



Annual Report 2006-2007





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Message from the President

“Since January 1, 2007, QCGN has undergone a sea change in its management and administrative structure, with the employment of a team of professionals committed to pursuing our strategic direction... positioning the QCGN as a legitimate, credible, articulate voice, among internal and external stakeholders and opinion leaders.”

Dear friends,

Within the past five years, Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) has undertaken intensive consultations with English-speaking communities across the province. This process has resulted in a Community Development Plan that sets out a vision for the English-speaking community to define its modern identity within Quebec and Canada and actively participate in future development. Also in place to support and chart QCGN's actions are a Strategic Plan and an Operational Plan focusing on high impact initiatives, all intended to promote the vitality of the English-speaking minority communities of Quebec.

Since January 1, 2007, QCGN has undergone a sea change in its management and administrative structure, with the employment of a team of professionals committed to pursuing our strategic direction, community development and communications, positioning the QCGN as a legitimate, credible, articulate voice among internal and external stakeholders and opinion leaders. With a target date for completion in June 2007, QCGN is reaching a milestone marking a historic transformation. We can all be proud of the considerable progress that has been made over the past twelve years since the first Framework Agreement was signed in 1995 between the Government of Canada and the English-language minority Communities of Quebec.

During my mandate as President for the past five years, I have met extraordinary people who work tirelessly to promote the development of their community, always with dedication and generosity. In this short time, together we have succeeded in raising the profile of the Quebec Community Groups Network and we can all be proud of the progress that has been made.

Our society owes a debt of gratitude to all those who unselfishly and generously in many capacities have served QCGN over the years. It has been a creative endeavour that called for the best that each

one of us has had to offer. Since the future development of our minority communities will depend significantly on the leaders of tomorrow, let each of us find creative ways of identifying and encouraging promising leadership potential within our network.

On the eve of stepping down as QCGN President, and as I reflect on the many wonderful opportunities my role has afforded me, I am most honoured to have had the privilege to have worked with the community volunteers from our member organizations. I hope you feel the leadership provided has been worthy of your expectations.

Sincerely yours,

Martin P. Murphy
President
Quebec Community Groups Network

Message from the Director General

Since joining Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) in January 2007, I have been thankful every day for the support of the members of the Executive Committee and the Board. That generous collaboration has been instrumental in ensuring a smooth transition into my new role as Director General.

During the whirlwind of those first few months, the focus has been on outreaching to member organizations to more fully understand the role that QCGN plays in regional and sectoral issues, setting up a team of professionals with the necessary knowledge and experience to develop and implement initiatives in support of the English-speaking communities of Quebec (ESCQ), and, lastly, meeting with key partners and stakeholders who play a pivotal role in achieving QCGN goals. In that short time, I think we were quite successful in continuing the implementation of projects already underway while developing new initiatives.

The creation of an Executive Directors Network is a promising new initiative. While a formal needs assessment still needs to be undertaken over the next few months, the initial concept for the Network is to provide opportunities to share and learn for staff leaders in our network, as well as act as a consultative committee to the QCGN Board on strategic policy and program issues. It is anticipated that the Network could significantly contribute to QCGN's ability to support member organizations in areas of professional development as well as further build our policy capacity.

QCGN has continued to work on the development of a multi-faceted strategy aimed at mobilizing English-speaking communities across Quebec. One of the first major components of this strategy is a Community Forum slated for February 2008. This event will focus on the results of two commissioned studies undertaken in 2006-07: the first, "Assessing the trends shaping the ESQ" will provide an analysis of vitality factors for the ESCQ, especially with regard to demographics and institutional support; the second, "A Policy Gaps Analysis Framework" will assess whether existing public policies continue

to contribute to, hamper, or have a neutral effect on the long-term development of the ESCQ.

Other components of the mobilization strategy include continued support of the work of a Steering Committee formed to address the development of community models in Montreal, and the development of innovative approaches to engage youth across the province. The culmination of all of these efforts to inform and reenergize the development of the ESCQ will take place through a number of fora, with key milestones being to ensure that community leaders and architects, stakeholders, and leaders of the Francophone majority in Quebec come together and explore the long-term development possibilities of the ESCQ.

QCGN has long recognized the necessity of diversifying its funding sources. QCGN, in partnership with its members and other key stakeholders, has initiated a vigorous consultation exercise with a number of relevant federal departments to identify a variety of funding opportunities. Accessing funding from all levels of government remains a priority into 2007-08 and beyond. QCGN intends to actively monitor the federal government to ensure that it acts on its obligations and commitments.

Finally, as the QCGN organization emerges successfully from its recent transition period, the new team looks forward to an exciting future. We are confident that the staff at QCGN can effectively contribute to the attainment of the strategic goals that were set out, and that our collective efforts this year will have a continued impact on the vitality of the English-speaking communities across the province.

I personally look forward to working closely with members, partners and key stakeholders throughout the next year to set a new course for remobilizing English-speaking communities across Quebec.

Sylvia Martin-Laforge
Director General
Quebec Community Groups Network

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The main factors influencing the Committee's approach for building the community's future were the changing demographics in Quebec, the bilingual capacity of English-speaking youth, the shifting sense of community identity, the vigour of our institutional frameworks, and the need for more relevant services.

Human Resources

The Human Resources Committee was formed to implement the proposed staffing strategy laid out in the 2005-2010 Strategic Plan. This strategy was intended to build organizational competency and capacity to build QCGN as an articulate voice for the English-speaking communities of Quebec. The Committee focussed on three areas for staffing development: policy, communications and community development.

Three positions were created by the Committee and filled in 2006-2007, Director General, Community Development Director and Communications Director. The Communications Director builds awareness and support for QCGN's new strategic direction and works to position QCGN as a credible voice for the English-speaking communities of Quebec.

It is hoped that as QCGN diversifies its funding in the next year, additional positions will be created in the fields of policy and research, and professional development.

Membership and Governance

The Membership and Governance Committee was formed in 2006 in order to respond to the QCGN Strategic Plan adopted in May 2005, which called for membership expansion and governance renewal. Its goal was to reposition QCGN to pursue its vision as a provincial and national actor and make a more significant contribution to supporting the long-term vitality and development of the English-speaking communities of Quebec.

The Committee, composed of community leaders and experts on law and constitutional issues, worked on

models and directions for reshaping the structure of QCGN's Board of Directors and its bylaws.

The resulting proposal for Membership and Governance restructuring will form a more streamlined Board with a focus on policy development for a wider representation of Quebec sectoral and regional organizations.

Community Development

The Community Development Committee worked towards implementing the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) 2005-2010 Community Development Plan. The Committee, which is composed of community leaders and experts on the concerns of English-speaking Quebecers, studied the information currently available on the English-speaking communities of Quebec and produced a report on Models and Approaches for Community Development. This report contains 16 directional strategies for enhancing the vitality of the English-speaking communities of Quebec.

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Communications

Aside from hiring a Communications Director, Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) has put a great deal of work and resources into updating its communications tools, while creating new ones, in an effort to enhance its visibility in the press and improve internal communications with its members.

The QCGN website has been regularly updated with media advisories, press releases, events and notices. As of June 2007, the website will also be redesigned, in order to put a greater focus on current news and members.

The Virtual Community Resource Base (VCRB) is meant to be an important tool, to get a greater sense of the issues currently interesting the English-speaking community in Quebec. However, a recent survey revealed that it was not being utilized as previously expected. In response, QCGN and ShiftCentral (VCRB's design company) are currently effecting changes to update the VCRB, with the goal of making it a more user-friendly program, while at the same time making it available to a larger audience. Ultimately, the VCRB will aim to be a portal for decision-makers across the country on issues of concern to English-speaking communities in Quebec.

QCGN has also produced an information pamphlet, three media backdrops, two QCGN flags, and a large number of posters, as well as QCGN pens and letterhead. These products were created in an effort to enhance QCGN's profile as a professional organization.

The communications office at QCGN has also launched a media relations campaign in an effort to raise awareness of QCGN in the press. To that end, QCGN Director General Sylvia Martin-Laforge has frequently been asked to comment publicly on television, radio and print media on issues that concern the vitality of the

English communities of Quebec. This level of activity has given QCGN a more significant profile on the local, provincial and national levels.

Finally, the communications office has identified the necessity of reaching out to all relevant organizations in order to better understand local issues. It also realized that it must work in partnership with QCGN members, with the goal of offering heightened support to them in their communications activities.

“I think it's great that we have a young, dynamic woman representative of the community in cabinet...

“We expect all 18 ministers to understand the concerns of the anglophone community.

“All of them should be working on our behalf, and to understand the challenges we face.”

Sylvia Martin-Laforge on the nomination of Yolande James, MNA (Nelligan), to the position of Provincial minister of immigration and cultural communities - The Gazette, April 18, 2007

“QCGN was dismayed to find that federal front-line services tended to not be able to offer services in both languages...

“This has been a particular problem in Quebec where all too often the English-speaking communities are not able to obtain services in their own language.”

Sylvia Martin-Laforge on the Commissioner of Official Languages' 2006-2007 Annual Report, which found that many government departments failed to fully apply the Official Languages Act - The Gazette, May 16, 2007

In 2005, Quebec Community Groups Network launched a 5-year plan to transform itself from a small but dedicated group of community volunteers to an inclusive, representative, community-driven and province-wide organization...

In 2005, Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) launched a 5-year plan to transform itself from a small but dedicated group of community volunteers to an inclusive, representative, community-driven and province-wide organization which supports the development of the English-speaking communities of Quebec and promotes their interests nationally and provincially.

In order to do that, QCGN knew that it needed to understand the community development needs of the English-speaking communities of Quebec and address them, from the isolation and vulnerability of the English-speaking communities of rural Quebec to the need for strong leadership for the burgeoning English-speaking population of the Greater Montreal Area.

A steering committee composed of members from QCGN and community volunteers from sectoral and regional organizations across Quebec was formed.

The committee spent a year reviewing the research that has been done on community development and began to translate it into action by producing 16 key recommendations for developing the English-speaking communities of Quebec.

If QCGN members agree to the directional strategies, they will form the basis of the QCGN mandate for 2008. The gauge of the success for these strategies will be how organizations decide to implement them in the upcoming year.

Already, work has begun to implement one of the strategies - to organize a major youth conference and put together a steering committee to deal with youth issues on a provincial level.

In addition to planning for the future of Quebecers, the Community Development Steering Committee also

made sure that QCGN would have the professional and organizational capacity to support their initiatives by overseeing the hiring of QCGN's first ever Director of Community Development.

The Director will lead QCGN's community development initiatives in the next year.

2006-2007 Highlights

QCGN is involved in community development projects across the province of Quebec, and partnerships with many talented and committed organizations, to increase the vitality of English-speaking communities and promote the use of the English-language. Through its outreach work with members of the English-speaking community, community and regional organizations, and all levels of government, QCGN has too many projects on the go to list here. Please see on the adjacent page some annual highlights from QCGN and its member organizations.

Health and Social Services

The Health and Social Services Networking & Partnership Initiative (HSSNPI) was devised by QCGN in partnership with two of its member organizations, Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN) and Townshippers' Association, in order to improve access to health and social services for English-speaking Quebecers.

With support from Health Canada, the project's volunteer committee was able to participate in making public sector health care better by placing English-speaking community volunteers on hospital boards, requiring all Quebec regions to present action plans for service delivery to the English-speaking community, and holding workshops to train new volunteers in the delivery of health and social services, among other things.

Greater Montreal Community Development Initiative

The Greater Montreal Community Development Initiative (GMCDI) is a special project carried out by QCGN to garner the opinions of residents of the Greater Montreal Area on the issues that concern them the most. For more information on the GMCDI, see the Special Projects Report on page 11.

QCGN member organizations

Here are some interesting community development projects that our member organizations have on the go.

Community Radio

Because newspapers, radio and television are an invaluable tool for linking isolated English-speaking communities across Quebec, QCGN and its member organizations support

the vitality and spread of English-language media across Quebec.

In this last year, Canadian Heritage co-sponsored equipment upgrades and training for community radio stations. CFBS (Blanc Sablon), CJMQ (Lennoxville), CJAS (St. Augustine), CHIP (Fort Coulonge), and CFTH (Harrington Harbour) all received upgrades which permitted them to improve programming to the English-speaking communities of Quebec.

Tele-Health

Community partners across Quebec, including several QCGN member organizations, participated in the Tele-Health Video Conferencing, which brought the best in health information to English-speaking communities across Quebec through video-conferencing technology that allowed community members to interact live with trained medical professionals on topics such as attention deficit disorder, learning disabilities and bullying. The Tele-Health Video Conferencing was a Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN) initiative with support from McGill University.

2006-2007 Highlights



Greater Montreal Community Development Initiative

QCGN then produced and widely distributed a guide to the parties' political platforms in anticipation of voting day, and obtained a commitment from the Quebec Liberal Party to create a working committee to address the issues of the English-speaking communities of Quebec.

Following the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) 2005-2010 Strategic Plan, QCGN has worked to identify and understand government policies and programs that could have an impact upon and benefit the English-speaking communities of Quebec. It has accomplished this by building partnerships with research groups, sectoral and community organizations, academics and most importantly, through exchange with members of our community. In 2006-2007, QCGN has also influenced public opinion and public policy options, as evidenced by strong responses from governments to QCGN ideas and initiatives.

Part of the reason for this change in the working relationship between the federal government and the English-speaking communities of Quebec is the November 2005 amendment to the Official Languages Act, which holds the government responsible for actively enforcing the Charter right of equality of status and use of English. Bill S-3 specifically obligates the majority of government agencies to take positive measures to ensure the effective advancement and implementation of the Government of Canada's commitments to official language minority communities, and it allows for court challenges for breaches of those commitments.

In order to maximize this opportunity, new program directors have been put in place to focus on policy, communications and community development. These directors, along with heads of QCGN member organizations and community partners, recently met with Canadian Heritage for their Spring consultation with the English-speaking community of Quebec. Presentations on health, arts and culture, economic development, and the strategic directions prepared by the QCGN Community Development Committee were well-received by Canadian

Heritage, which is responsible for taking the measures necessary to fulfill the government's commitments in the Official Languages Act.

QCGN identified several key issues for 2006-2007, and commented publicly on them in the press. QCGN voiced its concerns in the press and with the Official Languages Standing Committee about the cancellation of the Court Challenges program, which provided funding for members of minority language communities to challenge breaches of language rights, for example. Other public policy issues of concern to QCGN have been the implementation of the federal Official Languages Act, and proper representation for the English-speaking communities in the provincial cabinet.

During the recent provincial elections, QCGN submitted a questionnaire to each of the political parties on the issues that are close to English-speaking Quebecers and asked them to commit to working with QCGN to address those issues if elected. QCGN then produced and widely distributed a guide to the parties' political platforms in anticipation of voting day, and obtained a commitment from the Quebec Liberal Party to create a working committee to address the issues of the English-speaking communities of Quebec.

Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) identified in its five-year strategic plan (2005) that the English-speaking community of the Greater Montreal Region should receive support and assistance in developing a project that would help it identify and explore how to address key issues related to its long-term development. The outcome is the Greater Montreal Community Development Initiative (GMCDI).

The GMCDI represents a group of community volunteers that wishes to engage and consult English-speaking Montrealers, community leaders, and local professionals on the key issues currently affecting the English-speaking communities of the Greater Montreal Area.

The outcome of the GMCDI will be a final report to QCGN, to all levels of government and to the public at large on issues related to the ongoing development and vitality of the English-speaking communities of the Greater Montreal Area.

To meet that objective, QCGN hired a project coordinator who worked with a team of professional researchers. They drafted six discussion papers on topics and issues that QCGN identified as critical to the long-term development of the English-speaking communities of the Greater Montreal Area. These issues are:

- Demographics
- Health and social services
- Education
- Social participation
- Arts, culture and heritage
- Economic development and employment

The initiative is being coordinated by a volunteer Steering Committee, chaired by Don Taylor and supported by staff at QCGN. The committee is composed of a total of 13 representatives from ethnic

communities, sector organizations, and each of the five communities of the Greater Montreal Area.

The GMCDI organized community forums in Montreal East, Montreal Centre, the West Island, the South Shore, and Laval between March 1 and March 13, 2007, in order to collect the opinions of community members on each of the key issues selected for discussion. The GMCDI also assembled six Sector Panels composed of volunteer specialists in fields corresponding to the issues identified. Between March 19 and March 22, 2007, these specialists met in order to analyze the opinions and recommended strategies collected at the community forums.

In an effort to capture comments from as many representatives from the English-speaking communities of Montreal as possible, a public consultation forum will be held on April 11, 2007 at the Hotel Hilton Bonaventure in downtown Montreal.

From mid-May to the end of the month, an integrated panel comprising community representatives and sector specialists will review the information collected at the community and public forums. Recommendations will be presented to the GMCDI Steering Committee.

Finally, in the summer of 2007, the Steering Committee will issue a final report including an account of the consultation process and a series of recommendations. QCGN will use these recommendations as the basis for an application to Canadian Heritage to carry out the implementation phase of the project.

Greater Montreal Community Development Initiative

REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

Châteauguay Valley English-Speaking People's Association

E-mail: cvespa@bellnet.ca
www.cvespa.org

Coasters Association

E-mail : coasters@globetrotter.net
www.coastersassociation.com

Committee for Anglophone Social Action

E-mail: casa75@globetrotter.net
www.casa-gaspe.com

Community Association for Saguenay Lac St-Jean

E-mail: casl@qc.aira.com
www.casl.ca

Council for Anglophone Magdalen Islanders

E-mail: cami@duclos.net
www.ilesdelamadeleine.com/cami

Heritage Lower St. Lawrence

heritagelstl@globetrotter.net

Megantic English-Speaking Community Development Corp.

E-mail: mcdc.coord@bellnet.ca
www.mcdc.info

Neighbours Regional Association of Rouyn-Noranda

E-mail: neighbours@cablevision.qc.ca
http://neighbours-rouyn-noranda.ca

North Shore Community Association

E-mail: jody.lessard@globetrotter.net
www.quebecnorthshore.org

Regional Association of West Quebecers

E-mail: wq@magma.ca
www.westquebecers.com

Townshippers' Association

E-mail : ta@townshippers.qc.ca
www.townshippers.qc.ca

Voice of English-speaking Quebec

E-mail: info@veq.qc.ca
www.veq.qc.ca

SECTORAL ORGANIZATIONS:

Black Community Resource Centre

E-mail: bcrc@qc.aira.com
www.blackyouthproject.org

Community Health and Social Services Network

E-mail: info@chssn.org
www.chssn.org

English Language Arts Network

E-mail: info@quebec-elan.org
www.quebec-elan.org

English Speaking Catholic Council

E-mail: escc@bellnet.ca
www.catholiccentre.ca/escc

Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network

E-mail: home@qahn.org
www.qahn.org

Quebec Association for Adult Learning

E-mail: qaal@alcor.concordia.ca
http://doe.concordia.ca/qaal/

Quebec Community Newspapers Association

E-mail : info@qcna.qc.ca
www.qcna.org

Quebec Drama Federation

E-mail: qdf@quebecdrama.org
www.quebecdrama.org

Quebec Farmers' Association

E-mail: qfa@upa.qc.ca
www.quebecfarmers.org

Quebec Federation of Home & School Associations

E-mail: info@qfhsa.org
www.qfhsa.org

Quebec 4-H Association

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