPI Glace Bay staff. ECBC recognizes the GPI Glace Bay project as a tool with tremendous potential to assist the economic revival of the town and the region, which in turn will produce greater security, and the prevention of crime. ECBC is particularly interested in the long-term sustainability of the GPI Glace Bay project, and sees the potential for the tool to be successfully marketed to other communities in a way that can produce economic benefit for the region. GPI Glace Bay staff are potential trainers of other communities that may be interested in adopting the tool, which can provide long-term contract work for Glace Bay residents. In addition, a functioning GPI in Glace Bay will attract visitors and spur interest in the area.

11. Nova Scotia Departments of Economic Development and Community Services

A partnership with the NS Department of Economic Development provided summer employment in the summer of 2000 for three students who apprenticed with the GPI Glace Bay team and who conducted the survey testing during that summer. These students played an active role in providing input into the final GPI questionnaire through their testing experience. GPI Atlantic has also had several meetings with NS Community Services Glace Bay director, Rosemary Lewis, who is also very supportive of the project, and who has personally recommended staff who are now employed in the GPI project.

Further, Ron Kanary, an employment counselor with Community Services, has joined the project steering committee.

12. Family Physician and other Leading Citizens

One of the GPI Glace Bay project's strongest supporters is Dr. Michael Gallivan, a well-respected town family physician. We have had several meetings with Dr. Gallivan, and we are currently discussing with him a way to use the GPI results to mobilize a massive smoking reduction program at the Glace Bay High School. Florence Breschi, another leading citizen, has participated in the Canadian Policy Research Networks' quality of life indicators project and is now a key supporter of the GPI Glace Bay project. Contacts have also been made with church leaders, who have assisted in spreading the word about the GPI survey, and with other leading citizens in the town.

13. Local Business Groups

Many local businesses have offered in-kind support to the project in many ways. A local pizza owner assisted in distributing the GPI Glace Bay project brochure by including brochures in all pizza deliveries. Sobeys similarly put GPI brochures into grocery bags. A local property owner helped get the project started by providing very reasonable cut-rate office space normally occupied by Peers Helping Peers. A local meat supplier provided coupons to respondents completing the questionnaire. The local bed and breakfast has graciously accommodated visitors to the project. Many other local businesses have assisted in countless ways to help the project proceed, including delivery services, provision of photocopying, servicing of computer equipment, etc. The GPI Glace Bay office computer was bought from a local Glace Bay business and an excellent relationship has been established with that company. Local businesses are particularly interested in the business section of the peace and security questionnaire (attached).

Accomplishment:

The above list is only a partial list of key partners and supporters of the GPI Glace Bay project. Without a doubt, the project is becoming increasingly well known in the town, and has the direct support of organizations and citizens that command great respect locally. As well, CBC conducted an in-depth interview with the GPI Glace Bay project director that appeared both on the regional television news and on its afternoon "Mainstreet" radio program; and the most recent issue of the HRDC regional news also publicized the project. A tape of the CBC interview has been sent to you under separate cover.

In the last 12 months, the GPI Glace Bay director and staff have explained the GPI project to countless community groups, including the Kinsmen and other service groups, church groups, local businesses, educational groups and parents' associations, and so on. The project is increasingly well known, and is strongly supported by key groups. It is felt

that this awareness-raising process itself is community-strengthening. When we explain that the project is designed to provide indicators of community strength, wellbeing and security, citizens and community groups respond enthusiastically and feel renewed commitment to improving the wellbeing and security of their own community. They appreciate the focus on issues that matter directly to them and their energies are mobilized.

The strong community base created in year one will ensure the long-term viability and sustainability of the project. It should be recalled that the establishment of a community Genuine Progress Index that tracks progress towards greater peace, security and wellbeing is not a one-time event, but a long-term tool that allows the community to assess its progress annually. This long-term stability is best ensured by the strong community partnerships established so far, which will be carefully nurtured and expanded in the next two years.

Kings County

The Kings County partnership development process has a longer history, goes deeper, and is correspondingly more difficult. The Kings County GPI was initiated as a result of a request by the Nova Scotia Citizens for Community Development Society (NS CCDS), which has a direct interest in developing indicators of community strength, wellbeing and security. NS CCDS board member, Leonard Poetschke, has played a key role from the inception of the project in mobilizing Kings County community groups, forging partnerships, and organizing the project. Indeed, the entire community GPI project would not have occurred without Mr. Poetschke's initiative, perseverance and dedication to community development processes based on ecological integrity; social cohesion, social justice; and effective decision-making.

For one year prior to the NCPC (Business Action Program) funding (i.e. 1999-2000), about 40 Kings County community groups, under the leadership of the NS Citizens for Community Development Society and Kings Community Economic Development Agency, met regularly to identify indicators of community wellbeing. Having done so, these groups then divided into indicator areas and worked very hard to construct a preliminary community GPI questionnaire that would elicit citizen information necessary for the construction of a community Genuine Progress Index.

One of the most active of the indicator groups was the "Peace and Security" committee, which met regularly to construct a victimization survey, sets of questions on the costs of crime and on citizen attitudes towards peace and justice issues, and survey of businesses that would assess business costs of crime. That committee included RCMP community relations officer Gary Smith, who has been a key supporter of the Kings County GPI project from its inception; a local businessman (Mr. Jerry Legge); representatives of the Black and Miqma'q communities; a youth representative; a representative of victim services groups, and a representative of the Kings Community Economic Development Agency. The group also consulted with the regional parole officer, who provided

important advice, feedback and insight into the community GPI survey peace and security questions.

The meetings of the Kings County Peace and Security committee went far beyond the construction of the peace and security section of the Kings GPI questionnaire. Meetings intensively discussed current justice issues, including the alienation of youth, and Nova Scotia's restorative justice initiative. Every new question added by the committee to the questionnaire provoked lively and constructive discussion on key justice issues. Of particular interest to the committee was the relationship between crime and social exclusion, and the potential to reduce crime by including groups that have traditionally been excluded.

It was during this questionnaire development process that GPI Atlantic and its partners applied to the National Crime Prevention Centre (Business Action Program) for funding to implement the questionnaire and construct the community GPI. In short, the partnership development process in Kings County began even before the February 2000 NCPC (BAP) funding. When that funding became available, the partnership development process expanded further to include presentations to the Kings County Mayor and Council, three community health boards in Kings County, the Kentville Rotary Club, and many other community groups that had not hitherto been part of the process. In addition, a half-hour interview on the Kings County GPI was aired on the local cable TV channel's *Religion in Action* program.

In the spring of 2000, several new partnerships were created, and leading citizens, including Reverend Canon Sid Davies and Kings County Councillor John Griffiths, joined the Kings GPI steering committee. That committee was headed by two key Kings County businessmen, Gary Cere, who owns and operates a wellness clinic, and Richard Hennigar, a prominent farmer. A general meeting of all participants in the project decided to create a local chapter of the Nova Scotia Citizens for Community Development Society that would represent citizen groups in working with GPI Atlantic to oversee the project development.

However, to be frank, the project partnership development from the summer of 2000 was a difficult process. Everyone involved, without exception, has been 100% supportive of the Kings County GPI project, and no one at any stage has questioned the worth of the project and its importance. However, the interest was so great that it became difficult to decide on how the project was to be "owned." Everyone agreed that the project's success depended on "community ownership," but it was challenging to determine who would represent that "community," and exactly who in the community would "own" the project or represent the "community's" legitimate interests.

Several groups felt that the established community leadership structure, including the Kings Economic Development Agency, were not fully representative of groups which had traditionally been excluded from mainstream society, such as the black community and other traditionally disadvantaged groups. It has been a long and difficult six-month

process to work through many historical issues that have nothing intrinsically to do with the GPI, but which have been brought to the table through the GPI development process.

I am very pleased to report that the consummate patience and perseverance of all participants, and the willingness to air challenging issues, has finally resulted in a process and structure that will allow the Kings County GPI to proceed to completion. I believe that the community is stronger as a consequence of this process, and that it has helped bring to the surface and begin to heal historical conflicts that have traditionally divided the community and detracted from its peace and harmony.

There is no pretence here that the GPI development process will be completely smooth and without wrinkles. Indeed, it is precisely because the Genuine Progress Index directly addresses core wellbeing and quality of life issues that important divisions are brought to the surface and resolved in the interests of greater shared community interests. The GPI participants understand that the GPI results are likely to continue that process.

There is an apt metaphor for this partnership development process in the peace and security section of the questionnaire itself. That questionnaire asks direct questions on domestic violence, child abuse, attitudes towards the legal system and controversial justice issues, and other highly sensitive issues that have traditionally been hidden and ignored. Any measure of genuine progress cannot skirt the tough issues. From the perspective of genuine crime prevention, too, a community cannot fail to address these issues if it wants to create greater peace and harmony among its citizens.

In short, the Kings County partnership development process has been longer than the Glace Bay process, and it has gone correspondingly deeper to unearth difficult issues that have traditionally divided the community. However, the commitment to the development of the Kings GPI is stronger than it ever was, and we finally have an agreed structure that will allow the project to proceed to completion successfully. As a result of this process, the Nova Scotia Citizens for Community Development Society has become more actively involved than ever, and a six-member committee of its board is now overseeing the entire project development in partnership with GPI Atlantic. A recent meeting in Kings County affirmed the commitment of all participating community groups, and the survey administration process is expected to be completed by the summer of 2001.

A list of the 40 participating Kings County groups has previously been submitted to the National Crime Prevention Centre's Business Action Program and will not be repeated here. The steering committee has included representatives of those groups, local businessmen, a prominent church leader, two leading educators (from Acadia University and Kings Technical College), and Kings Community Economic Development Agency.

This description of the Kings partnership development process is quite different from the preceding description on Glace Bay partnership development. However, both processes have precisely the same goal -- to root the community GPI process firmly in the two communities. GPI Atlantic is a research group that is capable of providing the technical

expertise to ensure the project's successful accomplishment. But it is not based in the two communities, and cannot simply come in as an outsider and hope to establish the project on a sustainable basis acting alone. For that reason, GPI Atlantic has made a priority of this partnership development process, to ensure that actual ownership resides firmly in the two communities, and that the GPI expertise is enlisted in the service of community objectives rather than having any agenda of its own.

2) Infrastructure Development and Staff Hiring

The second key accomplishment for the year 2000 is the development of an organizational structure that can not only accomplish the project, as defined in the agreement with the National Crime Prevention's Business Action Program, but also ensure its continuity and success after that funding period is over. The partnership development process described above has not only rooted the community GPI process firmly in the two communities, but produced an actual GPI organizational structure in both communities.

There is now a properly staffed and stocked GPI Glace Bay office, and the project has a full-time director (Ken Macdonald) and an additional full-time staff of four that has pilot tested the questionnaire and is currently administering the survey. One key accomplishment in year one has therefore been the successful hiring and training of a competent staff. Developing this competence has been time-consuming. On-site training sessions have been held, both to acquaint staff with the purposes and goals of the project, and to review in detail the procedures for administration of the survey. We have established a Glace Bay office, purchased a computer, opened an email account, and attended to all the infrastructural development details that are necessary for successful completion of the project. That Glace Bay staff have now been administering the survey itself, with 600 fully completed and checked surveys already in hand.

The same process occurred in Kings County in July, 2000, with the appointment of a local project director, the establishment of a temporary office at Kings Technical College, and the hiring of a staff of 8 to pilot test the project in that region. Funds were only available in Kings for that initial pilot test, and all staff were hired for that specific purpose for a period of two months. The Kings County test was extremely helpful in identifying needed revisions to the questionnaire itself (due to certain questions provoking confusion on the part of respondents) and it also enabled GPI Atlantic and the Nova Scotia Citizens for Community Development Society to refine and revise survey administration techniques and methods.

In short, we found out over a period of two months what works and what doesn't work. This learning process will be invaluable for other communities that will learn from our experience in the future. By making every conceivable mistake in this pilot stage, we will be able to assist communities in avoiding those mistakes in the future. Every lesson we learn is being meticulously recorded in a manual; and this manual will become the basis

for the information materials that will be prepared for other communities in the last funded year of this project.

With the year 2001 funding, a new Kings County project manager is now being hired (with the job description advertised just last week) and the remainder of the staff will be hired in the coming days and weeks. The new year's funding will allow the survey administration in Kings County to be completed this year and all the data entered into the new database. At the present time, suitable office space is being sought, and it is anticipated that the bulk of the actual data collection in Kings County will occur from March through June 2001.

Nova Scotia Citizens for Community Development Society is presently in the process of securing additional support from the Canadian Rural Partnership specifically to ensure the successful completion of the Kings County GPI survey, and the Society is now actively engaged in strengthening community action for that purpose. This additional support for the Kings County portion of the project will allow most NCPC (BAP) funds to be allocated to the Glace Bay project, as they were in year one. This allocation of resources is appropriate, as GPI Atlantic has created the Glace Bay GPI infrastructure from the ground up, whereas there was already a stronger community development process and volunteer effort in place in Kings County.

In short, year one has seen a hiring, office set-up, and organization infrastructure development that provides a sound basis for the project's success. As noted, we have put most of the year one funds into the Glace Bay project, which has had a full-time project director and staff since the end of June 2000, plus three summer students between May and August 2000. The first year's funding only allowed a similar staff complement in Kings County for two months to pilot test and revise the questionnaire. But the second year's funding will pay for the new hiring necessary to complete the Kings County portion of the project.

In short, we have had to prioritize, and have put the first year's funding into the infrastructure development and long-term hiring for the Glace Bay GPI project. Our experience there, as well as an intensive six months of community development process in Kings County, will enable the Kings County GPI survey administration to proceed without delay in the coming months.

3) Database Design and Development

GPI Atlantic has forged two key partnerships in the last six months that are essential to the success of the project -- with Dalhousie University's Population Health Research Unit (PHRU), and with St. Mary's University's Time Use Research Program (TURP). Under the personal direction of Dr. George Kephart, director, and Michael Pennock, research director, PHRU is currently designing the database for the Kings County and Glace Bay GPI. Both Dr. Kephart and Mr. Pennock are convinced that the database will provide a

unique and invaluable source of information on community wellbeing that will be widely used by researchers throughout Canada.

The most challenging aspect of the database design is the incorporation of the time use survey, which is filled out not by multiple choice answers, but graphically. In addition, this is believed to be the first time in Canada that time use patterns will be correlated with health, security, crime, and employment data. Two research assistants, one for two months to work with PHRU, and one for three months to work with TURP, are being engaged to complete the database design, which is already well under way.

Although we did not anticipate this as a project outcome a year ago, one major contribution of the NCPC (BAP) funded project will be the creation of this remarkable new database that will provide grist for the mill of researchers, including criminologists, for a long time. It is hoped that this project will spawn a wide range of research activities in coming years that link victimization, crime, attitudes towards the justice system, crime costs, and crime prevention initiatives to a wide range of social, economic and health determinants. The community GPI survey in Glace Bay and Kings County is the first that we know of that will link a wide range of specific justice-related questions to widely accepted determinants of crime within the same survey, allowing important cross-tabulations that have hitherto been possible.

The Population Health Research Unit at Dalhousie University will store and process the data, producing spreadsheets, tables and charts in user-friendly forms to allow analysis by both communities. PHRU is willing to respond at short notice to specific questions from GPI Atlantic and from community groups and to produce summary results with which the communities can work. For example, if we want to know whether there is a correlation between employment status and likelihood of being a crime victim, or between health status and domestic violence, we can pose such questions to PHRU which will produce a spreadsheet and tables for community perusal and analysis. PHRU is looking forward to the challenge of presenting results in ways that make it easy for laypersons and community groups to understand and use.

In addition, the St. Mary's University Time Use Research Program will undertake its own analysis of the time use survey results to see whether there are correlations between time use patterns on the one hand and justice and crime outcomes on the other. For example, is there a connection between the amount of time parents spend with their children, or the amount of time teenagers spend watching television, and the propensity to be victims of crime?

It is estimated that the in-kind contribution of Dalhousie University, St. Mary's University, and the University College of Cape Breton is worth about \$70,000. It is also hoped to forge a relationship with Acadia University in the coming months, particularly in relation to the Kings County data. A prominent Acadia University Economics professor, Dr. Maurice Tugwell, is a member of the Kings GPI steering committee, and

he is eager to spawn research projects among his own graduate students based on the survey results.

Again, as an unanticipated result of the NCPC (BAP) funded project, it is highly likely that there will be peer-reviewed scholarly articles appearing in academic journals as a result of the research conducted using the new Kings and Glace Bay GPI database. GPI Atlantic has worked closely in the past with Dr. Don Clairmont, one of Nova Scotia's senior criminologists, in the Sociology Department at Dalhousie University. Dr. Clairmont has been an adviser to the project, and he has carefully reviewed the Kings and Glace Bay peace and security questionnaires, making invaluable suggestions and recommendations on questions that have now been included. Dr. Clairmont and his students, too, will undoubtedly use the new database for specific research into key criminology areas that will make important contributions to the field.

It should be noted that the high sample size of the community GPI project (4,000 respondents; with 2,000 in each community) will allow cross-tabulations by age, gender, marital status, employment patterns and other social and demographic characteristics, that will produce a level of detail that should prove highly valuable to researchers. Needless to say, the direct purpose and goal of the NCPC (BAP) funded project is to turn the results into policy and into concrete crime prevention initiatives that can create a more peace and secure society in both communities. Nevertheless, the longer-term research that will be spawned by this project will certainly deepen our understanding of the social and economic determinants of crime in ways that can have a profound effect on policy initiatives in justice in the years to come.

Finally, Dalhousie University has agreed to do a proper ethics review through the university's accepted procedures, in order to ensure that the highest standards of confidentiality and anonymity are maintained to protect respondents, and that procedures follow the highest research standards.

The first section of the database design has already been completed, and plans are now underway to test this through actual data entry in Glace Bay in the first week of March. As a result of that test, problems with the database design will be identified, and revisions made in March, with full-scale data entry scheduled to proceed after that.

4) Questionnaire Development, Testing and Review

A key challenge in this project is the development of the survey tool itself. At the time that the NCPC (BAP) funding was approved, a draft questionnaire had been developed based directly on Kings County community input. However, about seven more months of work were required to test, revise, code and hone that questionnaire in order to be certain that it would elicit the needed information in the form required, and in such a way as to produce statistically valid results. In particular, community-recommended questions were re-worded and re-phrased to make them compatible with earlier surveys at the local, regional and national levels, in order to allow comparison and to develop trend lines over

time. For example, criminologist Dr. Don Clairmont had conducted a victimization survey in Kings County 10 years earlier. By adjusting several questions in the GPI survey to these earlier questions, important trends will become apparent.

Statistics Canada's Social Survey Methods Division has become a real partner in this project, by conducting three full-fledged reviews of the questionnaire at different stages of development since February 2000. GPI Atlantic has consulted with at least four senior methodologists from Statistics Canada, on a wide range of issues, including confidentiality agreements with respondents, question coding, required sample sizes, question design, clarification of particular content issues, and comparability of questions with existing Statistics Canada data. Statistics Canada was contracted for a part of this consultation process, but it is estimated that the agency contributed an additional \$10,000 worth of in-kind support and time.

Following Statistics Canada's advice and procedures, the survey was extensively pilot-tested in both communities during the summer of 2000. As a result of the feedback received from those tests, further extensive revisions were made, and the GPI staff in both Kings and Glace Bay participated actively in the redesign of significant portions of the questionnaire.

A major expense, which was paid from the NCPC (BAP) funding was the printing of 4,000 final-version questionnaires for both communities. In addition, using the NCPC (BAP) funding, the final version of the questionnaire was properly formatted by a professional typist, according to Statistics Canada specifications. A graphic designer also produced a much improved form of the Time Use Survey, that is far more readable and user-friendly than the original version.

In addition, assistance was sought from the Electoral Commission and HRDC during the summer of 2000 in producing a valid random sample of 7,000 names (3,500 for each community). Additional details, such as ensuring adequate youth representation (age 15-18) required attention. These names were then sorted by geographical area within each community, and considerable staff time was then required to locate phone numbers for all respondents.

In addition, again using NCPC (BAP) funding, a brochure was designed and printed for extensive distribution in both communities to let people know that the questionnaire was coming and to solicit their participation in completing the survey. Both the brochure and the final version of the questionnaire clearly identified NCPC's Business Action Program as funding agency, and they also listed the other project partners. These brochures were then distributed both to respondents on the random sample list, and in prominent places in both communities.

I can say with confidence that the extensive review, testing and revision of the questionnaire has produced a first-rate instrument for gathering community-level data on the social and economic determinants of crime and on the key elements of community

strength and wellbeing. Results will be statistically valid, answers will be comparable to national and provincial data, and new correlations between justice issues and other social and economic realities will be possible for the first time in Canada.

Finally, it should be noted that an important component of the questionnaire is a unique survey of businesses in both communities to assess the overt and hidden costs of crime. Business losses due to crime were a major component of the original GPI Atlantic assessment of *The Costs of Crime in Nova Scotia* (1999), and the community GPI questionnaire will allow such an assessment at the community level for the first time. This component of the questionnaire is attached.

To the best of our knowledge, this is the first time in Canada that some of these data on business costs due to crime will be collected, and we are certain that the results will have national significance from a crime prevention perspective. In both Kings County and Glace Bay, the results of this section of the questionnaire will be used to raise community awareness of business losses due to crime and the way in which such costs are passed on to the community. The outcome should be a genuine partnership by citizens, businesses and community groups to improve the business climate, prevent crime, and protect against such losses in the future. The baseline measurements collected through this year 2000-2001 survey will be used in future years to assess improvements over time.

Survey Administration

Using the NCPC (BAP) funding, and an HRDC labour market partnership agreement, field staff have been administering the survey itself in Glace Bay in the last few months, with 550 validated and completed surveys now collected. Survey administration techniques, requirements and details have been identified, and methods modified in accordance with experience. During this process, Statistics Canada and experts from Dalhousie University and UCCB have been consulted on a regular basis.

Starting at the beginning of March, and using Year Two NCPC (BAP) funding, we have decided on a change in procedures in order to complete the survey administration and data entry in the shortest possible time frame. We feel confident that we have now sorted out all the glitches and procedures sufficiently that we can proceed much more quickly at this stage. We have erred on the side of caution and care, in order to make sure that the outcome is as strong and solid as possible, but we now feel certain that we know what to do to bring the survey administration phase to completion quickly.

We have therefore engaged the Market Research Centre (MRC) at the University College of Cape Breton to complete survey administration in Glace Bay, beginning in early March. The GPI Glace Bay staff will help train the MRC staff (who are expected to number in the next 2-3 weeks, and will exercise complete quality control over MRC activities, checking each survey for completion. GPI Atlantic / GPI Glace Bay will retain ultimate responsibility for the verification of each completed survey, and determine which surveys need to be returned to respondents for completion.

When the MRC survey administration is well under way, GPI Glace Bay staff will begin the data entry process, so that final data entry should be completed very soon after the survey administration process itself is complete. In other words, the strategic goal here is to enter the data from the surveys collected to date *at the same time* that new surveys are still going into the field. This will allow us to telescope the survey administration and data entry processes and have the results in hand in a shorter period of time.

Survey administration procedures followed to date are as follows.

- 1) Respondents are contacted by telephone from the random sample list; the purpose of the survey is explained including its potential benefit to the community; and interview times are scheduled.
- 2) GPI Glace Bay staff go to the homes of the respondents at the appointed interview time, about 20-30 minutes is taken to go over the questionnaire in detail and to ensure that the respondent understands all instructions.
- 3) The survey is left with respondents for a period of one week, with advice given to complete the questionnaire in sections. (The total time needed to complete a questionnaire is about 2 hours, so respondents are advised to do it in three 40-minute segments or four 30-minute segments. The peace and security section is one of those segments. Wherever respondents request, GPI Glace Bay staff offer to sit down and assist respondents in survey completion by asking the questions orally. This is particularly helpful in the case of some infirm, elderly or disabled respondents who are physically unable to complete the survey.
- 4) After four days, respondents are contacted by telephone to see how they are doing and ascertain whether they have any questions. Further encouragement is given over the telephone to complete the survey. If the respondent needs more time, an alternative pick-up time is set.
- 5) Surveys are picked up from homes of respondents at appointed times and staff do a quick doorstep check for survey completion.
- 6) GPI Glace Bay director, Ken Macdonald, then checks the surveys as they are brought in to the office. If any section is found to be incomplete, it is returned to respondent for completion.
- 7) Mr. Macdonald forwards weekly reports to GPI Atlantic director, Ronald Colman and community GPI coordinator Virginia Brooks, on number of surveys completed, response rates, individual staff performance, and other details. Results are reviewed, and any needed changes are made. This procedure also allows regular feedback to be given to survey staff.

It should be emphasized that this entire process does not focus only on “results,” but that each contact with a respondent is regarded as a step in “community building.” The survey purpose is carefully explained, and it is hoped that the respondents themselves will become spokespersons for the project among their neighbours and friends. In other words, the survey administration process is itself seen as a stage in building a stronger, more peaceful and more harmonious community.

Funds were not sufficient in Year One to bring the data collection process to the same stage in Kings County. An extensive 8-week test in Kings produced about 150 completed and validated surveys. However, Year Two funding from the NCPC (BAP), along with additional assistance from the Canadian Rural Partnership and the NS Citizens for Community Development Society, will allow the Kings County survey administration process to proceed without delay, and we are working towards a June 30 deadline for survey completion there. Lessons learned from the more extensive field experience of the Glace Bay staff will now be transferred to Kings County.

In both Glace Bay and Kings County, the GPI project is now becoming increasingly well-known, though we have been very cautious not to make any big claims until we had all our community partnerships and procedures in place. Now that we have a very strong ground in both places, we are intending to become very much more public in the coming months, and we anticipate that we will have quite a strong dossier of public information products in Year Two. We have focussed strongly on infrastructure development in Year One, and I am pleased to report that we are entering Year Two with a sound basis and with real confidence that our partnership-building to date will ensure the long-term sustainability of the project.

Attachments

- 1) Attached is a copy of the brochure that went out to residents of Glace Bay prior to the administration of the survey. A similar brochure for Kings County was also used during the pilot phase there
- 2) Attached also is the year one project revenue and expenditure statement prepared by project accountant, Trident Accounting and Bookkeeping Services of Halifax.

Please let me know if you require any further information for this Year One interim report. We all look forward to an NCPC (BAP) site visit in Year Two. Unlike our situation at project start a year ago, we are entering Year Two with a very strong partnership base that includes all the elements needed to complete the project successfully and ensure its sustainability beyond the funding period. Our alliance with three leading universities will ensure that the data processing and production of results will happen quickly, efficiently and with the highest standards. Our alliance with community partners will ensure active involvement and mobilization at the community level that guarantees the results are actually used fully and completely to impact policy development.

We at GPI Atlantic, on behalf of all the project partners, wish to thank the National Crime Prevention Centre's Business Action Program for this remarkable opportunity to develop key indicators of community strength and security that can become a highly useful tool for community-level crime prevention strategies throughout the country.

Yours sincerely,
Ronald Colman, Ph.D, Director, GPI Atlantic