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***REPORT OF THE EVALUATION OF "HOMEGROUND":
THE DOWNTOWN EAST SIDE WINTER FESTIVAL FOR THE HOMELESS AND
UNDER HOUSED: FEBRUARY 20-22, 2009***



*Prepared and Presented by
CS/RESORS Consulting, Ltd.
Marylee Stephenson, Ph.D., Evaluator
April 14, 2009
resors@axion.net
ph. 778-846-3554*

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I. CONTEXT OF THE EVALUATION

The City of Vancouver contributed \$80,000 to the Carnegie Centre to create and implement an innovative Downtown Eastside Winter Festival for the Homeless and Under-housed. The Carnegie Centre partnered directly with the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House, as well as a number of other associated neighbourhood organizations to deliver a three day festival, entitled "*Homeground.*"

A. Objectives

The stated objectives for the *Homeground* event are contained in project documents, and are as follows:

[When] Three days in February 2009 seven to ten days in February 2010, ongoing in the following years

The purpose of the Winter Festival is to facilitate a creative, mutually supportive event for homeless and under housed DTES residents, in the month of February including during the period of the 2010 Olympics, by providing a refuge and a comfort zone where participants can receive sustenance and be entertained or take part in community based art and music activities. It is very likely that DTES residents will experience some discomfort during this period due to increased media scrutiny and/or tourist curiosity as well as the great increase in traffic and visitors in the Neighbourhood. The Winter Festival hopes to mitigate that discomfort and provide an inclusive atmosphere based in community participation.

Continuous, meaningful community consultation will be at the organizational heart of the Festival, reflecting the creative input of all segments of the low income community including sex workers, the disabled, those struggling with addictions and those of aboriginal and other ancestries. 2009 Festival will be a three day pilot festival that we can learn from, in preparation for a bigger festival in 2010. If it proves to be the successful expression of community good will which we anticipate, the Winter Festival might well become an annual event. [emphasis, the evaluator's]

The core of the event was based on four key elements for bringing a community together – consultation, food, local entertainment, and a substantial involvement of local volunteers. Again turning to the project description, the following show how these elements were intended to operate,

to achieve the *Homeground* goals. We find these connections being made between goals and actions:

- Carnegie Community Centre and the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House, with associate community groups, will work together to provide the festival. Carnegie will provide and oversee the site and all equipment and the DTES *Neighbourhood* House will oversee the entertainment programming and food delivery.
- The site will consist of two large tents with seating and heat and light capacity set up on Dunlevy Street near Oppenheimer Park for three days in February 2009 and seven to ten days in February 2010. The shorter three day event in 2009 will provide an opportunity to plan the logistics for the longer event in 2010, for instance make an estimate of numbers and response to activities etc.
- One tent will be a source of nutritious food and beverage for participants and one tent for art activities and entertainment. There will be opportunities for local performers to contribute as well as some surprise performances by friends of the neighbourhood. Art activities could include painting, carving etc.

B. Implementation Processes

There was a management team of the Director and Assistant Director from Carnegie Centre and the Executive Director from Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House (DTES-NH) as well as a number of coordinators. These included an event coordinator, food coordinator, volunteer coordinator, music/technical production coordinator, and site coordinator. Carnegie Centre also utilized its Outreach workers to assist any participants in meeting their information or services needs. In all, some 202 individuals volunteered, carrying out tasks as varied as hair cutting, assistance with finding a place to sleep for the night and more stable housing if possible, life skills, and art work with children and adults. The volunteers had their food provided at the nearby DTES-NH, which gave them a quiet place to re-charge and share information and advice about their work.

There was some transferability of skills learned by the security/traffic control persons, who were local residents, in that their training for this work will now allow them to apply for similar, paid work in other settings needing their new skills. One of the distinctive elements of the event was that there were different coloured toques handed out to various categories of volunteer – so that they could be readily identified as security, or food services, etc. The toques had *Homeground* embroidered on them and seemed to be treasured legacies of the event.

The Park itself had small tents for others of the various functions and services for participants – for the art work, an open-air haircutting venue, a media tent, and an information tent. People would circulate from tent to tent or activity to activity throughout the Park. There was an active clean-up team. There were also some services, such as physical care services (foot care, manicures and pedicures), offered in nearby buildings of community partners. There was a full day-by-day agenda, with flyers of the locations of all events being handed out throughout the event. It included meal times and was posted in a number of places throughout the Park.

The goal for the meals was to serve some 1000 people. There were nine sittings each day, starting with a breakfast one at 8 a.m. and running hourly through the afternoon. Over the duration of the event, there were three breakfasts, three lunches and four suppers. People had to line up for tickets to the meals, with volunteers in charge of this function. The food tent housed 160 people, and the food was brought to the table to each person by volunteers – rather than having a cafeteria-type lineup. The food preparation was also by volunteers, including a Sikh youth group that specializes in providing free food services for those in need. They provided each of the evening meals. The food was plentiful and often people were able to have second services.

The music tent was a busy one, with a rotation of local musicians, mostly of the rhythm and blues style. However, the entertainment was varied by a long set by a pair from the Opera Vancouver, with a woman soloist and male keyboard player, who also took some time to explain what each of the pieces were about. This distinctive and highly professional performance was greeted with the same respectful attention and enthusiastic applause as were given to all other groups.

II. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation methodology was a standard one, but one that called for considerable flexibility on the part of the evaluator and the Management Team, because of the complexity of the *Homeground* event itself, and the exceedingly small budget and rather limited timeframe for the evaluation as a whole. However, there were several very informative consultations between the Management Team and the evaluator, as the evaluation got underway. This included the presentation by the evaluator of a proposed methodology and work plan, which was designed to be as comprehensive and balanced as possible, given the modest scope of the evaluation resources.

The basic principle of the evaluation was the use of “triangulation” or the use of “multiple lines of evidence.”¹ What this means is that the key evaluation questions are explored by drawing on the full range of those participants involved, and any backup documentation for the event. Thus, there can be a comprehensive, balanced picture developed of what went on, what worked, what didn’t, and what could be done in future to ensure that sponsor goals are met.

The data sources and data collection strategies included:

DATA SOURCE	DATA COLLECTION STRATEGY
<i>Homeground</i> Management Team	Individual interviews with Carnegie and DTES-NH Executive Directors Focus groups with event coordination team members (two separate groups, 10 individuals in all) post-event, included both EDs)
Volunteers	In focus group, 6 – varied functions -- post-event

¹ Denzin, N.K., *The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods*, 1978, as quoted in Patton, M.Q., *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*, Sage Publications, 1980, p.187

Participant Surveys – 40 respondents (generally reflecting gender distribution – more men than women participants, considerable age range, some self-identified as Aboriginal)	Filled out during the event by evaluator who asked the questions of participants at the food tent – the most stable and quiet place, with a surface for writing
The <i>Homeground</i> event itself	Participant observation by evaluator for first two days of the event – there for a number of hours, circulating, chatting, visiting in main and subsidiary tents. Collecting any information sheets being handed out.
Event records – like volunteer usage and meal usage, records kept by relevant management team member	Provided by volunteer coordinator to evaluator – post-event

The data analysis consisted of content analysis of the observations and interviews – exploring the key evaluation questions of what worked well and what could be improved in the future. There were comparisons made within a given respondent category (like, within management and staff) and across categories, like how participants might view a service compared to how staff or volunteers might. There is very modest statistical description of the participant survey data, on what they liked, what they attended, and then their suggestions were counted as well. This will be presented in table form later.

III. EVALUATION FINDINGS

The presentation of evaluation findings will have two main streams: A) a “checklist” of the combined inputs and outcomes that were proposed for *Homeground* in the funding application and related documents; and B) the perspectives of the full range of those interviewed, in whatever format, about their experiences of *Homeground*. Some were a part of it from the beginning, as planners and managers, and some were volunteers, and some were participants, interviewed on-site in the first or second day of the event. It is from these latter types of data – the interviews and survey sheet, that the evaluation could focus on what respondents felt worked well for the event and what they believe could be changed to improve event processes and content when it is held again – for the 10 days during the Olympics.

A. Homebound Implementation: What was expected and did it take place?

Projected Input	Projected outcome (from funding application and related documents)	Actual implementation
3 day event, from 11 a.m. to 8 pm.	Activities throughout this time	Time was fully utilized.
Hiring of an Event Coordinator, and coordinators in Food provision, Volunteer Oversight, Site Coordination, Entertainment Programming, and Technical Production.	Effective and efficient procedures for implementation of the event.	All positions filled and managed by the EDs from Carnegie and DTES-NH.

Projected Input	Projected outcome (from funding application and related documents)	Actual implementation
3-4 art and music workshops for up to twelve participants each, designed with community input, will be provided in the weeks and months leading up to the events with opportunities to showcase the results at the festival.	Opportunities for creative expression will be available to residents in the weeks and months leading up to the events.	There was not pre-event workshop delivery. However, the main opportunities for artistic expression were available at the arts location during the event. An Aboriginal artist was one of the leaders, and he received very positive feedback. There was engagement of children also, through face-painting.
...capacity for 160 at a time in the food tent Water freely available 1000 meals served per day, 3000 in total	A large number of community members will have adequate food served in a dignified setting at a time during the winter when the food lines are traditionally very long.	This was achieved through a system of providing 9 servings a day, with tickets being used to ensure an orderly process. The food was served to people already seated, rather than having a cafeteria-like line. Participants were frequently heard to say that appreciated this form of service. In all, 1600 meals were served per day
9 hours of continuous activities and entertainment from 11:00 AM to 8:PM by local and visiting musicians and storytellers	[not stated in the project description]	This occurred, with a wide range of musical talent, from R and B to City Opera. The tent was a place where people could sit for long periods of time, chat with friends, and listen to music. It was a warm and comfortable atmosphere, in the evaluator's view, with a very appreciative and well-behaved audience.
--Five mentor ships in Event coordination established for community --50 volunteers per day working in five hour shifts A team of 10 Community guardians provide security under the direction of the Carnegie Outreach Team	Event coordination mentorships will build the community skills that could create sustainability for this event. Volunteers and community guardians will acquire work experience that may help them to find further employment.	The mentorships were established and their new skills could be drawn upon as a core for the next event. There were 205 volunteers, allocated over the 3 days, where needed. There were 947 individual shifts. Volunteers received a \$1 an hour honorarium. The guardians received training in "Level 1" traffic and crowd control and this is a transferable skill. All were engaging in tasks that would serve them for finding various "entry level" jobs – and they would now have references from the Coordinator.
Daily service, health and shelter referral for homeless individuals	To connect community members to these services in the immediate area whenever possible.	This was provided by Outreach workers, located near the Park itself

Projected Input	Projected outcome (from funding application and related documents)	Actual implementation
Anecdotal evidence from a similar winter festival in Montreal suggests that having food and comfort available for several days in a row can give people the opportunity to relax and make plans for the future. This kind of planning is difficult when an individual is entirely focused on survival.	Evaluator's comments: while this evaluation could not go into the depth necessary to confirm this in a rigorous manner – this would take much more research on the spot and follow-up research months later, it did appear that the participants definitely were relaxed, did not feel rushed, could move freely and at their own pace from place to place for information or entertainment or food. There were many sources of information and assistance for them. Thus, it may be assumed that the conditions were created for consultation with sources of information, for planning – because these three days were not focused on sheer survival. Food, space, shelter, cultural activities, toilets, water – all were there for free and easily accessed.	

Thus, it seems clear from the program documents and on-site participatory observations of the evaluator that the inputs were implemented and the anticipated outcomes of the *Homeground* event were fully achieved. The food services in fact exceeded projected outcomes by a considerable margin.

B. Telling The Story: The *Homeground* Outcomes from the Perspectives of Management, Staff, Participants and Volunteers --What Worked, What Should be Changed for the Future

This section begins with the perspectives of staff and volunteers on the site itself – Oppenheimer Park, in the Downtown Eastside. This will be followed by a brief description of what was learned about the housing situation of participants, and then turns to the perspectives on the food tent, entertainment, and volunteering.

1. The *Homeground* Site – the Foundation of the Event

Oppenheimer Park is a park of .98 hectares, and it has a long history as a focal point of community-based recreation and celebrations, having been created in 1898. The Park's features include many shaded seating areas, a field house for staff, a children's playground, shuffleboard, basketball courts, softball pitch and open grassy areas. There are washrooms and for *Homeground* there were a large number of portable toilets added. The Park is overseen by an impressive totem pole in the southeast quarter.

The food and entertainment tents were at the western end of the Park, as was the information tent and the place where the tickets for meals were distributed.

The management team, including the various coordinators, were overall very pleased with the Park as a venue. They also were very grateful that the weather was good, because otherwise the Park can become very muddy indeed.

They felt the physical set up was excellent. This included the fact that the tents were bright and airy, with large windows. They found the logistics of pickup of garbage from the food tent to be

very efficient, as was other cleanup. The entertainment tent was especially noted, with a team member describing it as:

The entertainment tent set up beautifully, the night lighting was beautiful. It is a much more festive party atmosphere than we have at [respondent's organization building]. People get a chance to be in a new environment—lights and gels.

The management team emphasized the importance of the security that was set up. The Site Coordinator and some other team members had recruited security staff for weeks beforehand, advertising and networking informally with their “sister” service organizations in the area. The security staff were paid \$10 an hour, and they had a training period before the event. The security staff were very proud of their new skills in dealing with people, maintaining entry and exit to the tents, and general traffic control. They had two-way communication systems and wore their specially coloured toques with pride (different colour toques were used to readily identify different categories of paid staff or volunteers). The recruitment went slowly and the attrition rate before the event was high, but staff feel they have a better idea now of how to reach out to people and also how to be able to identify those who are likely to stay with the job throughout. Since the days could run as much as 12 hours long, from set-up to clearing the area, being on security was quite a demanding function.

The closing time of 8 pm was seen as appropriate. There were no difficulties in moving people along, and as one coordinator said, “it was a long enough day,” and another said, “people were satisfied, morning, noon, and night, so they were ok with that [closing time].

Because this whole event was new to everyone, there were a number of lessons learned for next year. These included:

- Start planning even earlier
- Bring in the community on a wider basis, by having workshops months ahead, telling people what *Homeground* is, and how they can get involved. This strengthens communication and partnering with “sister” organizations in the area.
- Be sure to know who is handling the set up of tents, especially the electronics for entertainment, and the sources of power for cooking.
- Improve signage – larger size and in several languages
- Start with a larger pool of potential security people, to take into account high attrition rates – not coming for training or not showing up or staying at the site.
- Improve the ground surfaces, so that people in wheelchairs can move more easily and safely.
- In the recruitment and training, be very clear that on-site security and traffic control is a paid job, with expectations for dependability (showing up on time, staying the full shift), for learning how to deal with difficult situations, and knowing when to call on others for assistance.

- Try to find a way to be more supportive of multi-barriered security on-site staff, so that they will complete the training and be there for the whole event – so that they can transfer these skills to other community events that partner agencies may hold.
- Clarify the “lines of authority” between the two sponsoring groups, to know whose job it is to assure that the security staff are performing as expected
- Also be sure that payment systems are coordinated – some sister organizations may pay their clients to come and help and they may also be paid by the event sponsors – so a clear understanding and consistent approach should be worked out.
- Have all of the “off-site” activities on-site next year. The one that might have to be off-site is Life Skills, because it is already in an established location, but otherwise have the activities on-site (as was the hair-cutting – a very popular service).
- Have a First Aid person on site, just in case.
- Have a “security protocol” for all volunteers so they will know when and how to call on security if difficulties arise.

2. The Housing Situation of Participants

In that the DTES is a place with very high homelessness rates, with many people moving in and out of homelessness (“at risk of homelessness,” “near-homeless”), it was important to the event sponsors and funders to know whether they were in fact drawing in those who might otherwise feel they could not be a part of a community-based event. The 40 participants interviewed were asked where they “mostly” slept over the past week. It was not always clear what was meant in their responses and the sensitivity of the issue meant that the evaluator did not press for details. Thus it was difficult at times to know if the “home” was subsidized or simply rented. The survey showed:

Type of Housing	Number of Respondents	% of the 40 Respondents
Rental, usually SROs or equivalent – non-subsidized	19	47.5
Shelter	5	12.5
Outdoors	3	7.5
Subsidized/supportive housing	11	27.5
Couch surfing	2	5.0
Totals	40	100%

Even with the ambiguity of responses at times, the findings of the survey show that the majority of these respondents do fit the profile of marginally housed individuals that are disproportionately found in the DTES. Thus, this indicates that the goals of Homebound serving the local community were indeed being met.

3. Food Services

The food service was one of the two main components of *Homeground*, and as such was a major focal point of activity for staff, volunteers, and community participants. The extent of the service has been described above, but the perceptions of management, staff, and participants are of considerable importance.

Management team, staff, and volunteers were all very positive about the food service – from the quality of the food, to the venue, to the mode of service. Along with the goal of serving 1000 people per day, which was exceeded by there being 1600 people being served, there was the goal to provide food that was more appealing and different from the meals that participants were used to receiving at the various food services in community-based sources, such as shelters, or faith-based organizations.

The entire budget for food was \$10,000. Three local food suppliers (a café, church, and drop-in centre) were contracted to provide the breakfasts and lunches. The evening meals were provided free by the Guru Nanak youth group. The menus were varied each day, and the addition of East Indian food was also distinctive. It was reported by several staff that this type of food initially had not been well-received, at earlier events, but that now the community had adapted to it and welcomed it.

There was a food services Coordinator who had a great deal of experience in this kind of activity, and there was a team working directly with the coordinator to make sure everything was working out at all times as it should be. The Coordinator had begun planning well before Christmas, and the food buying and delivery worked smoothly at the time of the event. The contracted services and the Guru Nanak group prepared the food on the site.

All respondents, with one exception, found the quality of the food to be very high, the service venue to be a good one, and the process of using tickets and serving the food directly to people when they were seated to work out very well. Participants enjoyed being served and the volunteers enjoyed their role in bringing good food to their community members. The one exception felt that they could get macaroni at a shelter, and that all the food should be different at an event such as *Homeground*.

It should be noted that the volunteers had their own place for eating, at a room in the DTES Neighbourhood House. This was reported as working out very well. It could get hectic at times, but the food was prepared right there, and the volunteers enjoyed having their own place for respite, sharing experiences, and eating food available just for them. As three of the management team said,

- *It was very respectful of them [the volunteers] to have a separate place to eat and they were treated as though they were very special, and could see that this was a really good thing.*
- *They really appreciated it...they loved the place to rest. Some were there [on site] for 10 to 12 hours, and they needed a place to get away.*

→ *The volunteer food costs \$700, and that is very little per person – very hearty meals for three days, people had this to eat, and this is very good.*

The brief interviews with participants showed a similarly positive response to the food services. They were asked to rank their satisfaction with the food, with 5 being very good, 3 being “ok” and 1 being not good at all. Some said that 5 was not large enough and answered 6. There were responses from 35 of the 40 of those surveyed (a few of the 40 had not yet had time to use the food services). The findings were:

Food Rating on a scale from 1 - 5	#	%
0	1	2.86
1	3	8.57
3	4	11.43
4	7	20.00
4.5	1	2.86
5	17	48.57
5+	2	5.71
Total	35	100

If 5+ is treated as 6 then the average rating for those using food services is 4.13.

Of course, it is necessary to be cautious in generalizing from this small a number of respondents to the participants as a whole, but the consistency of the responses is reassuring that it probably reflects the wider response.

Again, given the fact that this is a pilot event, the lessons learned are very important to identify. In the case of the food services, the themes were:

- Plan even earlier, to reduce strains of last-minute challenges, decision-making, etc.
- Seek food contributions from local food suppliers – whether wholesale or retail outlets, cafes, restaurants. This lowers cost and increases awareness in the larger community of the needs of the local area, its diversity, and the work that organizations are doing there.
- Have more food for lunches and breakfasts in particular, because on the first two days it was not possible to meet the full demand.
- Work out a better way of controlling entry – in that people did not have to stand in line once they got their tickets, but “local culture” is one of standing in line, so people would do this when they could have just taken their ticket and gone to the music tent or other activities until their seating time came up.

- Also, improve the skills of volunteers to move people out of the food tent once they have finished, to make room for others (and to avoid people having more servings than allocated, though there were times when second helpings were possible).
- Consider having a “canteen” with coffee and muffins, so people can have this as they attend events or wait for their food serving.
- Recognize that this three-day event was very demanding in terms of organization, staffing and volunteer effort and that for a 10-day event, the tasks and need for food resources will increase dramatically. Thus planning for this, including being aware of fatigue on the part of all, must be taken into account.

In sum, the food service planning, food delivery and preparation on-site, service to participants, and food quality and appeal were all positive. The lessons learned are essentially about doing the same thing, only more efficiently and on a larger scale, not about what went wrong – because it appears that little if anything did go wrong.

4. Entertainment: Concert Tent and Other On-site Arts Activities

The other main component of *Homeground* was a very busy and complex undertaking, and it centred on the music tent. There were musicians throughout each day, and there were always people in the tents. There was movement in and out regularly, without a sense of a beginning and end to a specific act during the day, but there was a specific “evening concert” each night. The sound system was a good one, and there were security people by it at all times. One item was taken, but returned later.

Since this was quite new to many of the management/staff, they realized they had not been able to envision what it could be like, and were very pleasantly surprised by what was created. As two of these respondents noted:

- *I had no visual memory of such a tent – I saw it as jammed. And instead the tents were phenomenally beautiful – the skylights, and all lit up so beautifully. It was so welcoming, so dignified. The whole thing was set up [so well that] it didn't feel poor.*
- *Yes, it was the same musicians [that are well-known in the community], but there was a different feeling, and it has to do with the setup – “this is classy, this is a show.”*

The participants were asked to rate the music/entertainment and the findings are:

Entertainment Rating on a scale from 1 - 5	#	%
3	1	6.67
4	1	6.67
5	12	80.0
5+	1	6.67
Total	15*	100

*There were fewer participants who had had a chance to go to the entertainment tent, because the interviews took place from about 11 to 3 in the afternoon and the respondents tended to have recently arrived, and had first been engaged with food services.

Again, a few participants gave a rating of 5+, and 5+ is treated as 6 then the average rating for those using the entertainment is 4.87

As for lessons learned about the entertainment component of *Homeground*, the themes were

- Earlier planning,
- More variety of musicians,
- Having a way to allow some food in the tent (coffee).
- Having a Master of Ceremonies
- Have people at the door to welcome audience members
- Have volunteers go from person to person and “schmooze” with them
- Continue the practice of paying the musicians immediately, with documentation – to keep the professional sense of the music activities.
- Consider having places with board games, etc. that people can use when not eating or in the entertainment tent as such.

As for the other arts events, which include everything from an informal drawing workshop led by a local Aboriginal artist, to face-painting, drumming, and banner-making, these were reported as working very well. Parents and children would join in a given activity, and the activities themselves were spread around the Park in smaller tents or gathering places.

Lessons learned for the other artistic components of *Homeground* included:

- Clearer identification of roles of volunteers or staff, to know who is doing what, to whom they are reporting.
- Make sure that volunteers have a protocol for who they would call if any conflicts or other difficulties arose among participants at an activity.
- Have more staff/volunteers, and have “roving” positions established.

Thus, the other artistic activities did work well, but given the diversity of them, the earlier planning and incorporation of more staff/volunteers will be important.

5. Volunteers

Volunteers were an essential part of *Homeground* for several reasons. One is, of course, the need for human resources, unpaid or paid by modest "honorarium" to carry out such a large undertaking. Another is that the event was dedicated to inclusion of as many community members as possible, and volunteers are a key way of achieving this. Management and staff were asked about how the recruitment and deployment of volunteers worked, and the lessons they learned for the next time. A small number of volunteers were also interviewed about their experience, a few weeks later, at the DTES Neighbourhood House.

For management and staff, there was overall satisfaction with the incorporation of volunteers into *Homeground*, in every aspect of it. The records kept by the volunteer management showed that the vast majority of volunteers were residents of the area. The results of the data collected are:

Day	Friday February 20 th	Saturday February 21 st	Sunday February 22 nd	Totals
Amount paid \$1 per hr	\$205	\$312	\$408	\$925
# of Volunteers	54	76	72	202
# of Out of Neighbourhood Volunteers	5	16	5	26
# of Shifts	74	132	141	347

With just 26 volunteers residing outside the area, this was seen as a clear signal that the goal of *Homeground* to be a true community-based event was met. It is also worth noting the large number of shifts (4 hours each) and the modest levels of expense of the volunteer component, in terms of payment to individuals. It is not usual to "pay" volunteers, but this was seen as an important sign of respect and also simply easing in a small way the financial burden that the volunteers experience in their daily life.

In the group interview with five volunteers, it was possible to go into more depth about why they had become volunteers, and whether their own personal goals had been met. There were two women, in their early 20s, and three males, ranging from about 25 to 60. They were there all three days. One was a haircutter, one worked at the information/ticket table, one was experienced in this kind of event before and was active in the setting up of the event and supporting the Volunteer Coordinator throughout, and the other was a "floater." Helping out where called upon.

The reasons for becoming a volunteer were two-fold, with respondents often listing both for themselves. One motivation was altruistic – to help out others who were going through what the volunteer had gone through before, and had now come out of that to a healthier situation. The other was to be a part of a positive, healthy activity in itself.

Typical quotes of the altruistic motivation goal of being a volunteer are:

- *I had everything as a child, I moved here, lost my job and ended up on the streets – met my husband and got off the streets and that is why I help those who are down on the streets, because I've been there, so I want to help them, no matter how small.*
- *I was in the same boat when I was 18, out on the streets – and I want to get to meet new people and try to help them.*

For the goal of being an integral part of a healthy environment, the quotes are:

- *It's the health and happiness I see stemming from here. I can't help but help to see it grow. [the staff] are the driving force.*
- *Same here – for over 50 years, this is the first time I've volunteered, the first one [event] that is doing what it says it is doing. They don't judge you as long as you are not disturbing other people's space – it is totally non-confrontational.*

All of these respondents would gladly volunteer again. They felt good about what they did and would want to be a part of it again. Typical quotes are:

- *Yes, because there is still health and happiness coming from this organization and I can't help wanting to be a part of it. All my relations – "cookschum" – Everything I do is for all my relations, not just my people, not just for me, but all my relations.*
- *Ditto- I just want to be part of something that's positive and I spent too many years on the dark side, and it's a little nicer on this side of the fence.*
- *Definitely, helping a lot of people out, and helping the homeless on the streets, bringing them in – giving them food – they definitely need help.*
- *Most definitely – I enjoyed what I did, making people smile. Even if it was for the whole weekend and more hours than I'd thought it would be – and there was the honorarium, so it helped my kids. But it was the smiles of people – that was enough.....*

These comments reflect the key elements of both the goals and benefits of volunteering, from the perspective of a volunteer. They help others and by doing so, help themselves – and in this case it increases the sense of belonging to their community, from a group that has been severely marginalized much of their lives. Thus, the *Homeground* goal of community inclusion is also being met, through the volunteer component of the endeavour as a whole.

As for lessons learned about the incorporation of volunteers, these have been noted in the sections above, because of how integral volunteers are to *Homeground* as a whole. Thus, even earlier planning, clear identification of roles, more orientation to the various roles and tasks – all would apply.

IV. EVALUATION CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION

It is clear that the *Homeground* initiative as a whole met and even exceeded its goals. The food, the entertainment, the related activities, the incorporation of volunteers, and the inclusion of the larger community – all have succeeded. When there were momentary difficulties, in planning or in implementation, it appeared that all parties responded quickly and positively to resolve any issues.

The partnering between Carnegie Centre and the DTES Neighbourhood House also worked well, in both the planning and implementation stages. The evaluator would like to comment appreciatively on the considerable cooperation given by both organizations to the evaluation process. This is seen as a reflection of the excellent organization of each of the two sponsoring groups and their collaborative approach to all aspects of their work related to *Homeground*.

As for recommendations for the future, these arise directly from the lessons the many respondents to the evaluation research described. None of them reflect mistakes or flaws, so much as a realization of what will be necessary if *Homeground* does indeed take place over 10 days in 2010. This will be an enormous undertaking, with the demands and challenges increasing exponentially. Therefore, in terms of recommendations, the evaluation will address this issue most of all.

It is recommended that:

- Planning for next year begin now (and it already has begun, at least informally); this would include having:
 - A designated event planner – as done before
 - Regular planning meetings, in response to the needs as identified by the event planner
 - A realistic budgetary framework upon which to base planning
- Continuing the use of Coordinators for the various key functions of the event (food, entertainment, volunteers, site management, etc.)
- Expanding the use of sister organizations for providing part of the programming activities – whether on-site or in these organization's own facilities
- Drawing upon other additional food resources, as "sponsors" – with attendant recognition given in all communications for their donations
 - The same for sponsors of equipment, arts supplies, games, etc.
- Expanding the variety of music and arts activities – bearing in mind the difficulties that arise for a supplying this for 10 days.
- Develop a communications/marketing plan for the 2010 event. Note that this may require a Coordinator position.
 - The Plan will address such issues as: bringing in more community partners to help sustain activities for the 10 days, bringing more sponsors for food, supplies, equipment, publicity itself, etc.

- Include an evaluation plan, both for any funding applications and to ensure that the 10 day event is evaluated -- for accountability purposes and for lessons learned from it.

This concludes the evaluation of the *Homeground* event. The evaluator would like again to thank all of those who contributed to the evaluation research, and to express appreciation for the opportunity of being a part, even if at arm's length, of this most innovative initiative.

APPENDIX – INTERVIEW GUIDES

Interview Guide for Homebound Festival Organizers

Interview Guide for Volunteers

Interview Guide for Attendees

Interview Guide for Homebound Festival Organizers

Respondent:

Date:

Interviewer:

PERSON AND RESPONSIBILITY AREA	WORKED	DIDN'T WORK SO WELL	SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT YEAR
PLANNING/PARTNERING			
FOOD			
ENTERTAINMENT			
OUTREACH SERVICES			
VOLUNTEERS			
SITE AND SITE MANAGEMENT/SECURITY			
RELATIONSHIP WITH COMMUNITY/NEIGHBOURHOOD			
OTHER			

Interview Guide for Volunteers

Interviewer: Time: Location

[ensure confidentiality, answer any questions about the evaluation – be clear that the individuals are not being evaluated—and that reporting is done using generalized statements.]

I would like to use a name to talk with you, would you mind giving me a first name we can use for this talk?

Number in group

Names/gender

1. Would you tell me what your responsibilities were during Homeground?

Name	Responsibilities

2. Why did you decide to become a volunteer?

Name	Reason

3. Looking back over your experience, how well would you say your goals for being a volunteer were met?

If we used a scale of 5 to 1, with 5 being very well, and 3 being ok, with 1 being not at all well, where would you place how well your goals were met? And why do you say this?

Person	How well goals met –scale	Reasons

4. How easy did you find it to learn about what you were supposed to be doing as a volunteer? And would you tell me why you say this?

Name	How easy—and why/why not

5. When you were on the site, what was the best part of being a volunteer?

Name	Best part

6. When you were being a volunteer, did you run into any difficulties, and if so, what were they?

Name	Difficulties

7. How were these difficulties handled?

Name	How handled

8. If this kind of event were to be held this time next year, do you have any suggestions about how the volunteer experience could be improved?

Name	Suggestions

9. Would you want to be a volunteer again? And why do you say this?

Name	Y	N	Not sure	Reason

Thank you for your time and thoughts!

Marylee Stephenson, Ph.D. CS/RESORS Consulting, Ltd. 778-846-3554

Interview Guide for Attendees

HomeGround Evaluation: What's good, what could we have done better? (assure confidentiality)

Carnegie Community Centre & the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House (check to make sure they have not been interviewed by us before)

HG Interviewer _____ HG Location of Interview: (Food_____ Entertainment_____) Other_____ Page ____ of ____ used

Use new row for each person being interviewed, and number that row – give date and time also	Gender				Did you eat HG food? (If Yes: How many times? Or No)	Rate Food: 5-1, with 5 = best 1= not good 0 = no opinion	Attended Entertainment/art?			Rate entertainment: 5-1 with 5 = best 1 –not good 0 = no opinion	What time did you come here today?	How many days have you come here?	Over the last week, where did you spend most nights? (quote <u>exactly</u> what people say)	If we put on Homeground again, at this time of year, what could we do to make it better?
	M	F	T S	T G			No	Yes	If Yes, which ones					
#1-														
#2														
#3														
#4														