

2015

Portrait of the needs of certain vulnerable populations of the South of the West-Island of Montreal



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Dynamo – Ressource en mobilisation des
collectivités

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SPECIAL THANKS

Thank you to our supporters

The Table de Quartier Sud de l'Ouest-de-l'Île (TQSOI) wishes to thank all its members, supporters, and community partners for their efforts during this consultation initiative. A huge thank you to all the residents for their participation: your enthusiastic presence in our focus groups was invaluable.

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- Amcal Family Services
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- Centre d'Intégration Multi-Services de l'Ouest-de-l'Île (CIMOI)
- Équipe Entreprise
- Villa Beurepaire
- West Island Association for the Intellectually Handicapped (WIAIH)

Thank you to the Working Committee members

Thank you to all the Working Committee members, which are:

- Action Jeunesse de l'Ouest-de-l'Île (AJOI)
- Batshaw Youth and Family Centres
- Bread Basket Lac-St-Louis
- Carrefour Jeunesse-Emploi de l'Ouest-de-l'Île (CJE)
- Literacy Unlimited
- Ministère de l'Immigration, de la diversité et de l'inclusion (MIDI)
- NOVA West-Island
- TQSOI – coordination and administration Board
- Volunteer West-Island
- West Island Association for the Intellectually Handicapped (WIAIH)
- West-Island CIUSSS
- West-Island Community Resource Centre (CRC)
- West-Island Women's Centre (WIWC)

Thank you to our sponsors

A huge thank you to our sponsors. Without them, this project would not have been possible. Their ongoing support will help us improve the quality of life in our community in the South of the West-Island.

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INTRODUCTION

The Table de Quartier Sud de l'Ouest-de-l'Île (TQSOI) is an instance of cross-sectoral and multi-network collaboration serving seven municipalities in the Montreal region: Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue, Senneville, Baie d'Urfé, Beaconsfield, Pointe-Claire, Kirkland, and Dorval. Its mandate is to improve the living conditions of its population and optimize the social development of its territory.

In 2014, in order to lay the foundation for a first social development plan for the area of the South of the West-Island, the TQSOI first produced a statistical analysis and held various public forums in the municipalities of its territory. Then, in the fall of 2014, to complete its data collection, the TQSOI began to build a more specific picture of the needs and concerns of the population called "vulnerable" on its territory. In order to succeed, it mobilized several partners around a consultation process, which was accompanied at certain stages by Dynamo - community resource in mobilization. Over several meetings held between November 2014 and March 2015, the committee identified a number of key stakeholders who would be able to identify some of the needs of disadvantaged populations in the South of the West-Island of Montreal. They then developed a strategy and organized to meet them to hear their views on their living environment.

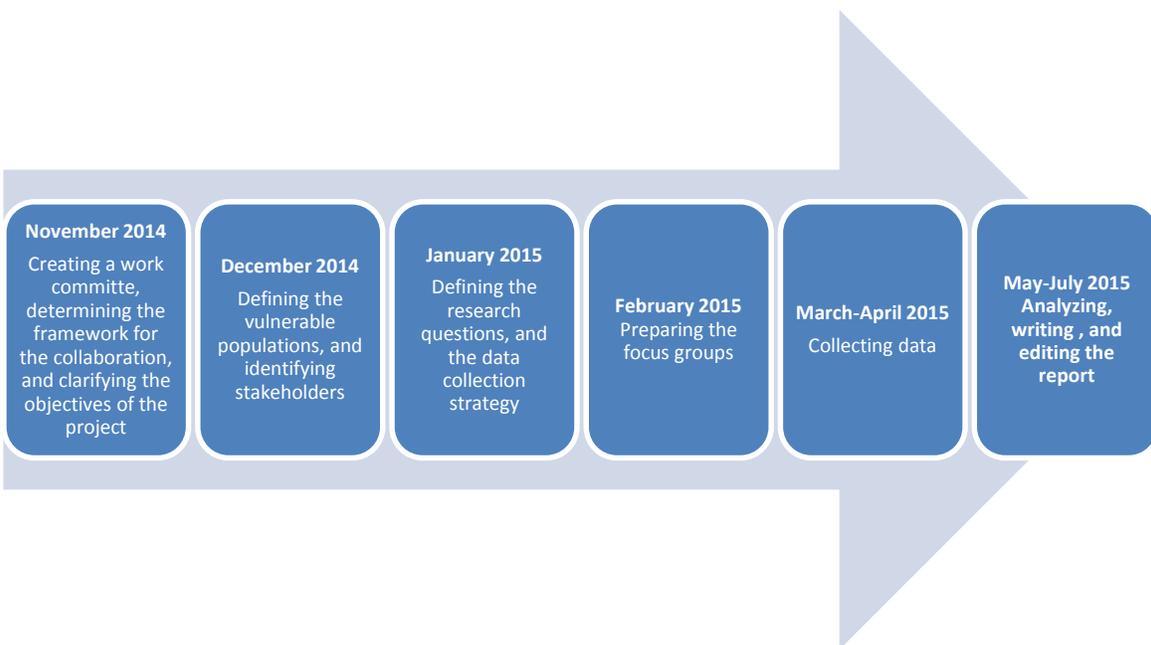
This report presents the main findings from this consultation process. First, we briefly describe the methodology that was used to identify and consult stakeholders in the process. Then we will present the main results: answers to two questions that were asked in each group discussion. Finally, we will reserve a section to present quotes from each of the meetings that were held.

1. METHODOLOGY

1.1 Main Steps

The process for developing a portrait of the needs of the vulnerable population of the South of the West-Island occurred between November 2014 and July 2015. Figure 1 summarizes the main steps of the process of evaluation. The following sections elaborate on the actions the committee members took for each of those steps.

Figure 1 – Main steps of the process of evaluation



1.1.1 Creating a working committee, determining the framework for the collaboration effort, and clarifying the project objectives

In the fall of 2014, various TQSOI partners were invited to form a Working Committee on the issue of the vulnerable population of the South of the West-Island. Several organizations responded to the call and took part in one or more meetings of the committee thereafter:

- Action Jeunesse de l’Ouest-de-l’Île (AJOI)
- Batshaw Youth and Family Centres
- Bread Basket Lac-St-Louis
- Carrefour Jeunesse-Emploi de l’Ouest-de-l’Île (CJE)
- Literacy Unlimited
- Ministère de l’Immigration, de la diversité et de l’inclusion (MIDI)

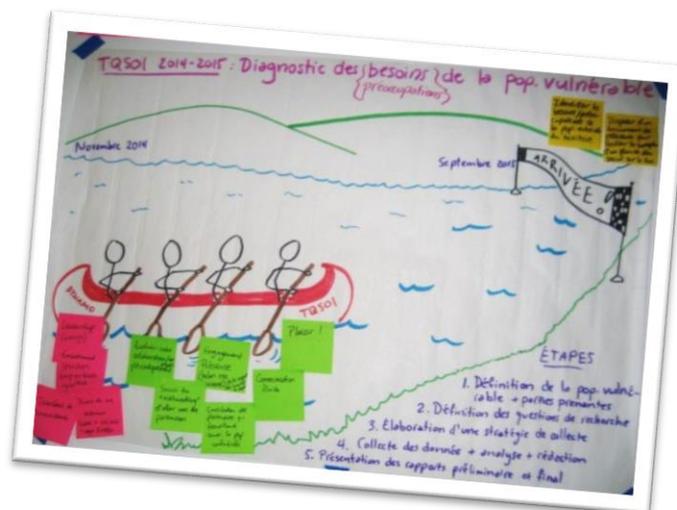
- NOVA West-Island
- TQSOI – coordination and administration
- Volunteer West-Island
- West Island Association for the Intellectually Handicapped (WIAIH)
- West-Island CIUSSS
- West-Island Community Resource Centre (CRC)
- West-Island Women’s Centre (WIWC)

On several occasions, a project manager of Dynamo - Ressource en mobilisation des collectivités - joined the Committee in order to support the process of certain key phases.

During the group’s first meeting, held in November 2014, those present first ensured that they agreed on a certain number of collaborative principles, to recall the main steps of the project, and properly define the main objectives:

- ❖ Identify the needs and concerns of the vulnerable population of the territory
- ❖ Have a reference document available to facilitate the design of a social development plan for the territory

They then identified a certain number of vulnerable populations of the territory, and specified the reasons why they considered them ‘vulnerable’.

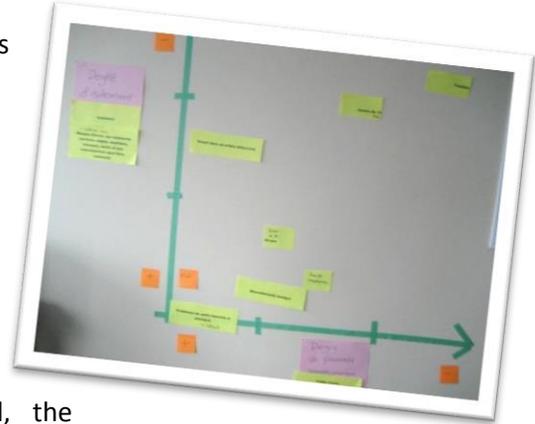


1.1.2 Defining the vulnerable populations, and identifying stakeholders

At the second meeting, held in December 2014, members of the working committee based themselves on two criteria (degree of isolation, and level of economic poverty) to identify, using a Cartesian map, a smaller number of populations particularly "vulnerable" among all those that had been identified at the first meeting.

At the end of this exercise, the five following groups were identified:

1. Recently immigrated persons (< 5years)
2. Youth 18-24 years
3. Persons with health problems (mental, physical, intellectual deficiency)
4. Seniors
5. Single-parent families



Once the vulnerable populations were targeted, the committee members began to identify, for each one, the community stakeholders that could be consulted, as well as a few supporting questions.

It should be noted that, during the following weeks, while the committee continued to meet to establish focus groups, they ultimately decided to divide the third group into four distinct subgroups to better consider the large diversity of the group. Thus, four other types of vulnerable populations were also consulted:

- Persons with a physical handicap
- Persons with a minor intellectual deficiency
- Parents of children with special needs
- Persons with mental health problems



1.1.3 Identifying Research Questions, and Data Collection Strategy

During the committee's third meeting, held in January 2015, the committee members agreed to ask the three following questions to the targeted vulnerable populations¹:

1. **What are your main needs/concerns as [vulnerable population, p.ex. immigrants, seniors, youth, etc.] living in the South of the West-Island?**
2. **What solutions would you like to see established in the South of the West-Island to answer those needs/concerns?**
3. **What are your suggestions for us to learn more about the needs/concerns and other possible solutions favoured by other [vulnerable population] of the South of the West-Island ?²**

¹ It should be noted that these two first questions were directly derived from the questions that were asked by the TQSOI during the citizens forums in 2014.

² In almost all cases, the third question was not asked due to lack of time or lack of understanding. Seeing as there are little to no answers related to this question it was not taken into account during analysis. It is important to note that in the recently immigrated persons forum, the participants specified that a good way to know more about difficulties and problems was in fact to organize focus group meetings both in french and english. Furthermore, in the at-risk youth 18-24 years group, the facilitators asked those present to identify the most effective ways to contact them or to write down which media platforms they use. The answers they gave were: go in schools, colleges, utilize the morning advertising slots, television (CTV News at 6 p.m.), newspapers (The Gazette), word of mouth, email, home or cellular calls, certain media platforms (e.g. Snapchat).

1.1.4 Data Collection

Table 1 presents the list of organized focus groups and, for each, specifies the duration and venue of meetings.

Table 1 – List of organized focus groups

Vulnerable Population	Duration	Venue	Implementing Partners
1. Seniors	2h	Villa Beaurepaire 23 Fieldfare Avenue, Beaconsfield	Animation: West-Island Resource Centre (CRC) Note taking: TQSOI
2. Single-parent Families	1h55	502 Delmar Avenue, apt. 3, Pointe-Claire	Animation: Bread Basket Lac-Saint-Louis Note taking: West-Island Women Centre
3. Youth 18-24 years	2h05	Carrefour jeunesse-emploi de l'Ouest de l'Île (CJE), 225-F Hymus, Pointe-Claire	Animation and note taking: AJOI and CJE
4. Persons with a physical handicap	1h15	WIAIH, 111 Donegani, Pointe- Claire	Animation: WIAIH Note taking: TQSOI
5. Parents of children with special needs	2h	WIAIH, 111 Donegani, Pointe- Claire	Animation: WIAIH Note taking: TQSOI
6. Persons with a minor intellectual deficiency	2h	Avatil, 387 40e Avenue, Lachine	Animation: WIAIH Note taking: TQSOI
7. Persons with mental health problems	1h40	Equipe Entreprise, 750 Dawson, Dorval	Animation: WIAIH + Équipe Entreprise Note Taking: TQSOI
8. Recently immigrated persons	1h30	CIMOI, 143 Frontenac, Pointe- Claire	Animation: TQSOI Note taking: CIUSSS ODIM

As can be seen, the meetings lasted between one and two hours and were held in three of the seven municipalities of the territory: Pointe-Claire, Beaconsfield and Dorval. Moreover, no less than eight organizations have pitched in to lead or take notes during these focus groups.

Table 2, for its part, tells us how many people from the targeted groups and how many facilitators/representatives of organizations expressed their views as part of this consultation process. Note that these people participated in discussion groups on a voluntary basis and were recruited through posters and/or targeted invitations.

Table 2 – Characteristics of persons whose remarks were reported

Focus group	People from targeted groups	Facilitators / organization representatives	Total
1. Seniors	4	5	9
2. Single-parent families ³	5	1	6
3. Youth 18-24 years ⁴	5	0	5
4. Persons with a physical handicap ^{5,6}	5	0	5
5. Parents of children with special needs ⁷	11	0	11
6. Persons with a minor intellectual deficiency ⁸	7	0	7
7. Persons with mental health problems ⁹	5	0	5
8. Recently immigrated persons ¹⁰	11	2	13
Total	53	8	61

As can be seen, a relatively small number of facilitators/organization representatives (8) were ultimately heard in focus groups and in some cases, none were present. The meetings were therefore primarily an opportunity for different people from vulnerable populations of the West-Island to share their perceptions with respect to their environment.

³ One person is a former resident from the territory of TQSOI and no longer lives there today.

⁴ Three out of five people from this targeted group live in the North of the West-Island.

⁵ The focus group was attended by some people living with or working with people with various physical disabilities.

⁶ One of the people interviewed does not have a disability, but rather lives with someone who has one.

⁷ Four persons of the target group live in the West-Island and one lives in Montreal.

⁸ Five people from this targeted group live in Montreal and one lives in the North of the West-Island.

⁹ Three people from this targeted group live in the North of the West-Island.

¹⁰ Two people from this targeted group live in the North of the West-Island.

To avoid losing any of the detail from the participants' statements, note that each focus group was digitally recorded. These records were kept during the project to ensure the confidentiality of the statements, then deleted.

1.1.5 Data Analysis

To analyze the data collected as part of this consultation, the Dynamo project manager used qualitative analysis. Because of the limited resources available, the eight focus group records were not literally transcribed, but rather summarized. So during the listening of each record, the statements of the participants were synthesized into different ideas, then recorded in a Word document.

These ideas were then classified according to whether they referred to a problem or a proposed solution. Indeed, as Health Canada states: "In the analysis of needs, the word "need" refers to the gap between the current situation and the desired situation." (Health Canada 1998: 13). It was therefore considered appropriate to make an analysis that distinguishes situations (problems, concerns) reported by the participants on the one hand, and the desired situations (solutions) on the other. To make this report as concise as possible, it should be noted that the positive feedback received from participants with regards to the current situation were not retained. Therefore, the reader should not be surprised if it appears that the painted portrait seems unbalanced or particularly bleak.

Regarding the first research question, the many problems identified were also classified according to the themes that were addressed: poverty and social exclusion; food security; employment and local economy; housing; health and social services; public safety; recreation and sports; transport; urban planning and green spaces. Note that an additional category emerged over the analysis and was eventually included in the report: family life.

Note that in the end, some hard choices had to be made to classify all the issues raised in well-defined themes.¹¹ These ranking efforts were aimed at facilitating the reading of the report and should not hide to the reader the fact that social problems are generally complex. Indeed, as recalled in Figure 2 below, these often prove multifactorial; moreover, they can simultaneously affect multiple human dimensions and can be closely bonded to each other.

¹¹ For example, when the cost of a good or service was a problem, it was agreed that this issue would be classified in the "Poverty and social exclusion" section, even if it included the cost of housing or food.

Figure 2 – Illustration of the complexity of social problems



1.2 Limits of the Consultation

Note that the approach has some limitations:

- The fact that a single data collection method (focus groups) was used. Although this method has the advantage of being stimulating for the participants, gathering a lot of information from several people in a short time and to promoting in-depth reflections, it can sometimes have the disadvantage of skewing some of the participants' answers. Indeed, the dynamics of the group and/or social pressure can influence the statements of some participants (SECRÉTARIAT DU CONSEIL DU TRÉSOR DU CANADA [s.d.] : 125-129; PNUD 2009 : 174-175; BOUCHON 2009 : 80). In addition, the focus group method does not allow for a general overview. It nevertheless provides an important range of perceptions and opinions. With more time and resources available, it would be interesting to triangulate this method with others to overcome its weaknesses.
- The fact that not all vulnerable populations of the territory were approached to participate in the consultation. Given the limited resources available, choices had to be made and all vulnerable populations living in the South of the West-Island were not invited to participate. This consultation should therefore not be considered as a comprehensive picture of the concerns and aspirations of all the vulnerable populations of the territory.
- The fact that in five of the eight focus groups, some participants were not residents or workers in the area covered by the TQSOI. Therefore, many times, the words of these participants concerned the northern municipalities of the West-Island, or even districts West of the City of Montreal. Ultimately, it is difficult to separate from these groups the issues that are truly related to municipalities of the territory covered by the TQSOI. Note that the presence of persons not residing in the South of the West-Island in the focus groups is due to the fact that some organizations that helped organize these focus groups cover the West-Island area and beyond.
- The fact that some meetings were held by some stakeholders with little or no experience with focus groups. This may have contributed to bias the evolution of certain discussions. On the other hand, this allowed some key players in the community to develop research skills.
- The fact that the third question, in regards to solutions to learn more about the vulnerable populations we met, was often removed from focus groups due to lack of time or lack of understanding of the issue. The series of focus groups did not really allow the identification of new strategies to effectively survey these same groups later.

- The fact that the samples taken are not probabilistic and voluntary. According to Statistics Canada, "Sampling voluntary participants as opposed to the general population may introduce strong biases. Often, (...) only the people who care strongly enough about the subject one way or another tend to respond. The silent majority does not typically respond, resulting in large selection bias." Moreover, given that the recruitment of persons from vulnerable populations has been voluntary and they self-identified to targeted vulnerable populations, it is impossible to certify that the persons surveyed perfectly match the respondents targeted by the approach.

2. RESULTS

2.1 Seniors

2.1.1 Issues Raised by Participants¹²

Related to poverty and social exclusion

Poverty

- Low income, manifested by the large proportion of seniors who use tax reporting services for low income individuals, or an inability to pay a small amount of money to get a meal from Meals on Wheels
- Poverty of LGBT seniors, deduced from their use of food baskets
- Activity costs, limiting accessibility
- Unforeseeable and unbilled costs of certain medical evaluation services (e.g. driver's license)

Social Exclusion

- Isolation of LGBT seniors, difficultly to speak of their story to others, to reveal their sexual orientation due to several factors: history of discrimination or persecution; lived with an opposite-sex spouse; hetero-sexist environment of retirement homes; fear of losing a certain quality of service
- Judgment towards senior widowed women in Pointe-Claire, some of which have never had gainful employment and who receive small pensions today

Related to health and social services

General

- Lack of services for seniors who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual (LGBT)
- Reluctance of many senior women to express their needs and seek help (from pride, shyness, etc.)

CLSCs, clinics, hospitals

- Decrease in hospital care when people are identified as LGBT
- Difficulty in accessing a family doctor (long wait times, the need to take frequent and repeated steps)

¹² We must remember that all points below reflect the perceptions of the parties interviewed.

- Fear of certain newly established seniors in the West-Island of Montreal of leaving their old family doctor given the difficulty in finding a new local doctor
- Difficulty of people living with a chronic condition to be managed by a family doctor, compared to people with a one-time health problem
- Dissatisfaction vis-à-vis expeditious services provided by some doctors

Related to transport

- Difficulty for some seniors without a car to go to the low-cost activities offered by organizations planning to entertain them and break down isolation
- Fear of some seniors who still possess their car to drive it
- Difficulty of some seniors who have no car to go shopping downtown, even when the bus is available, because of travel time and items to be transported
- Fear of falling while in public transport (bus and metro)
- Difficulty for seniors not registered to paratransit of finding transport and support services, notably to go to appointments or one-time treatment sessions
- Difficulty of being eligible for paratransit (need for a medical certificate and a physical therapy review at the CLSC)
- Significant travel time when using paratransit
- Difficulty to go for medical treatment by bus and then return by bus
- Debt linked to the frequent use of taxis
- Perception that some people registered for paratransit do not really need it
- Erroneous referencing from the CLSC to local organizations for transport services
- Isolation of many seniors due to losing a driver's license and the termination of carpooling opportunities
- Vicious circle of lack of appropriate public transport services in the suburbs, which causes people to have multiple cars, which hinders the development of public transport services
- Certain seniors holding on to their driver's license for too long
- Taxi Or service limitations: only available in Pointe-Claire, Beaconsfield and Dorval; primarily serves seniors living in residences; does not cross municipality lines; remote and inaccessible service points in Beaconsfield

Related to food security

- Difficulty of some senior women to go out to buy good food and eat well
- Food insecurity, resulting in the use of food banks and calls to Meals on Wheels to receive more food

Related to housing

- Difficulty of maintaining some houses in the West-Island, due to lack of funding from their owners
- Plumbing or water damage problems slow to be resolved or repeated in some apartment buildings (posh or not)
- Frequent injuries following the move from a home to a hospital

2.1.2 Possible Solutions Proposed by Participants

- Provide food to churches and grocery stores during events like Easter, Christmas, etc...
- Form support groups for LGBT people in retirement homes
- Establish an advertising campaign to say "no one has ever died of shame" and encourage people to use the services they need and overcome their shyness
- Establish an information campaign for seniors about services available to them through a variety of communication tools: radio (especially late at night, when they are alone and they are preparing to go to bed); advertisements in municipal newsletters on paper and local newspapers (expensive); articles in local newspapers (free but not always available in retirement homes); pharmacies and medical clinics. Note that the Internet or the telephone that refer to a website or to a long list of options, is not be advisable
- Promote greater exchange of information and posters among community organizations
- Promote more caring and compassion between people

2.2 Single-Parent Families

2.2.1 Issues Raised by Participants¹³

Related to poverty and social exclusion

Poverty

- Fear of financial difficulties after maternity leave
- Significant cost of daycares and babysitting
- Difficult access to daycare spaces at \$7/day
- Additional costs if the day care that provide over 10 hours of services, and difficulty in fixing the working day of less than 10 hours because of transportation and the need to travel sometimes to two daycares
- Financial difficulties related to the purchase of children's clothing
- Financial difficulties related to legal proceedings between former spouses, and being ineligible for legal aid
- High costs of tutoring or homework help, especially for children with learning difficulties
- Abolition of popular free tutoring service due to lack of funding
- High cost of camps for children during the summer or spring break
- High cost of extracurricular or leisure activities for children
- High cost of rent and parking
- High cost of dental care
- Significant indirect costs (parking, absenteeism) to access affordable dental services in Montreal
- Frustration of some working mothers in regards to discounts offered by the YMCA to welfare recipients
- Limited affordable recreation programs for children

Social Exclusion

- Social pressure in the West-Island to buy designer clothes for children to avoid being labeled as "poor"
- Isolation, lack of spouses, parents, or friends to talk to
- Behavioural problems in children when their parents leave them alone at home so that they can participate in social activities
- Discomfort associated with living a different reality than a two parent household or to socialize with two parent households
- Low propensity of men to talk to their friends, to form support groups or seek help when they are experiencing difficulties

Related to health and social services

¹³ We must remember that all points below reflect the perceptions of the parties interviewed.

General

- Lack of awareness of available resources and services in the West-Island and steps to take to find them
- Inadequate flow of information on services available in the West-Island
- Difficulty to know where to turn for information on available services
- Inadequate resources in the West-Island, compared to Montreal
- Insufficient resources for single fathers in the West-Island (presence of only four organizations in the Greater Montreal Area)
- Low availability of services to help the head of households solve their family problems
- Inadequacy of existing legal information services in the West-Island for parents (especially immigrants, who are not always familiar with the legal system) after separation and before access to legal aid (two months possible and available only if the income of the person allows)
- Difficulty in accessing French lessons, even when one is unemployed and unilingual Anglophone, because Emploi-Québec believes it is still possible to find work
- Low propensity for men to talk to their friends, to form support groups or seek help when they are experiencing difficulties

Education Sector

- Difficulty in finding a babysitter for the children
- Uneven diagnosis of problems in children from one school to another
- Weak monitoring of children at school after classes, and the absence of response from school board in problem cases
- Too much homework assigned at school
- Frustration with the fact that some parents use child care while they are at home
- Lack of daycare or school during the last week of August each year, forcing the parent to take the week off, sometimes causing misunderstandings and friction with coworkers
- Learning difficulties and school dropout, sometimes varying by school
- Dissatisfaction vis-à-vis the training programs offered at John Abbott College

CLSCs, clinics, hospitals

- Lack of support offered by the CLSC
- Waiting list to access services at the CLSC
- Dissatisfaction with the advice given by the CLSC on how to solve family problems
- Significant (transport, waiting) time to access affordable dental services in Montreal
- Difficult for certain anglophones to understand some french government sites

Related to employment and local economy

- Difficulty finding a job in one's field, especially after completing studies

- Limiting the job search to the West-Island to avoid too much travel time (notably in winter) and late fees at daycare

Related to public safety

- Drug-related issues in the West-Island, not always well-known to people settling there
- Inadequate police interventions

Related to transport

- Lack of transportation services when temporary health problems arise and prevent people from using the car or public transport (e.g. broken leg)
- Significant transportation times in the West-Island, detrimental to access programs at Vanier and Dawson Colleges

Related to family life

- Behavioural disorders (hyperactivity, difficulty concentrating, expulsion from school, disrespecting the rules, use of various drugs, refusal to work or study) and personal difficulties (insecurity, frustration, feelings of rejection, anxiety, depression) in children
- Rough relationship between parents and children (disrespectful language and physical violence towards parents, expulsion from the home)
- Difficulty exercising parental control over children over 14
- Difficulty for some parents to keep their children home without a break, without the need for daycare
- Lack of free time
- Difficulty balancing work, education, transportation, and child care
- Difficulty to provide homework assistance to children in a time conducive to learning (before dinner)
- Difficulties with certain former spouses: absence, negative role in the development of children, lack of communication between children and former spouse, legal proceedings related to custody
- Judicial decisions leading to the sudden loss of daily contact between some fathers and their children after separation (occurring especially when the child is very young and the father is not able to provide basic care, or when there have been domestic violence episodes)
- Difficulties related to separation leading some parents to commit irreparable acts, desperate, impulsive, or irrational, that may worsen the situation
- Need for certain newly separated fathers to prove they are "good fathers", that they are able to provide a supportive environment for child custody
- Feeling of some fathers that they are disadvantaged compared to mothers in regards to child custody

2.2.2 Possible Solutions Proposed by Participants

- Establish single mother support groups, notably to refer trusted babysitters
- Develop social groups, not to let off steam, but for fun and to have social activities
- Have access to psychological help or people to talk to
- Better promotion of services or events for single parents, especially via Publisac, newsletters, online newspapers or local newspapers, distributed in different places (community centers, libraries, etc.)
- Provide life coaching services
- Provide child care spaces at \$7 for low income families rather than wealthy families
- Access to an insurance company that offers lower fees for dental care
- An organization that will offer more workshops on child development and parenting skills
- Make more legal information available (to know their rights, know how to see their children) for recently separated fathers in the West-Island
- Training sessions to educate employers on the needs of single-parent families (e.g. to ensure that companies offer banking of hours for medical appointments or short absences, or offer daycare in the workplace)
- Make more information available in English on the Quebec Government's website
- Conduct better anti-drug operations in the West-Island
- Better training for the police to deal with drug-related issues
- Provide temporary transport services during difficult times (e.g. broken leg)

2.3 Youth 18 to 24 years

2.3.1 Issues Raised by Participants¹⁴

Related to poverty and social exclusion

- Food too costly at the supermarket, even at the dollar store
- Ungenerous sales in supermarkets
- High cost of rent for people who live alone, even in the poorer areas or even lesser-quality apartments

Related to health and social services

- Lack of communication between the resources of the territory and the people who need help
- Too long a wait at the clinic to ask just one question
- The need to get up early to go to the clinic
- Limited number of patients allowed per day in some clinics
- Gap in the verification of documents required to renew a health insurance card at the CLSC, which causes delays and extra steps

Related to public safety¹⁵

- Undue and ill-treatment of youth by police officers
- Insults, abusive language used by police towards youth
- Lack of sensitivity and consideration on behalf of the police with regards to certain situations considered as problematic
- Police harassment against some families with a member who is in legal trouble
- Racism in the police force
- Frightening presence of youth groups or single men at night, leading some young women to change routes or avoid the neighbourhood
- Lack of respect and incivilities committed by youth aged 15 and over to other citizens, notably on the bus

Related to transport

- Repeated delays along bus routes, not only in winter but also in summer
- Bus delays at departure (e.g. 211 bus to the Lionel-Groulx station), causing long queues and preventing all passengers to board
- Occasional interruption of bus service
- Slow bus routes
- Lack of buses (unsatisfactory frequency of passages)

¹⁴ We must remember that all points below reflect the perceptions of the parties interviewed.

¹⁵ The items in this list seem particularly relevant to areas of the West-Island that are not part of the TQSOI territory

- Suspension of several bus lines deemed necessary on weekends (p. Ex. 460, 209)
- Early cessation of certain bus lines (e.g. 200), which requires people to make several transfers to get to the Fairview Bus Terminal
- Unpleasant behaviour of some bus drivers, who do not wait for people running for the bus, even with a child in her arms

Related to food security

- Distance of supermarkets in the West-Island, mostly only accessible by taxi or car

Related to housing

- Dirt and mold or fungi in the kitchen or bathroom of apartments with rents still considered high¹⁶

*Related to urban planning and green spaces*¹⁷

- Poor maintenance of parks and city sewers
- Bumpy streets and sidewalks under construction that can cause injuries to rollerbladers
- Work on public roads without activity or significant progress

2.3.2 Possible Solutions Proposed by Participants

- Have paid advertising by the government in local newspapers about available resources
- Install posters at city hall in regards to available resources
- Access to affordable rental apartments for people with low incomes who are not receiving social assistance
- Ensure that homeowners are paying more attention to the condition of their housing units
- Ensure the STM stresses to its bus drivers to arrive and depart on time
- Reduce food prices

¹⁶ This element refers to a sector of the West-Island that is not part of the TQSOT territory

¹⁷ The items in this list relate to areas of the West-Island that are not part of the TQSOT territory

2.4 Persons with a physical Handicap

2.4.1 Issues Raised by Participants

Related to poverty and social exclusion

Poverty

- Inadequate government benefits to pay for basic items, even with subsidized rent
- Dependence of their entourage to travel, survive, etc.
- Higher spending due to not being able to see sales
- High cost of rent and annual rent increases, which leads some people to think about moving to Montreal

Social exclusion

- Impossibility to write cheques, making it necessary to pay bills at the bank
- Teasing or derogatory comments from people not sensitized to the realities of people with disabilities
- Isolation

Related to health and social services

General

- Difficulty in recruiting volunteers to maintain associations or disability support groups for people with disabilities
- Feeling that aging might lead to deterioration of their situation
- Accumulation of unread personal mail due to not being able to read or rely on volunteers for confidentiality reasons
- Lack of information on how to find suitable housing
- Lack of a directory of resources available and wheelchair-accessible places in the West-Island (unlike Montreal where a CLSC distributes one)
- Lack of awareness of existing resources for the disabled
- Worthlessness of existing phone books for blind people
- Technicians having difficulty repairing computers adapted for the blind
- Waste of time making phone calls to find services

CLSCs, CHSLDs, clinics, and hospitals

- Cuts to non-medical or non-essential services provided by the CLSC to people in wheelchairs, which makes it that basic needs of food, physical assistance, etc. are not always met (dressing and bathroom only)

- CLSC services unavailable for a child with down syndrome, because of legal liability issues
- Lack of training and awareness of some home support workers on how to interact with people with disabilities
- Apprehensions related to the closure of a CHSLD (Gilman Residence) for blind people

Related to employment and local economy

- Difficulty getting hired

Related to transport

- Long travel time when using paratransit transportation
- Difficulty knowing at what time to solicit or what time the paratransit vehicle will pass, sometimes early, sometimes late
- Difficulty for some blind people to embark in or disembark from a taxi (sometimes causing head injuries), as opposed to trucks, which have ramps
- Occasional disorientation of blind people after transport
- Unexpected change in taxi return schedules
- Difficulty for taxis and customers to find one another, resulting in frustration and criticism of either side

Related to food security

- Dependence on the generosity of others to feed oneself

Related to housing

- Inadequate amount of living environments adapted for disabled people under 55 whose parents or grandparents become disabled or pass away

Related to urban planning and green spaces

- Complaints from residents against auditory signals for blind people installed in certain areas of Pointe-Claire, leading the municipality to inquire about removing them
- Insufficient time to cross Saint-Charles Boulevard (Kirkland) in a wheelchair
- Damages to canes for the blind caused by cars
- Limited mobility in winter
- Poor sidewalk infrastructure which may hinder the movement of wheelchairs
- Unpredictability of door openings (sometimes inwards, sometimes outwards), particularly in shopping centers, which can lead to injuries to blind people

2.4.2 Possible Solutions Proposed by Participants

- Increase MESS housing support
- Create a government guide providing information on different types of disabilities and services offered
- Create a guide to show people how to interact with disabled people
- Develop awareness campaigns to raise awareness about the realities of the disabled
- Provide transportation services for people with multiple disabilities, such as in the U.S.
- Provide more time to cross certain intersections
- Train and educate nursing students, or home workers on the different needs of, and ways to treat people with disabilities
- Form support groups or regular focus groups, once a month or every two months, to unite people with disabilities and enable them to share their realities
- Form a Facebook group to share ideas and information for people who cannot attend meetings, are not blind and have access to a computer
- Fund support groups by soliciting contributions from existing constituencies in the West-Island (Lions and Rotary Club) or the City of Pointe-Claire
- Have a standard door opening system so that people with disabilities know which way the door will open

2.5 Parents of Children with Special Needs

2.5.1 Issues Raised by Participants

Related to poverty and social exclusion

Poverty

- Financial problems related to the presence of children with special needs in the family
- Lack of affordable activities for parents of children with special needs
- Significant cost (\$1,000/week) of the municipal day camp in Pointe-Claire if one is not a resident and have a child with special needs
- High cost of therapy

Exclusion

- Social and home isolation, trouble leaving their accommodations
- Feelings of being misunderstood by many people in their surroundings
- Difficulty from several members of the family to manage the presence of children with special needs in their surroundings
- Judgments or comparisons sometimes made by the entourage towards children with special needs or their parents

Related to health and social services

General

- Trouble sleeping, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder in family members who live with a child with special needs
- Memory loss, linked to sleep deprivation
- Sickness
- Feeling of not having a life, being overwhelmed, overworked, exhausted, in "survival" mode, and always in a hurry
- Difficult to take care of oneself when a child is suffering and needs help
- Self-harm problems in some children with special needs
- Lack of respite (guardians, custodians)
- The need to apply several months in advance and arrive early to get a place in a day camp for their child
- Lack of awareness of existing services for parents of children with special needs
- Lack of monitoring and response to emails sent to employees of a private organization
- Shyness to call resources to get help for their child (guardian)

CLSCs, clinics, and hospitals

- Problematic experiences with the CLSC and feeling that it is only through the use of private or semi-private resources, or in person at the hospital and being insistent, that parents can manage to get services
- Difficulty to join the CLSC by phone after moving, to provide a change of address
- Difficulty reaching the right resource person when calling the CLSC
- Unanswered calls and messages left with the 'DI-TED' team (*Déficiences intellectuelles et troubles envahissants du développement*) of the CLSC
- Reluctance of the CLSC to take new cases, to provide services
- Home visits from social workers lasting too long (3h)
- Fear that when calling the CLSC, the parent will not be taken seriously
- Difficulty in accessing social worker, even in a crisis, even prior to the current restructuring of the network
- Difficulty knowing whether one is followed by health and social services, especially in terms of waiting lists for services
- Fear of losing services when moving
- Difficult hospital visits with the child
- Feeling that neither hospitals nor CLSCs want to take responsibility for some children
- Poor services received by public institutions, feeling harassed, generational conflicts between parents, especially to encourage them to withdraw their application for placement
- Feeling that services for other health problems are better than those for autism, for which there is a lack of doctors, professionals, and services to help parents
- Delay of several years (2) to receive public services, resulting in inadequate services
- Batshaw Centres investigation against some parents
- Termination of WMRC services when the child enters school
- Waiting for several years for a diagnosis, which is detrimental to obtaining services
- Difficulty in accessing other services to address other issues or health problems when their child is autistic
- Lack of funding in public institutions (hospitals, WMRC) to meet demands
- Lack of mental health services for children (Children's Hospitals and Douglas do not offer these services or do not have the training to deal with autistic children with mental health problems)
- Lack of training in hospitals to handle some cases of autism
- Lack of training for social workers and hospital staff, school or other professionals to deal with some cases of autism and/or mental health problems
- Fears that adopted special needs children will be taken back by the system

Education sector

- Difficulty in finding a tutor to help children with special needs with their homework
- Anxiety of children with special needs in school, despite the presence of accommodations, tools, and specialized equipment

- Inadequate follow-up hours ("shadow") per week in school
- Sometimes child care is refused to children with special needs in the regular after school activities due to their behaviour, which stresses working parents and forces them to return early to pick them up
- Difficulty to work with other parents to improve services to children with special needs
- Academic failure in some children with special needs

Related to employment and local economy

- Difficulty in finding the time to do the required training to maintain a professional title
- Fear or dispute relating to the reconciliation of care for children with special needs and work (notably full-time)

Related to family life

- Reluctance and difficulty of some special needs children to do their homework
- Anxiety experienced by some children with special needs and their families (notably other children)
- Excessive use of video games in some children with special needs
- Marital difficulties, difficulty to spend more time together as a family, separations
- Breakage of material goods by some special needs children
- Difficulty working with a child with special needs
- Difficulty to do outings (e.g. going to the movies) with certain children with special needs
- Physical and mental violence perpetrated by some children with special needs on their parents, sometimes directly or indirectly (parent trying to protect the child), injuries
- Blame and accusations by some children with special needs made towards one parent only
- Feeling guilty about thinking of placing a special needs child that is too aggressive

2.5.2 Possible Solutions Proposed by Participants

- Have someone babysit the child at night so that parents can rest
- Increase the use of existing resources in the community, including Ceridian or Maman Dion funds for families in need
- Have more affordable recreational activities for the families of children with special needs
- Have tutoring services available, particularly for children under 12, for example after school in a central location, with volunteers, food, one-on-one
- Expand inclusive entertainment services offered in parks by the City of Pointe-Claire to other cities in the West-Island
- Ask for help before collapsing
- Extend Medicare coverage to all health problems, notably mental health problems
- Improve funding for services
- Have mental health services for children
- Have a positive place in the community to break isolation, share success stories and network with other families, and a social worker who could host, give tools and hope to families who have children with special needs
- Once a month or two months, have a party or an event with entertainment or dinner outing for parents of children with special needs
- Raise public awareness, support among parents, and advocacy carried out by parents of children with special needs
- Publish more videos on websites of organizations pertaining to autistic children and their particular reality

2.6 Persons with a Minor Intellectual Deficiency

2.6.1 Issues Raised by Participants

Related to poverty and social exclusion

Poverty

- Loss of quality of life from the death of parents
- Difficulty to live with the money received or need of more money
- Lack of money to attend recreational activities
- Increase in the price of household services
- Increased cost of invoices
- Elevated cost of housing

Exclusion

- Occasional feeling of loneliness
- Feeling of people staring, seen as strange, being the object of insults, shouting, being abused by people for no reason (e.g. on the bus)
- Unease of being in the presence of people who speak to themselves

Related to health and social services

- Fear of getting support from the CLSC if the resource person is not known, and the need to be able to trust this person
- Waiting an hour and a half for medical tests
- Lack of access to a family doctor

Related to public safety

- Multiple police fines for crossing the street illegally

Related to transport

- Bus routes too long

Related to food security

- Difficulty to go to the grocery store in winter

Related to housing

- Lack of elevators in the building
- Vehicle noise (e.g. police, firemen) in the street
- Very long waiting list for access to subsidized housing
- Presence of disturbing neighbours (noise at night, animals)
- Health and hygiene issues: presence of cracks in the ceiling/wall, dirty air ducts, plumbing problems causing drains to back up
- Inaction from the owner when dealing with safety issues
- Small stones and salt in houses during winter

Related to urban planning and green spaces

- Difficulty driving on sidewalks and stairs that are not or are poorly plowed or de-iced, making it difficult to transport bags, sometimes causing injury and obliging one to seek help

2.6.2 Possible Solutions Proposed by Participants

- Have a place to go to help people find housing options
- Conduct CLSC visits with a trusted resource person
- Be able to use paratransit/taxi to travel
- Ensure that the cities remove snow and ice to allow people to walk steep streets in the winter
- Ensure that owners repair cracks in ceilings/walls

2.7 Persons with Mental Health Problems

2.7.1 Issues Raised by Participants

Related to poverty and social exclusion

Poverty

- Difficulty to cover basic expenses (housing, bus pass, clothing, groceries, etc.) with the income obtained
- Dependence on the financial support of a spouse or of family members
- Inability to honour payments by cheque
- Handling billing errors
- Memory, attention, or concentration problems, during difficult times
- Insufficient income when on welfare; no safety cushion
- Difficulty meeting the needs of children
- High cost of school outings
- Transport costs
- Difficulty finding affordable day camps for children in Pointe-Claire (50% discount deemed insufficient)

Social Exclusion

- Exclusion of benefits or services because of age group
- Feelings of isolation or loneliness, especially when in crisis situations, low number of friends
- Low, or declining self-esteem
- Fear of going outside due to feeling different
- Feeling of no longer recognizing oneself
- Difficulty of building relationships with those around them
- Feeling of being misunderstood by some people
- Lack of knowledge of places where one can socialize, find good friends
- Fear and stigma of people with a mental health problem living in the population
- Prejudice against people with mental health problems in hospitals, resulting in non-consideration of the symptoms reported by the patient
- Difficulty in finding things to do during the week when people work

Related to health and social services

General

- Ignorance or lack of awareness of available services (notably free activities, food resources, consulting services for employment, community-based services, and when one is in crisis or still at home)
- Inability of certain municipalities in the South of the West-Island to lead the poor to appropriate resources
- Lack of support in mental health
- Disappearance of support groups in some churches
- Feeling that no one cares enough about mental health issues
- Government trend in withdrawing itself from social services and handing responsibility for certain issues to the community
- Questioning on how to raise government awareness to the needs relating to mental health issues
- Alternating good and bad days in connection with mental health problems

Social Assistance

- Repeated inquiries from the government and imposition of penalties for welfare on account of assistance received by relatives
- Restrictions on access to social assistance
- No additional allocations for mental health on account of federal family allowances
- Need to make repeated requests for social assistance to obtain benefits for mental health

CLSCs, clinics, and hospitals

- Absence of useful and visible information (e.g. signs) in places like the CLSC about the services offered to the vulnerable population going through difficulties or legal issues
- Lack of knowledge on how CLSCs manage waiting lists for psychiatric help
- The feeling that certain CLSCs in the West-Island are better than others at addressing mental health issues
- Interruption of certain drugs when there occurs a change of doctor
- Limited contact between certain physicians and their patients
- Lack of communication, explanation, or referencing (e.g. to support groups) between some physicians and their patients
- Imposition of therapeutic approaches by some doctors or health system
- Feeling that some psychiatrists and family physicians send their patients back and forth
- Delay of sometimes several years to receive a proper diagnosis

- Difficulty in accessing psychological or psychiatric help

Related to employment and local economy

- Interruption of insurance company payments after a few months, despite the persistence of mental health problems
- Lack of information in regards to rights to compensation from the workplace in case of illness
- Difficulty finding work, which is detrimental to stability, access to food, etc.
- Mental health problems affecting job retention
- Difficulty of finding part-time work or adapting to the work capacity of people living with mental health problems
- Labour and pressure overload in some workplaces
- Professional burnout
- Difficulty to keep employment following the loss of a loved one
- Fear of not being able to find employment in the future, because of various personal characteristics: age, poor French language skills, long period away from the work market, child, competition from other applications
- Difficulty finding a job electronically rather than through in-person meetings
- Difficulty obtaining an interview
- Feeling that companies are very selective in their search of staff

Related to transport

- No bus service on Elm Street
- Repeated mechanical problems with private car
- Stress related to the fact that their child must take three buses to get to school (1h30 journey)
- The need to leave the home very early to get the kids to school in winter
- Bus delays in winter
- Long bus trips due to winter or traffic jams
- Lack of buses connecting the South and North of the West-Island
- Long wait times (half hour) for bus connections

Related to food security

- Reliance on food banks and community services

Related to housing

- Difficulty in accessing subsidized housing
- Ignorance of why it is not possible to have access to subsidized housing
- Welfare benefits cut in half when people live together

Related to family

- Lack of time
- Difficulty balancing work and children in the summer if they do not have access to day camps

2.7.2 Possible Solutions Proposed by Participants

- Look for discounts in Publisac
- Have a program with major corporations to get services or discounts in case of illness
- Organize meetings between people with self-managed mental health problems, without the support of other organizations or government
- Establish small buses or vans for transport on Elm Street
- Receive support and advice to make decisions
- Establish an occasional sponsorship of members of a vulnerable population with those of another vulnerable population
- Have a metro line in the West-Island
- Plan events or ways to promote the transfer of information by word-of-mouth
- Increase the supply of employability programs like those offered by the NPO L'Arrimage (notably through the Government)
- Increase the supply of subsidized housing
- Have direct contact, a presence of people living with mental health problems at public events
- Conduct public information campaigns
- Encourage the involvement of big companies or local companies through sponsorships

- Combine information campaigns with pleasurable activities
- Promote the positive sides and the hidden talents of people with mental health problems
- Ensure that people living with mental health problems tell their stories metaphorically, as with children (e.g. with animals)

2.8 Recently Immigrated Persons

2.8.1 Issues Raised by Participants

Related to poverty and social exclusion

Poverty

- Costs associated with teaching English in organizations
- High cost of certain medical operations, less expensive in their country of origin
- Dental care costs
- Inadequate income paid to support a family while learning French, making it necessary to take up a job which hinders learning
- High cost of living in Canada, financial issues
- High cost of housing in comparison to the income received (minimum wage or part-time work)
- High cost of deposits required for credit inquiries

Social Exclusion

- Concerns in regards to the integration of children
- Concerns about getting a network of friends to talk to and do activities
- Insufficient knowledge of French or English, which affects hiring, even if sometimes the job does not really require such knowledge
- Feeling that immigrants are sometimes used rather than helped by local residents
- Feeling neglected and excluded, resulting in frustration
- Discrimination on the labour market in favour of native francophones and anglophones at the expense of immigrants, even those that have a degree

Related to health and social services

General

- French courses are too short
- Difficulty retaining and absorbing the large amount of information disclosed to immigrants in a short period of time by organizations in their first week in the country
- Significant amount of research time to find information on the Internet
- Difficulty understanding the general context, culture, local systems (health, financial, tax)
- Lack of information about health services offered or approaches for studies done abroad to be recognized in the immigration process

- Lack of awareness of food bank locations
- Difficulty or inability for studies done abroad to be recognized (e.g. for qualified workers, professionals)
- Lack of government support to encourage businesses to hire newly immigrated people
- Cuts to interesting programs for immigrants

CLSCs, clinics and hospitals

- The need to make round trips between home and health centers for medical care
- Difficult access to health services
- Very long wait times in emergency rooms, to find a family doctor, on the CLSC waiting list with no follow-up

Related to employment and local economy

- Difficulty of integrating the labour market, including full time - due to lack of experience, notably Canadian - or despite the knowledge of English and French, and being qualified and experienced
- Inadequate recognition of experience gained abroad
- Difficulty to meet the requirement of having Quebec or Canadian experience
- Lack of trust that newcomers have the ability to do their job properly
- Feeling that an immigrant person with many degrees can be seen as overqualified for the job market
- Difficulty finding even volunteering opportunities
- End of the PRIIME program after six months
- Feeling that the PRIIME program is more beneficial to the employer than the employee
- Difficulty for certain immigrants to invest or start a business because they do not know the market or standards, and the businesses sometimes fail
- Need to go back to school to study to find work

Related to transport

- Significant amount of time to understand the public transit system
- Refusal of the bus driver to answer a question in English, causing some frustration
- Absence of a metro line in the West-Island
- Bus delays, especially in winter
- Insufficient number of bus shelters, forcing people to wait in the snow in winter, when it is very cold
- Ignorance of the payment system for the commuter train, which causes stiff fines

- Lack of service of some buses before and after rush-hour, which can complicate assistance to get to medical appointments or commute to work
- Failure to make the transfers intended when missing a bus, causing delays and waiting times
- Simultaneous bus departures at the Dorval bus terminal
- Interruption to bus service during winter

Related to food security

- Low number of food banks to meet needs in the West-Island
- Difficulty in accessing food banks and bring food in public transport, without a car

Related to urban planning and green spaces

- Stress of not understanding French when one walks in the street

Related to housing

- Difficulty in deciding whether or not to renew a lease when an owner requires one to indicate ones intentions six months before the end of said lease
- Difficulty in finding housing when one arrives in Canada when a credit check is required

2.8.2 Possible Solutions Proposed by Participants

- Give government subsidies to companies that hire immigrants
- Organize a campaign to encourage businesses to hire immigrants who do not speak French very well and allow them to integrate more easily into the job market
- Assign each newcomer a family (of the same origin or not) who could help with orientation and socialization in the first months
- Provide more realistic information to immigration applicants as to health and social services, recognition of studies, etc. before their departure for Canada
- Encourage immigrants to develop a network to find employment (rather than getting them to look at deals on Emploi-Québec or Kijiji)
- Explain clearly and assert the utility for immigrants to learn French quickly after arriving in Quebec, not only for the language but also to promote integration
- Provide better information to immigrants who wish to be entrepreneurs so that they are more familiar with the local market before coming to Canada
- Explain the functionality of different public transport services

- Provide a warning to users when buses will be late or cancelled in winter
- Provide smaller amounts of food at once, but more frequently, to food bank recipients
- Expand the Interconnection program across the island of Montreal, to more people and make it longer and more rewarding for immigrants (no earnings currently associated)
- Organize a service point on social media platforms, a Facebook page for immigrants where they can communicate together and help meet their needs directly
- Create an organization via a MeetUp group to establish contact between recent immigrants
- Allocate more resources to organizations that offer programs for immigrants

3. IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

This page contains some quotations (1 per focus group) that were transcribed literally to give participants the opportunity to express some of their concerns in their own words.

“Back during our time, a lot of women [...] stayed home to mind their children. These women today do not have a lot of money.”

- UnE participantE du focus group sur les aînéEs

« You’re limited to the area that you can search for a job because you have to stay close by.”

- UnE participantE du focus group sur les familles monoparentales

« Social Solidarity can say whatever they want, but anybody trying to live on a limited income, especially what the government gives us, in our current economy, it is impossible to live on what I get a month. Impossible. »

- UnE participantE du focus group sur les personnes vivant avec un handicap physique

« In the West Island the bus is very bad [...] it takes long [...], they’re never on time”.

- UnE participantE du focus group sur les jeunes de 18-25 ans

“I have to say that my experience with the CLSC over the years was problematic, at best, that’s the nice way of saying it, and the only stuff that ever worked for us was private and semi-private. Private money is the way to go, because the system itself, for us, was...and it was only by going to the hospital and not leaving until I got services that I got them. ”

- UnE participantE du focus group sur les parents d’enfants ayant des besoins particuliers

« Finding employment is kind of a major problem for me »

- UnE participantE du focus group sur les personnes vivant avec un problème de santé mentale

« Quand on commence à trouver un logement, les personnes font une enquête de crédit, mais tu commences, t’as pas un crédit (...), t’as pas une grosse référence économique, et c’est trop difficile vraiment de trouver un logement, et si c’est pas par référence d’un ami, c’est vraiment trop difficile. Ils font des enquêtes de crédit, ils te demandent trop, ils te demandent des dépôts des fois, pour faire des enquêtes de crédit (...) »

- UnE participantE du focus group sur les personnes récemment immigrées

« I have problems from my ceiling. There is a crack in my ceiling, an opening (...) but the landlord doesn’t even do anything about it at all. He just leaves it that way and it bothers me ».

- UnE participantE du focus group sur les personnes vivant avec une déficience intellectuelle légère

CONCLUSION

Between November 2014 and July 2015, the TQSOI has managed to rally the energy and expertise of several of its members around an exciting project: to hear and understand the views of facilitators and residents in relation to the needs of certain “vulnerable” populations of the South of the West-Island of Montreal. In total, no fewer than eight focus groups bringing together more than sixty people were organized and led by local organizations in three municipalities of the territory. These groups helped highlight many of the social problems experienced by “vulnerable” groups as diverse as: seniors, single-parent head of households, youth aged 18-24, persons with a physical handicap, parents of children with special needs, persons with a minor intellectual deficiency, persons with mental health problems, or recently immigrated persons. They also revealed a range of aspirations within these groups and identified a series of solutions to mitigate or solve the difficulties they experience.

Admittedly, the consultation process that was conducted had some limitations: use of a single data collection method; few consulted vulnerable populations; mixture of southern and northern West-Island populations; limited experience of some facilitators; abandonment of an interview question; participant recruitment was performed voluntarily and by self-identification to the targeted vulnerable populations.

That said, it also has several strengths that should not be ignored: the strong involvement of community stakeholders in all stages of the process; the great diversity of vulnerable populations encountered, and the large number of people recruited and heard.

Ultimately, the main objective of the project, which was to better understand the many issues faced by vulnerable populations of the territory and the solutions they propose, does seem to have been achieved. With this report, the TQSOI now has new information that supplements the general picture it already possessed and will enable it to conceive a transformative and inclusive social development plan for the area of the South of the West- Island of Montreal.

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