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ABOUT THIS REPORT

The ACT for Youth Midterm report (March 2009 – September 2011) was prepared for SSHRC to fulfill a funding requirement of our grant through SSHRC’s Community University Research Alliances. The report summarizes ACT for Youth’s progress including outputs and outcomes that we identified as part of our funding proposal and confirmed in our milestone report. This report provides readers with an overview of our research objectives and accomplishments during the first half of our CURA grant.

ACT for Youth’s midterm report was prepared by:

Uzo Anucha  Principal Investigator
Tka Pinnock  Project Manager
Jen Ryan  Research Assistant
Annika Ollner  Research Assistant
Anita Sekharan  Graphic Designer

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Email: actadmin@yorku.ca
SECTION I
A Summary of the Assets Coming Together for Youth Project

Assets Coming Together for Youth (ACT for Youth), brings together a multi-sectoral alliance of community stakeholders and an interdisciplinary network of scholars to undertake a programme of applied research, capacity building, knowledge transfer and evaluation that is focused on youth in ‘marginalized’ urban communities using as a case study the Jane-Finch community located in northwestern Toronto. Youth in the Jane-Finch community, like youth in other ‘marginalized’ urban cities, have been the focus of extensive negative public discourse that brands them as ‘problems’.

ACT for Youth draws from the positive youth development (PYD) perspective that challenges the ‘youth as problems’ model and encourages research, programs and policies that create pathways to assets within communities for youth. ACT for Youth integrates this perspective with a social justice approach that recognizes that youth in ‘marginalized’ urban communities experience social, political and economic forces such as racism, sexism, poverty, zero-tolerance and unemployment that are ‘toxic’ to their well-being. Drawing from these two perspectives, ACT for Youth will develop a comprehensive youth strategy that articulates how ‘marginalized’ urban communities like the Jane-Finch community, can energize community assets that support positive youth development.

Framed by a Community Dialogue Approach that builds into the research process the translation of research findings into programmatic and policy actions, ACT for Youth draws on multi-methods that include a survey, in-depth interviews, focus groups and arts-based approaches to address five questions:

1. What is the assets-profile of youth in ‘marginalized’ urban communities?
2. What are the perspectives of these youth on issues of concern to them such as youth-on-youth violence?
3. What are the diverse pathways of urban youth from high school into regular participation in the labour market?
4. How can we reframe the negative public discourse about these youth to a public discourse that is supportive of PYD policies and practices?
5. How can we build a sustainable, equitable community-university partnership that can support PYD within ‘marginalized’ communities?

KEY PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS
Uzo Anucha (York University- PI)
Sue Wilkinson (Ontario Non-Profit Network)
Antonius Jamal Clarke (Friends in Trouble)
Alex Lovell (Queen’s University)
Mwarigha Mwarigha (Region of Peel)
Karen Swift (York University)
Byron Gray (The Spot)
Marilyn Eisenstat (PEACH)
John Graham (University of Calgary)
Nombuso Dlamini (York University)
Ifeyinji Ezeonu (Brock University)
Nathan Gilbert (Laidlaw Foundation)
Bonny Ibhwah (McMaster University)
Janet Mosher (York University)
Sue Levesque (York-TD CEC)
Natasha Burford (EAW)
Theresa Knott (California State University)
Matt Wood (First Work)
Rebecca Houwer (York University)

KEY COMMUNITY PARTNERS
Black Creek Pioneer Village
Black Creek West Community Health Centre
Educational Attainment West
First Work
Friends in Trouble
George Brown College
Jane-Finch Community and Family Centre
Jewish Vocational Services – Youthinc
Laidlaw Foundation
Promoting Economic Action and Community Health (PEACH)
Seneca College
The Spot – “Where YOU(th) wanna be”
Thrive! Canadian Centre for PYD
Toronto Housing Corporation
Tropicana Community Services
York - TD Community Engagement Centre
Youth Now on track (YNOT)
Youth Unlimited
SECTION II
Community-University Alliance

At the core of ACT for Youth are five critical questions that were developed and refined through extensive consultations with community stakeholders. Although the questions are asked in the context of our case study, the Jane-Finch community, our emerging findings address theoretical debates and policy issues that are applicable to youth in other ‘marginalized’ urban communities, especially the 13 priority neighbourhoods in the City of Toronto.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What assets do youth in urban communities have and what are the possible ways that communities can increase their development using socializing systems within the community including the family, neighborhood, faith group, school, youth organization, and place of work?

2. What are the perspectives of youth in urban communities concerning their needs and well-being? What are their perspectives on youth-on-youth violence, how do they understand and experience this violence and how does it impact their life? What are their explanations for violence and how do they think it should be responded to?

3. What are the diverse pathways of urban youth from high school into regular participation in the labour market?

4. How can communities reframe the negative public discourse about youth to a public discourse that is supportive of positive youth development policies anchored in solid research evidence?

5. How can we build a sustainable, equitable community-university research partnership that brings together a multi-sectoral alliance of community stakeholders (youth, academic scholars, and organizations from the non-profit, public, for profit sectors) to energize community assets that can support positive youth development within ‘marginalized’ urban communities?

GOVERNANCE

ACT’s governance structure was chosen to ensure that community partners and university researchers work together on all research activities. The governance structure includes the following:

- Partnership Group (with a Youth-Led Subcommittee)
- Research Advisory Committee
- Knowledge Mobilization and Communication Committee
- Five Research Theme Working Groups

Each of these committees and Working Groups are led by both a community and an academic project team member. A Project Manager who is primarily responsible for budgeting and project coordination provides support to all the committees and working groups.

The Partnership Group (PG), the governing body for the project, is made up of all project team members, representatives of our partners, youth and students that are affiliated with the project. The PG is co-chaired by Sue Wilkinson (community) and Uzo Anucha (academic). The PG has a Youth-led Subcommittee that is entirely made up of youth PG members (youth interns, students, community partners, etc) and is co-chaired by two youth collaborators, Antonius Clarke (community) and Alex Lovell (academic). The Youth-led Committee serves as a representative voice for youth in the Jane/Finch community ensuring their involvement in ACT’s research process. As envisioned in our original proposal, the Youth-led Committee creates a space for youth to have decision-making roles in the project. The First Partnership Group Meeting was held at York University on November 20, 2009 and was attended by 45 community and academic partners and graduate students. The focus of this
meeting was identifying the goals and research questions of the project and, establishing research-themed working groups. The Second Partnership Group Meeting was held at the Black Creek Pioneer Village on March 12, 2010 and was attended by over 37 community and academic partners, youth and graduate students. The focus of this meeting was clarifying and approving research plans for each research-themed working group. The Third Partnership Group Meeting was held at Black Creek Pioneer Village on April 14, 2014 and brought together over 40 community and academic partners, graduate students and youth members. The focus of this meeting was on sharing emerging findings; and, collectively designing dissemination plans.

Reporting to the PG is a Research Advisory Committee that includes all the co-chairs of all committees and Research Theme Working Groups. The Research Advisory Committee is co-chaired by Mwarigha Mwarigha (community) Karen Swift (academic). The Research Advisory ensures that there is an avenue for integration of all research activities. The Research Advisory Co-Chairs are responsible for coordinating the overall research agenda of ACT. All project team members and partners belong to at least one of five Research Theme Working Groups - Youth Survey; Youth Voices; Youth Economic Strategies; Reframing Discourse and Evaluation and Monitoring. Each Working Group is co-chaired by a university and community team member.

A Knowledge Mobilization and Communications Committee, co-chaired by Sue Levesque (community) and Janet Mosher (academic) is responsible for ensuring that the Working Groups are engaging in effective dissemination and communication throughout the research process. The KM/C committee also ensures that the communication plan developed at the start of the process is implemented and reviewed and revised as necessary.

Our PG meetings are a dynamic coming together of the academic and community sectors that help to link research with policy and action. Community partners and university researchers have worked together on all research activities – the design, data collection, and analysis stages. University researchers have had the opportunity to develop community development skills by working with professionals who are familiar with the socio-cultural environment of their service users and area residents. The project has provided university researchers an opportunity to identify and support policy-relevant advocacy for youth in ‘marginalized communities’. Community researchers on the other hand, have had the opportunity to enhance their skills in research design, methodology, and analysis. Our community partners are critical to ensuring that the findings are transformed into practice and policy.

All ACT’s committees and task groups have an open membership. Co-chairs receive either course releases or a small stipend for taking on such responsibility. ACT encourages all members to actively participate as much as they choose. Our teleconference number has a toll-free number so that members can call into meetings from wherever they are without incurring costs. Transportation costs (including parking) to attend face-to-face meetings are covered upon request and we do have a budget to pay honoraria to allow organizations to participate that would otherwise be unable to do so.

Challenges and Lessons: Sustaining a multi-sectoral alliance such as ACT for Youth that involves several community partners, an interdisciplinary network of scholars, students and youth is a learning process and this is why we created an Evaluation and Monitoring Working Group from the outset that was tasked with exploring and reflecting on this process. The activities of this Working Group are important in helping us understand and document the challenges of building an equitable partnership that is inclusive yet achieves the outcomes set at the proposal stage and confirmed in our milestone report.
Our evaluation findings have identified areas that ACT can improve on as we enter the second phase of our project such as the need to increase face-to-face contact between academic and community partners and the need for better communication among partnership group members. The expectation that our private, secure virtual community – an O3 Collaboration Site through the Orion Network will keep members up to date has not worked out as members have not gotten comfortable with the technology. In the first year, we set aside extra resources to provide Partnership Group members the ‘space’ to collaboratively develop and refine our program of research. Instead of holding one annual Partnership Group meeting, we held two in the first year. Several of the Research Theme Working Groups also held a face-to-face meeting supplemented by several teleconferences. We will explore how to do more of this in the remaining years.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Parternership Group
Co-Chairs: Sue Wilkinson(C), Uzo Anucha (A)
All project team members, partners, youth reps and students

Knowledge Mobilization and Communications Committee
Co-Chairs: Sue Levesque(C), Janet Mosher(A)
Members: Zorana Alimpic, Antonius Clarke, Ifeanyi Ezeonu, Kofi Frempong, Nathan Gilbert, John Graham, Bonny Ibahwoh, Theresa Knott, Sarah Maiter, Paula Thomas, Carol Wade

Youth Led-Committee
Co-Chairs: Antonius Clarke(C), Alex Lovell(A)
Members: Olivia Agyemang, Edwin White Chacon, Ann Duong, Nicola Holness, Taneese Jones, Enorwa Osagie, Tara Sherif, Abubaker Sultan, Shentha Sutheraharan, Alexander Toolsie

Research Advisory Committee
Co-Chairs: Mwarigha S. Mwarigha (C), Karen Swift (A)
Members: All the co-chairs of the working groups

Youth Survey
Co-Chairs: Natasha Burford (C)
Theresa Knott (A)
Members: Pat Howell-Blackmore
Alex Lovell
Phillip Meng
Kevin Patton

Youth Voices
Co-Chairs: Byron Gray (C)
Nobumso Dlamini, Ifeanyi Ezeonu (A)
Members: Zorana Alimpic
Antonius Clarke
Kofi Frempong
Ben Marshall
Janet Mosher
Carol Wade
Francis Ubah

YEES
Co-Chairs: Marilyn Eisenstat (C)
John Graham (A)
Members: Kizzy Bedeau
Marty Brent
Gervan Fearon
Wilburn Hayden
Leolyn Hendricks
Deborah Jones
Lavinia Lamenza
Scott Moore
Laura Metcalfe
Zola Jeffers

Reframing Discourse
Co-Chairs: Nathan Gilbert (C)
Bonny Ibahwoh (A)
Members: Daphne Jeyapal
Sarah Maiter
Narda Razack
Bridget Sinclair
Stewart Vander Velden

Evaluation/ Monitoring
Co-Chairs: Matt Wood(C)
Rebecca Houwer(A)
Members: Sue Levesque
Susan McGrath
Karen Swift
Paula Thomas
Sue Wilkinson
SECTION III
Research Training and Development

Graduate students and youth from the community have been involved in all our research activities. They work with both academics and community partners and are usually assigned to one Research Working Group (at a minimum). They are encouraged to attend working group meetings and the Partnership Group meetings.

Graduate students have had the opportunity to complete literature reviews from a critical appraisal perspective (including theory, discourse, and method); prepare research protocols (questionnaire design, interview guides, ethics review, translation); compile survey packages; do open and axial coding of qualitative data using NVIVO; conduct analyses of the quantitative data using SPSS; and prepare reports and presentations. The Master’s level students were critical in ACT’s data collection over the summer of 2010 and they continue to support the work of the five Research Theme Working Groups. They have learned specific skills in both quantitative and qualitative interviewing, data entry and management as well as in arts-based research.

Graduate students have been presented with opportunities to co-publish and present with the project team so they can experience some benefits in preparing for a research and/or academic career. Several PhD students on the project have manuscripts that are in the final stages of preparation for submission to academic journals. Graduate students and youth have also collaborated on preparing community-friendly E-Zines that are available on ACT’s website. The listings of our dissemination activities include several presentations and publications in which our postdoctoral fellow, graduate students and youth have participated or taken the lead.

ACT’s graduate students have been the key to the project’s success in building the research capacity of youth. They have developed and delivered the curriculum for the Community-Based Research Summer Institute (CBRSI) that ACT runs for youth. They have mentored and supported youth interns in their research activities. Evaluation interviews with the first cohort of youth interns indicated that relationships with graduate students have had a significant impact on youth.

More importantly, both Master’s and PhD students have had the opportunity to collaborate with an extensive network of community stakeholders and directly experience the challenges and negotiations that are part of a community-based research process. A quote from the focus group interviews with students in the summer of 2011 speaks to this:

“The second thing which I have liked and have come to respect is the way of doing research. I was amazed at the meetings like the Partnership Group meetings where there is like 40 people and some from the community and some from different departments and I have never been exposed to that and I am a bit of a generalist and I like to hear other people’s perspectives. And there was disagreement and I think at one point I suggested doing a longitudinal, quantitative design because that is where I am coming from and there were discussions of why this is impossible. That is like, I don’t know it is very difficult to follow up quantitatively with this group and there were moral reservations about doing that but for me it was like okay. I didn’t realize. It just opened up my realm of possibilities a little bit hearing from all these different people. I quite like that they do some things off campus like at the Black Creek Pioneer Village. I remember doing the winter meeting there and it was a really quaint atmosphere with the snow falling. I like that”.

ACT made a commitment to the Jane/Finch community during the project development phase that the project will provide youth with the opportunity to develop their research skills and engage their interest in the possibilities of post-secondary education and/or graduate education. ACT has hired and trained youth as co-researchers – youth research interns, youth survey
assistants and youth research assistants. The youth research internship is a paid 6-month program open to youth 16 years old or older who reside in the Jane/Finch area. Our first internship cycle ran from March 2010 to March 2011. As part of the internship, interns were assigned to a research-themed working group and participated in a mandatory six-part Community-Based Research training series. Our interns played an invaluable role in the research process, contributing their skills and expertise to the outreach and recruitment of potential research participants, data collection and assisting with data analysis.

Thirty-three youth survey assistants from the three high schools in the community that participated in the Survey of Student Resources and Assets were hired as survey assistants. They worked directly with the contracted supply teacher at their school, to engage their peers in the survey process. They contributed a total of 550 hours to the research project. They participated in an orientation and training session at York University that was led by one of our youth interns.

ACT has also engaged youth as youth research assistants on the Youth Voices’ Beyond the Caption group, and as interviewers with the (Re)framing Public Discourse Working Group. As one method of ensuring a continued relationship with our former youth research interns, the project employs them as youth research assistants when the opportunity arises. In year 3, we expanded the research training series beyond our interns by running an eight-week Community-Based Research Summer Institute (CBRSI) for 18 youth. Five participants from the Summer Institute were then selected to continue with the project as research interns in September 2011. A quote from the community partners’ focus group speaks to the importance of engaging youth for ACT:

“So, I’ve been quite relieved and comfortable with the approach. I have also been unbelievably proud to see a group of young people, who even five years ago, might have sort of distanced themselves stand up and say I am a youth researcher from York University and it is making me feel pretty happy. That is sort of a rosy picture. There are tensions along the way, but my commitment and energy is still quite high because of the structure”.

To read more about the experiences of our youth interns, please check out this E-Zine written by PhD candidate Enzo Verrillo. It summarizes interviews conducted with youth interns.

WAYS TO PARTICIPATE

Assets Coming Together for Youth provides different opportunities for youth to be involved. Please check the various ways you would like to be involved.

Your Contact Information
Name: 
Email: 
Phone: 

I would like to:
1. …apply to be a youth researcher.
2. …apply for an internship.
3. …join a committee.
4. …join our mailing list to get regular updates and newsletters.
5. …receive an invitation to our Summer 2010 Gala.
6. …participate in another way. Please specify below.

Anyone else we should involve? Please provide their contact info below.

MY INTERNSHIP STORY

An Evaluation of the Assets Coming Together For Youth Research Internship Program

Enzo Verrilli, PhD
York University

Research Training and Development
ACT for Youth engages youth and graduate students in all aspects of our research.
ACT’S TOP FIVE KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. Brought together a multi-sectoral alliance of community organizations that can transform our findings into policy and action.

2. Engaged youth extensively in our research and knowledge production.

3. Accumulated a wealth of qualitative and quantitative data about Jane-Finch youth.

4. Created a rich portrait of the assets and resources of youth in Jane-Finch.

5. Developed a deep understanding of how the negative discourse about the Jane-Finch community impacts youth.

SECTION IV
Research and Knowledge Production

The four charts on pages 10 to 13 summarize and describe our research activities to date as well as the research activities planned for the remaining 30 months of our project. The five accomplishments that frame ACT’s overall research and learning contributions include the following:

ONE – ACT is a network of academic researchers and community stakeholders. Beyond the Partnership Group, the project has established a broad array of community alliances and regularly participates in several youth-focused initiatives such as ONTARIO YOUTH MATTERS! – a provincial network of youth and youth service-providers working towards a provincial youth strategy; the Black Creek Community Collaborative – a local network of residents, community service-providers, public institutions and city staff tasked with the socio-economic development of the community; the Ontario Ministry of Child and Youth Services’ Research Forum in April 2011; a strategic meeting of the Toronto Crown Ward Championship Team; and United Way of Toronto’s Community of Practice on Youth Educational Attainment. The advice and expertise of our project has been sought by several youth-focused groups, both in and out of the Jane/Finch community, including: Elements Girls Group, Toronto Public Health, Grassroots Youth Collaborative, Education Attainment West, etc. We participated in the conference planning committee of a sister-CURA at the University of Toronto: Anti-Poverty Community-Organizing and Learning.

TWO – ACT for Youth’s work with youth is a particular source of pride for the project as it best represents our interest in supporting youth in developing skills and unlocking assets that will serve them well beyond their time with ACT. The project has continued to train, support and employ youth in various research and internship capacities thereby expanding their no-
tions of what they are capable of. Additionally, youth in post-secondary programs have been employed as Graduate Assistants and Research Assistants. The amount of time and resources that have gone into training and supporting youth in their ongoing work with ACT has been tremendous. This investment is one of the areas that really define the work of ACT.

THREE - All together, ACT’s five working groups have collected an incredible amount of rich data that will inform the action component of our work in the second half of the project. The data range from photographs, narratives, interviews from the Photovoice component of Youth Voices, to interviews with academics, policymakers, and media, and a Critical Discourse Analysis of both mainstream and alternative media output from Reframing Discourse. To date, the project has collected:

- 50 short-interviews with youth from the Mobile Speakers Corner speaking to issues of violence, well-being and ‘turf’
- 22 individual interviews, 10 focus groups with 22 participants and 110 photos each with narratives, from the two Photovoice projects focusing on issues of violence and well-being
- 2 focus groups with 16 youth on youth’s labour market attachment
- 36 in-depth interviews with youth on their labour market attachment
- A focus group with 12 front-line workers in the youth employment sector
- 30 in-depth interviews with youth, academics, policy-makers, media and community stakeholders on discourse consumption and production
- Critical Discourse Analysis of 148 mainstream media texts
- Evaluation data from project team members, students and youth

FOUR - In years 2 and 3, the project undertook a Survey of Student Resources and Assets with youth in grades 6-12 in schools in the Toronto District School Board. The survey was conducted in five of the six middle and high schools in the community and, in three high schools outside of the community that are attended by students who reside in the Jane/Finch area. The project mailed a total of 4563 consent letters in 9 languages to parents and students in the respective schools. 1756 students were granted permission to participate in the survey, of which 1706 students completed the Survey of Student Resources and Assets. In the end, 1592 of the surveys were usable. Data from the survey, which combines two frameworks for positive human development, offer a rich portrait of the assets and resources of youth in Jane-Finch that help us understand the challenges youth face and the supports they engage in order to overcome these barriers. These findings suggest strategies for long-term goals, targeting youth, mobilizing the public and supporting existing efforts.

FIVE - ACT is now in the early stages of integrating findings from all the data we have collected. Although this remains a complex process, one of the overarching themes emerging from the abundance of data is the impact of the negative discourse about the Jane-Finch community on youth. This negative discourse is a form of violence against youth from Jane-Finch that results in stigmatization, discrimination, and for some youth, a limited sense of what is possible. While many youth continue to resist this single portrait that is painted of their community by the media, policymakers and others, some appear to have internalized the negative messages about their neighbourhood. There are very real material consequences to framing a population based on need, deficit and deviance. Our research refers to these effects as ‘the violence of low expectations’. When a community is framed as lacking or dysfunctional, expectations for youth – both from within and outside the community – decline. Once expectations are reduced, youth are no longer challenged or given the opportunity to reach their full potential (by education systems, service providers, community members, the media, etc.). The negative discourse can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. For example, young people who have not been sufficiently prepared for life after high school are more vulnerable to falling into the traps that are exploited in sensationalized understandings of Jane and Finch. This finding will be central as the ACT for Youth project moves into the mobilization and dissemination phase.
ACT FOR YOUTH | SSHRC NARRATIVE MIDTERM REPORT

THEME ONE
Youth Survey: Midterm Accomplishments

RESEARCH TEAM OBJECTIVES
Survey of Student Resources and Assets
• To understand what resources and assets youth in urban communities have.
• To explore possible ways that communities can increase the development of assets for youth using socializing systems within the community.

Secondary Data Analysis
• To gather general information on social, economic and other characteristics in Jane-Finch that can be compared with other places and through time
• To understand how socio-economic and other structural conditions in the community intersect
• To understand how socio-economic and other conditions that youth experience are related to place

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>YEAR 1</th>
<th>YEAR 2</th>
<th>YEAR 3</th>
<th>YEAR 4</th>
<th>YEAR 5</th>
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<td>Ethics approval from Toronto District School Board and York University</td>
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<td>Parent and student engagement activities to secure positive consent for survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration of survey to all middle schools and high schools in the Jane-Finch area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration of survey to Jane-Finch students in schools outside the community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis of survey findings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development of strategies to mobilize community action based on survey findings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development of research agenda that explores structural/systemic issues using secondary data sets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acquire relevant sets (Police Contact data from Toronto Star and customized data from Statistics Canada)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis of data sets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development of strategies to mobilize community action based on secondary data findings</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

STARTED | ONGOING | COMPLETED | PLANNED
## RESEARCH TEAM OBJECTIVES

- What are the perspectives of youth concerning their needs and well-being? (This question will focus on key areas such as social relationships, housing, health, education, employment, community organizations)

- How do youth understand “turf issues” in their community? How do they understand what community they ‘rep’? Do they have a ‘hood pass’?

- How do youth experience violence in their lives?

## RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>YEAR 1</th>
<th>YEAR 2</th>
<th>YEAR 3</th>
<th>YEAR 4</th>
<th>YEAR 5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethics approval from York University</td>
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<td><strong>C</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Community outreach to recruit youth</td>
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<td><strong>C</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Screening of youth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Photo-voice Project on Violence</td>
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<td>Photo-voice Project on well-being</td>
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<td>Photo-voice Project on turf issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transcribe interviews and prepare for analysis</td>
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<td><strong>S</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis of findings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dissemination of findings from photo-voice project (presentations, e-zines, exhibits, etc)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mobile Speakers’ Corner interviews with 50 youth</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissemination of findings from mobile speakers’ corner interviews (presentations, e-zines, exhibits, etc)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>S</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of strategies to mobilize findings for community action</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>P</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### RESEARCH TEAM OBJECTIVES

**Youth Perceptions of Labour Market Attachment and Integration**
- To explore youth perceptions of the barriers and opportunities in labour market attachment and integration
- To examine the impact of geographical location on youth employability and how youth internalize their location in terms of what is accessible to them

**Employers’ Perceptions of Youth Employability**
- To investigate employers’ perceptions of youth and their employability

### RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERABLES</th>
<th>YEAR 1</th>
<th>YEAR 2</th>
<th>YEAR 3</th>
<th>YEAR 4</th>
<th>YEAR 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethics approval from York University</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community outreach to recruit youth</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two focus groups with youth to pilot interview guide</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 one-on-one in-depth interviews with youth</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus group with 12 front-line workers in the youth employment sector to contextualize findings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>S</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:1 in-depth interviews with 25 employers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public awareness campaign on barriers and facilitators to labour market participation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create employment information resources for youth in the community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disseminate fact sheets on Youth Education and Employment Strategies to schools and service-providers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>P</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STATUS**

- **STARTED**
- **ONGOING**
- **COMPLETED**
- **PLANNED**
### RESEARCH TEAM OBJECTIVES

- How can J/F reframe discourse to support positive youth development?
- How does the discourse (content and form) used to frame J/F youth relate to policies, programs, and funding that impacts the community?
- How do different people understand and produce discourse about J/F youth – both inside and outside the community – that reproduces or challenges negative framing?
- How do academics produce discourse about J/F and other communities; and how will this project resist reproducing negative discourse?
- How and who benefits (within and outside of the community) from negative discourse?
- How do J/F youth get information: informal networks; alternative media; internet social networking?
- How are distinctions between mainstream and alternative media understood within and outside of the community?

### RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Discourse Analysis of:</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Texts and print media (FACTIVA Database; Alternative Press Index, Ethnic News Watch etc.)</td>
<td>STARTED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative media (websites, blogs, youtube; visual, literary &amp; performing arts, etc.)</td>
<td>ONGOING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major reports/policies impacting J/F youth</td>
<td>COMPLETED</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Activities</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8-10 key informant interviews with policy makers to explore how negative and counter discourses are interpreted, produced, and responded to by community members in J/F and ‘outsiders’</td>
<td>STARTED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-10 key informant interviews with community stakeholders</td>
<td>ONGOING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-10 key informant interviews with media</td>
<td>COMPLETED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-10 key informant interviews with academics</td>
<td>STARTED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-10 key informant interviews with youth</td>
<td>ONGOING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a Reframing Strategy by integrating findings from the discourse activities using the Strategic Framing Analysis Framework</td>
<td>PLANNED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a media watch portal to be designed and delivered by J/F youth</td>
<td>PLANNED</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION V  
Dissemination of Research Results

The intended audiences of our dissemination efforts include the academic community, government and policy makers, media and community stakeholders, particularly community agencies, community residents and youth. ACT established a Knowledge Mobilization and Communications (KM/C) Committee at the start of the project and included a budget for a KM/C assistant to ensure that the KM/C plan developed at the start of the process is implemented and revised as necessary. The KM/C committee has been reviewing how best to share our findings with our target audience that is intentionally broad – from community stakeholders to media and policy makers, to other researchers.

Our community partners that represent a broad sector of community agencies are represented on the Knowledge Mobilization and Communications Committee as well as our five research-themed working groups and, as such, will play an integral role in how the findings will be translated for community audiences. Youth Interns on the project have been active in sharing emerging findings with youth audiences. Youth have participated in hosting community forums and presentations to share emerging findings with community stakeholders.

Past Dissemination Activities: Although the first 30 months of ACT was primarily focused on data collection, we have organized or participated in several public forums to share our emerging research findings. The charts on pages 15 and 16 list our dissemination activities to date. One of our dissemination avenues is through ACT’s project website: www.yorku.ca/act. The website allows the project to reach our various audiences and share our emerging findings.

Future Dissemination Activities: Some of our planned dissemination activities include the following: All Working Groups are collaboratively working on papers to submit to peer-reviewed publications. Peer-reviewed papers (journal articles, book chapters, academic press books) take a longer time to appear in print. Several PhD students are taking the lead on several manuscripts. In keeping with the project’s community-based collaborative principles, publication and presentations will be co-authored by university and community team members (including youth members) whenever possible.

ACT will hold a research conference for youth researchers organized by youth researchers in 2012. Youth continue to be positioned as objects of study rather than agents in the research process. Very few conference or networking opportunities exist for youth. On the occasion that youth are able to participate in formal dissemination, it is often in a marginalized role. ACT has certainly demonstrated an interest in supporting youth to become active and engaged researchers. However, the production of knowledge is not complete without skills and strategies around the dissemination of findings. Youth within and beyond ACT are producing fascinating work. Hosting a youth-led event will allow young people to connect, share their work and find out about other research projects. It will also provide many opportunities for growth and learning such as experience in how knowledge is shared, how to plan and organize an event (writing and distributing calls for papers, communications strategies, presentation and facilitation skills, and reporting and logistics). This proposed event is not imagined as a ‘sit in your seat and watch people present’ event. The hope is to have many opportunities for rich discussion, interaction and creative engagement.

Other activities in our KM/C plan include: a final conference in year 5; more presentations at academic conferences and at community events; articles in popular magazines and partner publications; enriching curricula in professional (Social Work, Education and Law) and interdisciplinary programmes in five partner universities; a Continuing Education course for youth workers offered in partnership with a community organization and; a documentary that tackles stereotypes and myths about Jane/Finch.
## Section V

### Listing of Public Forum Presentations & Major Meeting Presentations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>PRESENTER</th>
<th>FORUM/MEETING</th>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ACT for Youth Project</td>
<td>Tka Pinnock (Project Manager)</td>
<td>Research Symposium on Community-based Research by York-TD Community Engagement Centre</td>
<td>Sept 23, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ACT for Youth Project launch</td>
<td>Uzo Anucha &amp; Sue Wilkinson (ACT Co-Chairs) Jamal Antonius &amp; Alex Lovell (Youth Co-Chairs) Tka Pinnock (ACT Project Manager)</td>
<td>Public event for community stakeholders, youth, politicians and university members by ACT for Youth Project</td>
<td>Nov 20, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face This!: Our Voices, Our Stories</td>
<td>Judy Troung, Muzna Rehman &amp; Stephanie Lucas (Act 2010 Youth Interns)</td>
<td>Summer Gala for Jane-Finch Youth organized by ACT’s 2010 youth Interns</td>
<td>Aug 27, 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging Youth as Research Participants and Researchers: The ACT Experience</td>
<td>Uzo Anucha &amp; Sue Wilkinson Muzna Rehman, Stephanie Lucas, Abubakar Sultan, Jasjit Randhawa (Youth Interns); Mary Goitom &amp; Enzo Verrilli (PhD RAs); and Tka Pinnock</td>
<td>Learning Circle by United Way of Toronto’s Community of Practice on Youth Educational Attainment</td>
<td>Jan 28, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ACT for Youth Project</td>
<td>Tka Pinnock</td>
<td>The Pulse of Education Conference by Educational Attainment West</td>
<td>May 19, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So You Want to Engage Youth in Community-based Research? Lessons from the ACT for Youth Project’</td>
<td>Stephanie Lucas; Abubakar Sultan (2010 Youth Interns); Enzo Verrilli (PhD RA) and Tka Pinnock.</td>
<td>Learning from Each Other Conference by Anti-Poverty Community Organizing and Learning (APCOL) CURA Project</td>
<td>June 8, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So You Want to Engage Youth in Community-based Research? Lessons from the ACT for Youth Project</td>
<td>Tka Pinnock Rebecca Houwer (PhD RA); Asim Aziz and Grace Francis-Good</td>
<td>Jane/Finch Community-Based Research Forum, Yorkgate Mall</td>
<td>Sept 24, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Employment in Toronto’s Priority Neighbourhoods: A Temporal Analysis from 1996 to 2006</td>
<td>Uzo Anucha and Phillip Meng (PostDoc)</td>
<td>2011 Futures Conference, Collingwood, ON. Futures is Canada’s largest annual professional development opportunity for professionals working with young people seeking employment.</td>
<td>Oct 19, 2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Section V

#### Academic/Research Conference Presentations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
<th>CONFERENCE</th>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Engagement as a Methodological Practice: The Assets Coming Together for Youth Project</td>
<td>Uzo Anucha</td>
<td>Research Matters: Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, York University</td>
<td>Sept 25, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-University Assets Coming Together in the Jane Finch/Black Creek Communities</td>
<td>Sue Wilkinson (ACT Community Co-Chair) and Sue Levesque (ACT KMC Co-Chair)</td>
<td>15th Coalition of Urban and Metro Universities: “Building community resiliency: The role of university leadership”, Washington</td>
<td>Oct 11, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Engagement as a Methodological Practice in Research with Ethno-Cultural Communities</td>
<td>Uzo Anucha</td>
<td>Metropolis UBC Research Seminar, Vancouver</td>
<td>Oct 22, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ACT for Youth Project</td>
<td>Ryan Edwards and Stephanie Henry (2010 Youth Interns)</td>
<td>4th Annual Social Work Research Symposium, School of Social Work, York University</td>
<td>Apr 16, 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using GIS to Uncover Hidden Discrimination: A Racial Profiling Case Study in Toronto, Canada'</td>
<td>Phillip Meng (PostDoc) and Uzo Anucha</td>
<td>Annual Meeting of Association of American Geographers, Seattle</td>
<td>Apr 14, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trouble and Triumph’: Discursive Framing of Jane Finch Youth</td>
<td>Julia Janes (PhD RA)</td>
<td>5th Annual Social Work Research Symposium, School of Social Work, York University</td>
<td>Apr 29, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Engagement as a Methodological Practice: The Assets Coming Together for Youth Project</td>
<td>Uzo Anucha</td>
<td>Research Workshop: School of Nursing, York University</td>
<td>June 15, 2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### List Of Knowledge Mobilization And Communications – Other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>KMC TYPE</th>
<th>AUTHORS</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>AVAILABLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACT for Youth Project</td>
<td>Website</td>
<td>ACT Project</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td><a href="http://www.yorku.ca/act">www.yorku.ca/act</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT’s Youth Engagement Strategy</td>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>Interview with Tka</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Streetz FM 104.7, Winnipeg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION VI
CURA Performance and Evaluation

ACT’s evaluation framework monitors both the process and outcomes of our project. This evaluation process is guided by a series of questions that Finley (2003, p.294) proposes as a ‘rubric for assessment’ for participatory research initiatives:

- Is it useful to the community context?
- What voices are represented?
- Is there evidence of care between participants and researchers?
- Is there a blurring of roles (change in power dynamic)?
- Is there an experimentation of form not being limited to hegemonic research discourse?
- How did the representation create an open space for dialogue?
- Does the research provoke questions and allow for multiple meanings to be expressed?
- Does the representation connect the community and are they likely to be moved?

During the first half of ACT, our evaluation has focused on understanding ACT’s collaborative relationships. Partnership Group members completed the Partnership Self-Assessment Tool in the summer of 2010 to assess how well the collaborative processes are working, as well as to identify specific areas to focus on to make the processes better. The findings were reviewed at ACT’s Research Advisory meeting in December 2010 and at the Partnership Group meeting in April 2011. Based on the findings of the survey, the Partnership Group identified four areas that the project needed to address and some of the challenges of doing so:

- Need for increased contact between academic and community partners: one of the challenges of arranging more frequent meetings is whether Partnership Group members will have enough time to attend.
- Need for better communication among partnership group members: the expectation that our virtual network O3 will keep member up to date has not worked out as people are too busy to log on to the network. ACT continues to explore how to communicate more effectively with members who are busy.
- More community visibility for the project and the need to respond to community-issues in a timely manner: some challenges include how to differentiate how a community-based research project vs a program responds to community issues, how the project should decide when and how to respond and, what community issues the project should respond to.
- Need to link research to policy: As ACT enters the second phase, there is an acknowledgement that another working group that specifically focuses on linking the research findings to policy will need to be created. A decision about this will be made at the December 2011 Research Advisory meeting.

The Partnership Group followed up the survey with four focus groups in the summer of 2011 with youth, students, community members and academic members. The findings will be reviewed at the Research Advisory in December 2011 and Partnership Group meeting in the spring of 2012.

We evaluated the Community-based training for the first set of youth interns in 2010 and used the findings to revise the training for the second set of youth in the summer of 2011. We also completed interviews with the first set of interns and have used the findings to inform the way we will work with the second set of youth interns. The findings are described in an E-Zine on ACT’s website.

The chart on the next page summarizes our evaluation framework.
SECTION VI
Evaluation Framework

**ACT’S EVALUATION OBJECTIVES**

To understand the 'collaborative relationship’ of ACT for Youth (process evaluation questions):

- Who is involved, how are they involved and how do they experience their involvement?
- Is there an equitable process from the perspectives of students, youth, community members and academic members?
- How satisfied are members?

To understand the 'collaborative products’ of the project (outcome evaluation questions):

- What difference – changes in knowledge and research development; access and use of info – have individual members (youth, community and academic members) and organizations and community groups experienced because of the project?
- What are the knowledge generation and knowledge sharing impacts of the project?
- What outcomes have youth interns experienced?

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**EVALUATION ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERABLES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATION ACTIVITY</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partnership Members (PG) complete the web-based Partnership Self-Assessment Tool to assess how well the collaborative processes are working.</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings identify specific areas to focus on to make the processes better.</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four focus interviews with youth, students, community members and academic members on their experiences.</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background Information Form for Research Partnerships (BIFRP) completed annually by the Project Manager and shared at the PG meeting.</td>
<td>S O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate each community-based training for youth and use findings to refine next year’s training</td>
<td>S O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Most Significant Stories Interviews with each set of youth interns</td>
<td>S O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PG members complete The Community Impacts of Research Oriented Partnerships (CIROP): measures the amount of impact, if any, the project is having on PG members</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Project Manager will use the Research Contact Checklist (RCC) to document and track research-related material from the project</td>
<td>S O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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## SECTION VII

Budget Update and Justification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVIEW OF BUDGET SITUATION (MARCH 2009 – SEPTEMBER 2011)</th>
<th>FORECAST</th>
<th>ACTUAL</th>
<th>IN-KIND SUPPORT</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Personnel Costs — Student Salaries and Benefits/Stipends</strong></td>
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<td>Undergraduate</td>
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<td>Doctorate</td>
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<td>Postdoctoral Fellowship</td>
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<td>Project Manager</td>
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<td>Knowledge Mobilization and Communication Officer</td>
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<td>Salary replacement for community-based co-applicants and collaborators</td>
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<td>Youth Researchers</td>
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<td><strong>Travel Expenses</strong></td>
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<td>Applicant/Team Members - Canadian Travel</td>
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<td>Applicant/Team Members- Foreign Travel</td>
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<td>Survey</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Equipment</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Hardware</td>
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<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>7191</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
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<td>Knowledge Mobilization and Dissemination</td>
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<td>Honoraria</td>
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<td><em><em>RTS</em> In Holding</em>*</td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>60000</td>
<td>555607.74</td>
<td>496887</td>
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</table>
BUDGET REVIEW NOTES (2009 – 2011)
We have not made any significant change to our proposed budget. Where we made changes in the budget, we maintained the original intent. For example, York University provided ACT with funding ($100,000) for a two year postdoctoral fellow. We therefore used the funds we budgeted for this to support the education and training of more graduate students.

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (2011 - 2013)
We have approximately $400,000 remaining that we plan to spend on the three areas that ACT is strongly committed to: training of graduate students, building the research capacity of youth in the Jane-Finch community and mobilizing our findings to energize the community assets in the Jane-Finch community.

Over the remaining 30 months, the ACT project will spend 24 percent of our budget (about $100,000) supporting six Master’s students and six Ph.D. level students. These students will be involved with data analysis, mobilization and dissemination of findings. York University’s institutional support of Graduate Assistants will supplement these funds and allow us hire more Master’s students.

We will continue supporting the research training and capacity-building of local youth and will spend about $56,000 on this. Five youth will be hired each year as research interns over the next 30 months. During the summer of 2012 and 2013, the project will host our Community-based Research Summer Institute for 20 youth. We will also continue working with our 10-member Youth-led Committee.

We will spend about $100,000 on knowledge dissemination related activities for example, hosting a youth-led conference in 2012, an end of year conference in 2013 and supporting KMC activities to a wide array of audiences – the academic community, policy-makers, practitioners, youth, media and community stake-holders. We will publish our research findings in popular formats (community newsletters, research bulletins) and maintain the ACT webpages.

ACT will continue holding a Partnership Group meeting every year. Some of these funds will be used for project team members to attend the annual Partnership Group meetings and for project team members, project staff and students to provide workshops and attend dissemination events. Also included within our dissemination budget is the salary for a part-time Communication Assistant.

We will spend about $100,000 on a full-time Project Manager who will coordinate ACT’s multi-sectoral alliances, support our research capacity building with youth, and participate in our community engagement activities.