



COALITION ON RICHER DIVERSITY (CORD)
Umbrella Organization Newfoundland and Labrador

Diversity Winter Event (DWE) - Report

What I liked most about the meeting was the atmosphere of positivity and cooperation plus the cooperative, fun element

DWE participant

Conference Summary

The Coalition on Richer Diversity (CORD) hosted a Diversity Winter Event (DWE) to offer members of the community an opportunity to find out all about CORD and provide a chance to engage in active networking, to talk about the services available, and to learn about the different visions of diversity. CORD's communication approach for all our meetings is based in the **Appreciative Approach** method (for more information: check out <http://www.cancord.org>)

The DWE was offered twice on Friday January 18th, 2008 and Saturday January 19th to make it more convenient for participants to attend. This resulted in a diverse attendance between the two days.

Attendance Friday: 42

Attendance Saturday: 46

Each day began with Steering Committee member (SCM) Terry Rielly presenting an "Icebreaker" entitled 'How many Nations?' which encouraged mingling and dialogue among the participants to find out how many cultural elements are present in each of us. Attendees found this icebreaker exercise both surprising and informative.

After a short introduction from each DWE participant stating their name, why they were attending and their favourite food, all viewed the first ("Home and Native Land") of 3 short films chosen from Radio-Canada's Digital Diversity Competition where young Canadians aged 18 to 35 submitted short films dealing with diversity and immigration issues.

To view the films, visit: <http://www.radio-canada.ca/rci/rci/en/concours.asp>

Next, Steering Committee member (SCM) Barbara Burnaby gave a brief overview on CORD's formation. That was followed by SCMs Maria Callahan and Fred Eckert-Maret who gave a presentation and discussion about what CORD has been doing over the past few months, what CORD has heard, the development of the Solution Groups and where CORD plans to go from here. The presenters touched on the various definitions that make up CORD. This included immigration statistics as they applied to NL as well as definitions of the various components which included CORD's mission, vision, principles and policies. They also explained what CORD has been doing, CORD's development of the Solutions Groups and plans for the future.

For details see PowerPoint slides on our website www.cancord.org.

After a short refreshment/networking break the DWE continued with a 30 minute exercise. Attendees were asked to dream about this question: *If CORD is successful, what would Newfoundland & Labrador look like in 10 years?* To make this more workable, participants were divided into small groups and their way of expressing their dreams was through DRAWING each group's vision and then reporting back. To view the outcome, go to CORD's website: <http://www.cancord.org>

Enthusiasm of all group members is EVIDENT & CONTAGIOUS. Keep up the great work!

DWE participant

After enjoying a healthy lunch together, SCM Terry Rielly put forward another *icebreaker* in the form of a participatory 'garden song' to demonstrate through song and dance a celebration of diversity and growth.

This was followed by another short film "Abdallah of Mile End" from Radio-Canada's young film makers' competition.

The afternoon continued with an interactive consultation method entitled **World Café**, an exercise in two parts.

It must be pointed out that around the room six posters were on display representing CORD's six Solutions Groups. Each Solutions Group poster showing the main issues as identified by the **focus groups** which had met in June 2007.

Each of the six posters had a specific focus:

- Education
- Health
- Solutions Structuring
- Employment
- Youth
- Community

The first 20 minutes of the **World Café** exercise began by suggesting that participants go to the Solutions group that interested them most – that the participant had the greatest affinity for – and discuss as a group. They could then make additions to the definitions and the issues that were listed on the poster. This exercise was repeated (again 20 minutes) by asking participant to go through the same process with their second Solutions Group choice.

The exercise ended with a **Gallery Walk & Break** (20 minutes). Participants were asked to walk around to all of the other Solutions Group definitions, read them over and add to them if they so wished

After viewing the final short film ("Fruit Salad"), participants were asked to engage in a **dot-mocracy** exercise, a tour of the World Café placing four stickers on what each participant felt was the most important issue/issues. It was up to each participant how and where to place their stickers: spread them around or put them all on one issue.

For more information about World Café: <http://www.theworldcafe.com/what.htm>

I liked the interactions and friendly atmosphere, the participatory structure of the event and meeting people, looking for solutions to issues

DWE participant

Outcomes of the World Café exercise:

Friday's DWE attendees identified these as **top priority** issues:

1. 11 Stickers – Acknowledge those who came and stayed. What worked for them?
2. 8 Stickers – A pairing program for young newcomers & NLers to learn about St. John's, about cultures, builds on *ANC Host Program*, promote this in schools
3. 7 Stickers – Provide all youth with a space where all cultures can interact (bring NLers & newcomers together – youth)
4. 5 Stickers –
CORD should work with all organizations which have small employment programs
Neighbourhood approach: how can we reach people where they live?
Health care services need appropriate resources for immigrant clients with specific health needs

Saturday's DWE attendees identified these as **top priority** issues:

1. 14 Stickers – Retention is a by-product of mentoring, mediation, advocacy and support
2. 13 Stickers – Credential Recognition: People come to Canada & their credentials are not recognized
3. 9 Stickers – Cultural Sensitivity & Health: Advocate for more cultural sensitivity & education in Health profession
4. 6 Stickers – Buddy Program: Conversation partners with entire community
Red Tape: eliminate barriers in Government to employment
Education: other cultures: Need education about other cultures in school curriculum (not just white Canadian)

I enjoyed the diverse group of people who attended and the positive energy they all brought; the event was very interesting! Well built. BRAVO

DWE participant