

## Developing a Community Plan

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Through a process of community engagement, the folks involved in the Vibrant Communities Leadership Roundtable in Saint John have been working on developing a comprehensive Community Plan for poverty reduction to upgrade all the good work already underway in Saint John.

A local Vibrant Communities Leadership Roundtable has been established to lead Phase 2, with each of the 4 core sectors being represented, including the participation of the initial local Vibrant Communities Committee members. The group received approval in February 2003 to move into Phase 2 of Vibrant Communities; Phase 2 requires communities to build partnerships, mobilize resources and develop a community plan to drive a multi-year poverty reduction effort.

A coordinator has been hired to work closely with the Leadership Roundtable and lead the creation of the community plan. Building upon current momentum, the community plan aims to create a common vision and increased drive for poverty reduction across the various sectors of the community, which will serve as the motivating force behind the on-going efforts already underway by the various partners in the initiative. The community plan will establish targets, key indicators of progress, and evaluation mechanisms that reflect changes at both the individual (personal) and community (systemic) levels.

Partnership development figures prominently in this process, as the initiative looks to strengthen, increase and retain the effective, long-term participation and leadership within the 4 core sectors, (people living in poverty, non-profit organizations, business and government), in community-based poverty reduction efforts.

The initiative is also using communication tools to increase the community's awareness of the issue of poverty, its impact on everyone's quality of life, while promoting the opportunities for individuals to contribute to and lead the creation of a Vibrant Community.

The group is also working on developing strategic alliances and securing both financial and in-kind support for the initiative.

