

Collaboration Stars and Stories from the Flood of 2013:

Learnings and Insights from the Homeless-Serving Sector

February 2013



Prepared for:



Prepared by:

Elizabeth Dozois,
WORD *on the* STREET Ltd.
Calgary, Alberta

Contents

Introduction	1
The Story in Numbers.....	3
Methods	5
Scope of this Study.....	5
Findings	6
1.0 Impact.....	6
1.1 Impact to Clients.....	6
1.2 Impact to Agencies.....	10
1.3 Anticipated Longer-Term Impacts	15
2.0 Collaboration During and After the Flood	15
2.1 Collaboration within the Sector.....	16
Case Example: Collaboration within the Sector	19
2.2 Multi-Sectoral Collaboration	20
Case Example: Multi-Sectoral Collaboration	22
2.3 Funder Response	23
3.0 Challenges.....	23
3.1 Communication.....	23
3.2 Emergency Preparedness.....	24
3.3 Meeting the Needs of Specialized Populations.....	24
3.4 Funding Issues	26
3.5 Bureaucratic Issues.....	26
3.6 Managing the “Flood of Generosity”	27
4.0 Learnings	28
4.1 Emergency Preparedness.....	28
4.2 Building on What Worked.....	29
Recommendations.....	33
Recommendations for Ways to Further Strengthen Emergency Preparedness	33
Recommendations for Ways to Further Facilitate Recovery.....	34
Recommendations for Ways to Further Strengthen Collaboration in the Sector	34
Appendix.....	35

Introduction

In June 2013, Calgary experienced catastrophic flooding along the Bow and Elbow Rivers. A Local State of Emergency was declared, and 80,000 people were evacuated from their homes.¹ Included in the evacuation were approximately 2,000 of the city's most vulnerable citizens housed in shelters or treatment facilities in and around the downtown core. Unlike most evacuees, these clients had neither the means nor the connections to secure alternate accommodations. Most of them had sought shelter before the flood precisely because they had nowhere else to go.

Evacuating such a large number of vulnerable people presented enormous challenges. Among the 2,000 were women fleeing violence, people with chronic addictions, people in recovery, people with mental health issues, individuals and families who are unable to maintain stable housing, and offenders on conditional release who require additional treatment and supports. The City's reception centres (i.e., evacuation sites) could not easily accommodate these people,² and the shelters were scrambling to figure out where to go. While the flooded agencies had emergency plans in place, they had not considered a situation in which the entire downtown core would be evacuated.

We had an evacuation plan – but you never think everything in Calgary's going to be evacuated. So we'd always [thought], 'Well, if one centre is down, others are going to be able to step up.' ... In the past we've used, you know, the Stampede Grounds and the Round Up Centre in extreme emergencies – that's always the backup plan. So the uniqueness of this is everything in downtown Calgary went down.

A total of ten shelters and treatment facilities were evacuated during the flood, including:

- The Calgary Drop-In and Rehab Centre – 1000 clients
- The Salvation Army – 400 clients
- Alpha House – 172 clients
- Inn from the Cold – 113 clients
- The YWCA (Mary Dover House and the Sherriff King Emergency Shelter) – 104 clients
- The Mustard Seed – 62 clients
- Simon House – 45 clients
- Aventa Addiction Treatment for Women – 41 clients
- Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter – 29 clients
- Bedford House – 22 clients

Evacuating all of these facilities in a way that was sensitive to clients' needs required high levels of initiative, imagination, and collaboration. Shelter staff had to deal with the logistical nightmare of providing shelter, beds, food, clothing, water, medical supplies, showers, and toilets for 2,000 displaced shelter clients. They had to figure out how to transport large groups of vulnerable people out of the downtown core; how to address security concerns for women fleeing violence; how to find alternate sources of methadone for recovering addicts; how to address pushback from community members who were concerned about homeless shelters being temporarily relocated to their neighbourhood – and

¹ Estimates of evacuees were higher initially; however, CEMA has revised its estimate to 80,000. Personal communication Cara Katterhagen, Communication Strategist, CEMA, February 10, 2014.

² Alpha House and Inn from the Cold were moved out of the City's reception centres, and a number of 'shelter clients' were also removed from these sites and referred to homeless-serving agencies.

they had *hours*, not days, to figure it all out. Working together collaboratively, and buoyed by the generous support of citizens, community organizations, businesses and government, the homeless sector was able to meet the needs of Calgary's most vulnerable at a time when the city itself was vulnerable.

This report draws on interviews, focus groups and documentation to share the stories of creativity and collaboration that emerged during and after the flood. The purpose of the report is to:

1. Document the impact of the flood on the homeless sector;
2. Share stories of collaboration during and after the flood;
3. Identify challenges and learnings emerging from the crisis; and
4. Provide recommendations based on the learnings.

This report was initiated by the Calgary Action Committee on Housing and Homelessness (CACHH) in order to support the sector in building on successes and addressing any gaps that emerged during or after the flood. It is our hope that the findings in this report further strengthen a sector that has already proven itself to be resilient and resourceful in the face of adversity.

The Story in Numbers

For a quick overview of the impact of the flood and the response that was mobilized within and beyond the sector, take a look at these numbers.

1,988 Number of clients evacuated from Calgary shelters and treatment centres

1,200 Number of clients that walked across the Langevin Bridge at 7:00 am on June 21, 2013

Clients from the Drop-In Centre and Alpha House were ushered across the bridge to the Starbucks on the other side, where 40 City buses awaited to take them to temporary shelter locations.

91 Number of clients from flooded agencies housed at Fresh Start Recovery

This included: 41 clients from Aventa, 45 from Simon House, and five from the Centre of Hope. Together with staff from these agencies, and Fresh Start staff and residents, they were sitting at a cozy 186.

200 Number of volunteers in the lobby of the DI's Greenview location by 2:00 on the first day of evacuation

2 Number of 53 foot Reefer trailers filled with donated food items

The Dream Centre played a key role in collecting and distributing donations during the flood, including perishables which they stored in refrigerated trailers.

2 Number of hours to completely fill a community centre with donations

5 Number of times Alpha House clients were relocated

Alpha House was initially evacuated to the Drop-In Centre. When that facility was also evacuated, they were taken to a school, then a recreational facility, then the Max Bell Arena, and finally to the old Science Centre, where they remained until October 15.

3 Number of times Inn from the Cold clients were relocated

Originally evacuated to one of the City's reception centres, Inn from the Cold moved to two adjacent motels which they staffed 24 hours a day. However, this solution was short lived as the motels were booked for Stampede – so after five days, Inn from the Cold moved to the Marda Loop Community Centre.

3 Number of hours to completely set up a temporary shelter for 113 adults and children, including beds, bedding, food, water and hygiene supplies

When Inn from the Cold moved from Motel Village to the Marda Loop Community Centre, they were assisted by NeighbourLink and others who helped source supplies and get them set up in record time.

127 Number of days before Alpha House was back in its building

150 Number of days before Bedford House reopened

Bedford House (John Howard Society) estimates it lost about \$282,000 in earned revenue during its displacement.

6.5 Number of months that Alpha House ran its administration out of CUPS

800% Percentage by which NeighbourLink's work increased in the first three months after the flood compared to all the work done in the previous 12 months

In response to the flood, NeighbourLink extended the scope of its services to neighbouring towns and reserves in need. The demand during the first three months was intense, resulting in NeighbourLink doing 8 times the work they had done in the previous twelve.

400% Increase in demand for family-service shelters three months after the flood

The waiting list for family shelters rose from 13 families in June to 53 in September.

500 Number of Hope Hampers collaboratively assembled and delivered to flood victims

On July 17, NeighbourLink, Fresh Start, the United Way of Calgary and Area and PwC worked together to create and deliver stress relief packages to flood victims.

1 Average time in hours between sending a tweet asking for help and receiving whatever was asked for – no matter how large the request

NeighbourLink reports that the response to tweets for donations was so effective that they virtually achieved "just-in-time inventory." Dream Centre and others experienced the same level of response to requests sent out via social media.

30-70% Estimated drop in fundraising revenue in the months following the flood

Between cancelled fundraisers and public donations being diverted to the flood, many agencies experienced a drop in revenue.

Priceless Value of collaboration within and beyond the sector, during and after the flood

Methods

The findings from this report are based on interviews with representatives from 18 agencies, including homeless shelters, domestic violence shelters, and addictions treatment centres. An interview was also conducted with a manager from the Calgary Emergency Management Agency (CEMA). The interviews were conducted by the consultant, and were based on a semi-structured guide. Written notes were taken during the interviews, and excerpts were later transcribed based on audio recordings. (The interview guide and a full listing of participating agencies can be found in the Appendix on page 35).

In addition to the interviews, CACHH Sector Committees provided a key source of data for this report. Each of the nine committees was offered the opportunity to participate in the study by hosting a focus group discussion or distributing a questionnaire (see Appendix for the discussion guide and questionnaire). Five Sector Committees (Aboriginal, Addictions, Family, Immigrant, Inter-Agency) participated in a facilitated focus group session. Two others (Seniors/Special Needs and Mental Health) distributed questionnaires to their committee members. (However, the return rate was low, and only three questionnaires were completed). As well, the Women Fleeing Violence Sector Committee submitted their input via a report commissioned by the Calgary Domestic Violence Collective (CDVC) entitled *Coordinated Response to Flood Recovery: Findings and Priorities from the Community Consultation* (October 2013).

A number of documents were also reviewed for this report, including flood-related reports produced by the United Way of Calgary and Area (UWCA), the Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (CCVO) and CEMA, as well as newspaper articles and CMHC housing reports. Representatives from United Way of Calgary and Area, CEMA, and the City of Calgary's Neighbourhood and Community Services (CNS) were also consulted to provide further context.

Data were analyzed using qualitative methods: written and transcribed notes were coded, and coded blocks of narrative were then grouped into larger themes.

Scope of this Study

This study was limited to agencies and populations within Calgary. It does not provide information on the impact of the flood on surrounding towns or reserves.

Findings

1.0 Impact

With so many homeless-serving agencies located in the downtown core, the impact to the sector was extensive. Six agencies sustained damage to their facilities, and others lost thousands of dollars in food due to power outages. Two agencies were displaced for several months, creating disruptions in services and losses in earned revenue. In some cases evacuated agencies were moved several times, creating further disruption and stress for both clients and staff. The section that follows briefly outlines the impact that the flood had on both clients and agencies.

1.1 Impact to Clients

A number of informants commented on the resilience of their clients and the capacity they had to manage many of the stressors associated with the flood. One felt that, in some ways, his clients were better equipped to deal with displacement and uncertainty than many other Calgarians.

I think what's interesting to note is the resiliency that you got to witness from the families who were displaced – kind of teaching us as staff and other people going through it how to deal with this sort of a circumstance.... In some ways, [they were] better equipped than Joe Calgarian...

Despite the resilience demonstrated by many clients, a number were negatively impacted by the flood. Three themes emerged around negative impact to clients: economic impact, housing, and trauma.

1.1.1 Economic impact

Economic loss due to job disruption was a key stressor for clients, most of whom cannot afford to miss a paycheck. Several informants spoke of clients who worked in the service industry or performed janitorial duties downtown. When the core was shut down these clients were not paid, thereby further increasing their economic vulnerability. Others were unable to go to work because schools were closed and they did not have access to childcare. Still others lost jobs because the small businesses they worked for did not survive the closures associated with the flood.

Even economic ripples – sure the mainstream and the upper classes, they've all bounced back, but a lot of people didn't work during those periods. There was major ripple effects, right? There was job losses in some cases because some businesses didn't reopen after the flood – especially in our area. We had lots of service industry people who didn't work for two weeks – that's not survivable for a lot of them.

The Immigrant Sector Committee spoke of additional economic pressures for those clients who are sponsoring family members. Job disruptions or losses add an additional burden to the sponsor, especially when those being sponsored are not eligible for social assistance.

There are job loss pressures as many immigrant workers and businesses were not able to operate post-flood. Some entry level jobs have disappeared and it's not easy to find new ones due to language barriers. Also people are getting "bumped" from jobs by higher seniority employees... Immigrants who had been making progress are now back to square one.

Some clients also lost possessions during the flood. Members of the Addictions Sector Committee said that some of the clients who had been in treatment and recovery centres during the flood only found out months later that all the things they had in storage were destroyed.

Our clients that lost everything, it was really difficult to get help for them to replace it – Alberta Works gave them \$350 – but that doesn't cover everything. Red Cross would only cover to a certain amount of time and our guys didn't find out till later.

1.1.2 Housing issues

Calgary's low vacancy and high rental rates were a barrier for many individuals and families *before* the flood, and this problem was only exacerbated in the months that followed. The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) reports that the vacancy rate in Calgary dropped from an already low 1.3 per cent in October 2012 to 1.0 per cent in October 2013, and average rent for a two-bedroom apartment rose 7.2 per cent during that time.³ Low vacancy and high rental rates have kept people in shelters and transitional housing for longer periods of time compared to throughput rates before the flood. (Discussed further in 1.2.2 *Impact to Services*, below).

I think the impact for that population that we work with in shelter and housing intervention is being felt more now than it was even in those first few days of the flood. Evidenced by vacancy rates, difficulty getting affordable housing, that sort of thing.

One member of the Family Sector Committee also expressed concerns that finding placements for Calgarians displaced by the flood likely created delays for those who were already on the Calgary Housing Company's waiting list.

...you look at Calgary Housing – it was able to house all the families that were displaced, but when they housed all those families, what about the 3,000 people on their wait list? All of those ones just went on the back burner – so people who had been waiting a long time trying to get into housing got put on the back burner because those that were displaced by floods got housing.

The Women Fleeing Violence Sector Committee expressed concerns about the potential consequences of low housing stock for their clients, fearing that women will be more likely to stay in unsafe situations if they are unable to secure affordable and appropriate housing. In a report documenting the impact of the flood on women fleeing violence, service providers report a "Significant increase in number of clients attempting to flee abusive relationships who are unable to find safe, affordable, and appropriate housing. As many as 30 families competing for a single rental unit; Low vacancy rates keeps victims of violence stuck in unhealthy and unsafe housing situations."⁴

Interviewees also expressed concerns about predatory landlords, reporting increased incidents of:

- Above market costs
- Unsafe housing stock (repairs not completed after the flood)
- Theft of damage deposits

³ Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Rental Market Report, Calgary CMA. Fall 2013. <http://www.crra.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/2013-Fall-Rental-Market-Report-Calgary.pdf>

⁴ Calgary Domestic Violence Collective, *Coordinated Response to Flood Recovery: Findings and Priorities from the Community Consultation*. (October 2013), p. 1.

- Competitive bidding

Someone told me their rent was \$800 and the landlord gave them a month's notice and raised the rent to \$1800. So it was quite a jump. That client has been looking for alternative housing since August.

We're seeing different elements of [the flood] putting our clients I guess more at risk around predatory landlords or exploitative landlords – we've seen a fair amount of that. You know, people accepting damage deposits from multiple tenants and then running off with the money. ... I don't know if it's happening more, but more people have disclosed that – that we're back to competitive bidding around rental units and it's a matter of free markets for those landlords who want to exploit that, right? So we've seen those kinds of things. People who are back in buildings that have not been properly repaired – you know, where landlords have just ignored it and gone ahead and brought tenants back in knowing full well that it's not safe or that there's potential long term health risks associated – and these people don't have choice – they're not able to say 'No, I'll go find a better place.' Even people who, I mean I don't know if it's legal or not, lots of time who are displaced for an extended period like a month or more but were still required to pay rent during that time, right? These aren't people who can pay rent two places at once.

1.1.3 Trauma

Informants from multiple sectors expressed concerns about the impact of a traumatic event on a population that has already experienced considerable trauma. This apprehension took a number of different forms, including concerns that:

- The intensity of mental health issues has increased since the flood
- Increased stress could compromise the recovery process for clients in addictions treatment
- Increased stress could lead to increased rates of domestic violence and child abuse
- Aboriginal clients who already experience intergenerational trauma could be further traumatized by the flood – particularly those urban Aboriginals who lost personal belongings and those who have family on reserves that were impacted by the flood
- Seniors in the East Village, some of whom had come from shelters, may have been further traumatized by the prospect of losing their home

I'm not an expert in Post-Traumatic Stress, but in talking to other colleagues who work in counselling, they're seeing an increase in that – even among people who are very high functioning and believe themselves to be well equipped to deal with this – they're experiencing reactions that they're being blindsided by.

There were a lot of people in the East Village who were evacuated after several days of hiding out in their apartments... the people there, so many of them had come from the shelter system or had always been on the margins that my guess was ... most of them didn't want to leave their house because they had already experienced the loss of everything and they were terrified that they would lose everything again. And they were terrified that East Village's silent mission is to get the marginalized out of that community, and if they left, they'd never get back. It would be interesting to do a study on the emotional impact on them of the flood.

Others reported that their clients did not seem to be traumatized by the flood – in fact, they felt that the opportunity to focus on helping others might have had a very positive impact (see 1.1.4 *Positive Impact*, below).

A couple of informants suggested that CACHH could play a role in helping the sector assess the emotional and psychological impact of the flood on the homeless population. They are concerned that anecdotal information will not be sufficient to make a case for increased mental health supports to government and community funders.

1.1.4 Positive Impact

Clients from several addictions treatment and recovery centres volunteered to clear debris from flooded communities and help with the sorting and distribution of donations. Several informants said that volunteer activities like these might have had a positive impact on clients in recovery because it offered an opportunity for them to “*get out of themselves*,” exercise their capacities, and demonstrate their value.

It was really nice to see, you know – the clients were able to volunteer because I think that’s part of your recovery that you volunteer and you give service to the community as well as looking after self – so it was kind of nice. And they were really excited about it – to be able to go out.



Fresh Start Recovery helpers

They also had an opportunity to be identified as something other than an addict:

The best part was, when we were out on the ground, no one carried a sign around saying ‘I’m a lawyer,’ ‘I’m a drug addict.’ It was a great leveler.”

Asked whether there was an opportunity to build on this, informants said that volunteer service is already built into many of their programs.

1.2 Impact to Agencies

Agencies experienced a number of impacts related to the flood, including impacts to facilities, services, staff, and revenue. Each of these is discussed briefly below.

1.2.1 Impact to facilities

Six agencies sustained damages to their facilities during the flood, including: Alpha House, Aventa, Bedford House, The Calgary Drop-In and Rehab Centre (The DI), Salvation Army, and the YWCA. The newly launched Safe Communities Opportunity and Resource Centre (SORCe), a one-stop centre that provides housing-related programs and services was also flooded, as were other agencies that support direct service agencies (e.g., InformCalgary). In most cases, insurance will cover the damages. However, Alpha House did not have flood insurance, and had to raise significant funds to restore the building.

Well, the river ran through our agency, and we lost all of our contents – some of the second floor – there was some furniture we salvaged, but a lot of the furniture on the second floor,



because of the humidity, was destroyed. And our facility required significant repairs.

A team from the affordable housing fundraising campaign RESOLVE, volunteered to clean out the basement of Bedford House.

The damage to both Alpha House and Bedford House was so significant that each experienced long periods of displacement: Alpha House was displaced for 127 days, returning its facility on October 15, and Bedford House was displaced for 150 days, returning to its facility on November 17. The long evacuation periods created a number of challenges, including impacts to services and revenues (discussed further below).

1.2.2 Impact to services

The flood affected services in three significant ways: 1) disrupted services, 2) increased demand, and 3) impact to throughput.

Disrupted Services

Most shelters were able to deliver programs and continue services despite the chaos and displacement created by the flood. However, some experienced disruptions and/or had to develop workarounds during the evacuation. Informants cited the following examples of disruption to services:

- The number of detox beds available in the city was reduced by almost 50% because Alpha House could not provide that kind of care during its four month evacuation⁵
- In the initial phases of the evacuation, Alpha House experienced challenges letting its clients know where to access their services because the agency was relocated a number of times
- The YWCA Crisis Line was unavailable for 10 days
- The DI received 200 requests via its *Computers for Low Income Albertans* program that they were unable to fulfill because all of their computers were lost in the flood (They have subsequently received a donation of 100 computers)
- Domestic and sexual violence supports became secondary during the crisis as attention and resources were poured into basic needs (safety, shelter, urgent care)⁶
- The City's two largest emergency women's shelters were unable to take new clients during the evacuation
- Alpha House was unable to run some of its programs during its long evacuation because of the limitations of the temporary site

We had contractors that did certain types of our programming and we didn't have the privacy – we had to give up some, we had this 'women dealing with violence' group and we didn't have a private place – you know those types of things. We kept all our staff but they were certainly doing different jobs. Everyone was really gracious about that.

We're just trying to rebuild a structure again in our programs... so it's going to be another year, I think, before we're settled in – we're still opening boxes and it's still tedious, we're still learning what works, what doesn't work....

Increased demand

Demand for services spiked both during and after the flood. One of the most striking accounts of increased demand came from NeighbourLink, which expanded the scope of its services beyond the city of Calgary to assist neighbouring towns and reserves impacted by the flood. This resulted in a huge spike in service delivery, with NeighbourLink doing eight times as much work in the first three months after the flood as they did in *twelve* months the previous year. NeighbourLink also reports

⁵ CBC News. "Nearly half of Calgary's detox beds still closed post-flood." (August 30, 2013) <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/nearly-half-of-calgary-s-detox-beds-still-closed-post-flood-1.1415040>

⁶ Calgary Domestic Violence Collective, *Coordinated Response to Flood Recovery: Findings and Priorities from the Community Consultation*. (October 2013), p. 1.

that the organization logged 33,000 hours of volunteer time in 2013 – up from 3,500 in 2012 – which they also attribute to the flood.

Our mandate for NeighbourLink is within the city, and all of a sudden we were asked to respond to Siksika, Morley, Bragg Creek, Okotoks, High River and everything – so we accepted the challenge, but... that came with challenges. We're a smaller team. At the time, we had 10 full time employees. We had to hire an additional employee to work in our warehouse to service those areas. Because you know there's crisis relief... and not all people are back in their homes yet – we're still far beyond the scope of our normal practice.



The easiest way to put it into perspective is that we did eight times what we normally do annually in the first three months of flood response. So, when you ask what kind of impact... you have infrastructure, you have executive management essentially – right? How do you coordinate those things, how do you stay on track with those things? How do you continue to honour those relationships and help in the best way possible? And then there's the infrastructure piece ... the equipment usage, pallet jacks, trucks, manpower – you know all those really simple things...

Other agencies also experienced increased demand during the flood, including shelters that accepted referrals from City of Calgary reception centres. Inn from the Cold, for example, processed 63 referrals from these sites in the two weeks following the flood. However, the greatest spikes in services came *after* the flood, as evidenced by the following:

- **Demand:** Demand for shelter among family-serving agencies rose sharply over the summer months, increasing 400% from 13 families in June to 53 families in September
- **Waiting lists:** Waiting lists have increased in some agencies (e.g., Rainbow Lodge grew from 40+ before the flood to 100+ in the months following the flood)
- **Winter Response:** The Calgary Homeless Foundation requested another 100 beds in addition to the 200 beds already estimated for the Winter Response; the organization attributes the increased need to displacements caused by the flood
- **Client profile:** Shelters are seeing an increased need for their services among people who do not fit the typical client profile. (e.g., youth-serving agencies are seeing young people who have no addictions or mental health issues now needing shelter because their families were displaced by the flood; adult shelters are seeing tradespeople who have come to help with



rebuilding efforts and cannot find affordable accommodations – these are people who have never accessed a shelter before)

Over the summer – we were tracking the overflow of families beyond what our shelter spaces and the community can accommodate, we were expecting to see a spike of families over the summer - we had seen that trend before, but it jumped from June to July from 13 to 26 families – it doubled. And then in August it jumped to 43 families, in September 53 families. So I think to see such an increase and have that increase sort of cumulative as the summer progressed, there was probably a flood impact that was driving those numbers up for a while. ...It really strained the resources of our shelters to be able to handle all of that overflow and help those folks access resources beyond the shelters.

We've had people who have been displaced from their apartment because the landlords put the rent up or evicted them and got somebody else in who would pay more and would probably be a better, more longer term tenant. So the low vacancy rate – uh, it was already low and the flood made it extremely tight. So not only did that mean that our housing programs were actually slower to find places for people to move into, we had more people coming back to the shelters who maybe had been housed on their own for some time but because of this had been displaced. I think those were the real long term impacts.

Impact to Throughput

Throughput (i.e., the rate at which clients are transitioned to more permanent housing) has also been impacted by the flood. Because low vacancy and high rental rates have made placements more difficult, clients in transitional housing have “*nowhere to transition to.*” One organization reported that the time it takes its housing locators to find placements has increased from one month to six. Another agency said that clients have remained in short-term supportive housing for one or two months longer than average since the flood:

I looked at the numbers just before Christmas – and about half of the women who are with us right now – actually slightly more than half... were with us before the flood, were evacuated with us. So to me the secondary impact then is a throughput impact. We are not seeing women able to move out of short term supportive housing as quickly as they have in the past. ... We were typically in sort of the four month range [before the flood], and now we are five, six months as an average. There are a number of women I see in our lobby or in the elevators who I know were at [the temporary shelter] with us – and that's sad to me. And I think that just speaks to the lack of housing that was exacerbated by the flood.

Some emergency shelters are experiencing a ripple effect from delays in throughput for transitional housing. A representative from one of the domestic violence shelters said that, because of delays in moving clients out of second stage housing, the average length of stay in an emergency shelter is increasing.

1.2.3 Impact to staff

Staff burnout and exhaustion is already a concern in helping professions – and the flood only added to this challenge. Informants said that staff worked very long hours during the first ten days of the crisis. This was especially true of those staff whose agencies had been evacuated. Many slept in the

evacuation facilities and put in long hours of overtime. Some staff were dealing with their own flood-related challenges while trying to provide service to clients, which was exhausting.

For those shelters that were evacuated, the disruption in routines also created additional work for staff. For example, the Mustard Seed needed to create activities to keep their clients occupied. (Normally, their clients would be out of the shelter during the day). Alpha House staff experienced additional stress in trying to monitor and manage their clients' activities when the shelter was temporarily located in an area with a school and strip mall.

In addition to staff exhaustion, stress, and burn-out, informants expressed concerns about vicarious trauma and pointed out that extra supports may be warranted.

The other thing is to consider how this impacted our staff... and we know that we already have staff that are experiencing vicarious trauma and are experiencing burnout – so what do we need to do for those people who stepped up and donated hours of their time, what do we need to do for them? Are there special support programs that we need to provide them? Do we need to reevaluate – ‘how are you doing?’ ... I think that’s a missing piece – you know, we rely on our staff to provide excellent service and expect them to rise above because of who they are but we need to make sure that we’re taking care of them.

...the people that were traumatized were the staff - not just us, but I saw the stress when I looked around at the people who were working in the places – it was exhausting for you guys – it was crazy – and that went on for months and months and months. You know – I think sometimes we do forget that the people that are picking up the pieces – we get so client-focused that we forget the cost that’s there for the staff. That was a huge issue. ...What is the long term effect? ...you could just see it on the staff’s face – they were exhausted. And you had to keep going.

1.2.4 Impact to revenue

A number of agencies reported losses to fundraising and earned revenues. Most are still calculating losses and were unable to report a precise dollar amount at this time, although a few offered ball-park figures. For example, Bedford House, which holds contracts with Correctional Services Canada, estimates that it lost over \$282,000 in earned revenue. While Bedford House was able to move a few clients to some of its other sites, the organization had to transfer many of its clients to the Salvation Army because they had no facility for five months after the flood. Bedford House did not lay off its staff during this time; instead, they redeployed the team to other parts of the broader organization (John Howard Society). With no income to offset this expense, the organization was put in a very vulnerable position.

A representative from an addictions treatment agency also reported losses in fee-for-service revenue, saying that “We lost so much revenue that we’re now in a deficit position. So we’re playing catch-up – because we didn’t have any beds.”

In most cases, losses to earned revenue will be covered by insurance. However, fundraising revenues are not protected in the same way, and many agencies reported lost or diminished fundraising revenue due to the flood. For example, two agencies had to cancel fundraisers that were scheduled for the week of the flood. One – a golf tournament that usually brings in \$50,000-60,000 – could not be rescheduled because the golf course was “under water.” Others said that public donations had dropped considerably as people directed their contributions to flood relief. The estimated drop in fundraising revenues ranged from 30 to 70%.

We've seen across the board decreases in revenue of 30-40%... because most donations have been diverted to flood relief – and rightly so. But we rely primarily on public donations, so that's a concern.

Even, from a donor perspective, there was lots of donations that were redirected, lots of donors that used flexible funding dollars for programming that put it into relief efforts – and rightfully so – and so it affected programming and opportunities for programming. So I think we as a program and as an agency we have felt the effects of how it's impacted the landscape...

A related concern is that some of the funding that has been secured by agencies has been earmarked for flood relief and cannot be used to meet other needs. For many, it is still not clear what impact this will have on fundraising targets related to ongoing operational needs.

Another thing that was a bit of a challenge for a couple of reasons is that there was a lot of fundraising – donations that came in – but they were, by and large, designated for dealing with the flood and so there was a big concern about the extent to which that would divert funds from regular fundraising and whether organizations would struggle to meet their fundraising targets for regular operations. And the money that came in for dealing with the flood, because it was designated, wasn't money that could be moved over to deal with other things – so it was an advantage and a disadvantage at the same time. And we're still waiting to see how that's played out over the course of the year and whether it's been difficult for organizations to reach their normal fundraising targets for operational dollars or things other than flood-related expenses.

1.3 Anticipated Longer-Term Impacts

Many of informants warned that the full impact of the flood has not yet been realized. When asked what some of those longer-term impacts be, participants identified the following concerns:

- Further impacts to revenue: *"I don't think the real effect of our fundraising efforts will be seen this fall. The proof in the pudding will be next fall – October, November, December – I think we could be at risk then of seeing shortfalls. So I'd like to see us go through that whole year cycle after it's fresh in our memory and see what really happens November/December 2014."*
- Further increases in demand for services (e.g., continued economic ripples for vulnerable populations will lead to increased homelessness; displaced residents from the reserves will start coming into the city, increasing demand for services; stressors contributing to violence will be magnified, resulting in a corresponding increase in need for services related to domestic violence).
- The backlog created by the flood may mean that people struggling with addictions, mental health and disabilities will be unable to access the supports and services they need.

2.0 Collaboration During and After the Flood

Homeless-serving agencies deal with crisis, trauma and recovery on a regular basis – so it is perhaps not surprising that the sector demonstrated remarkable resilience and resourcefulness during the flood. Stories of collaboration within and beyond the sector are so numerous they could fill a report twice this size. This section highlights just a few of those stories, and explores themes related to 1) collaboration within the sector, 2) multi-sector collaboration, and 3) funder response.

2.1 Collaboration within the Sector

The flood was a great test of the homeless sector's capacity for working together – one that, by all accounts, met with great success. While relationships were further strengthened during the flood, informants said those bonds predate the crisis. Asked whether the culture of the sector changed during the flood, one informant said “*I didn't feel that it was different – I just found that the people you thought you could rely on or call on – that you were right about them! [Laughter] It confirmed that, yes, these are really good people.*” This sentiment was echoed by many others.

I think for sure it was a testament to the existing collegial relationships that these organizations have. We were personally calling each other to see who had what and how we could spread it around, right? So I think it's a testament to that – that we probably already operate that way and this just highlighted it or made it really explicit. There is a prevailing period of collaboration, cooperation all the time, but sometimes that's masked in the good times by petty stuff – by whatever competition or funding or whatever happens to be going on or turf or disagreements around how programs operate. But it was clear in the crisis that the prevailing relationship is one of cooperation and collaboration. And that we all understand and experience the same challenges and difficulty with resources and making sure that our clients don't get left out when these things happen - because they tend to be low on the priority sometimes.



Loading Hampers of Hope

Collaboration during and after the flood was characterized by a remarkable capacity for efficiency and effectiveness. The word “nimble” was used repeatedly to describe the speed and agility with which the sector responded to one another's needs, as the case example on page 19 clearly illustrates.

The homeless sector came together in multiple ways to ensure that Calgary's most vulnerable citizens were well taken care of during the flood. Agencies collaborated to provide all of the essentials, including:

- **Facilities** – Fresh Start made its facilities available to Aventa and Simon House, as well as a few clients from the Salvation Army, during the evacuation. The Calgary Dream Centre also housed approximately 30 clients from the Salvation Army, and CUPS provided office space to Alpha House for over six months.
- **Resources:** Evacuated shelters were flooded with donations during the crisis. And even though they were under considerable stress, they took the time to pass on what they didn't need to other shelters. The DI, for example, gave diapers to family shelters and drove 70,000 cans of water (which had come to them all the way from a brewery in Ontario) to High River. The YWCA organized a donation drive at the Marda Loop Community Centre and received far more than they could use. They then passed on the excess goods to other agencies in need (e.g., Inn from the Cold) and called on the assistance of the Food Bank, Dream Centre, and NeighbourLink to redistribute the remainder.

All our resources were strained during the flood, and we were all asked to do more. Somehow, we all did more. It was truly an amazing experience.

Agencies that were not directly impacted by the flood took on roles related to resource acquisition, sorting and distribution. The Dream Centre took in 55,000 donations within the first ten days of the flood – all of which they tracked and distributed. Metis Nation Region 3 also took in goods and redistributed them. Agencies within the sector used cell phones and social media to broadcast their needs – a process that one informant jokingly referred to as a giant game of Go Fish: “*The YWCA would email to see if we had something, and it’s like ‘No we don’t have it - Go Fish!’*” Informants say that this kind of broadcasting has continued since the flood: Organizations like the Food Bank and NeighbourLink are now broadcasting surplus supplies that others in the sector can use.

- **Services:** When Safeworks (Alberta Health Services) was unable to access their vans for five days, the DOAP team stepped in to support their clients:

So we worked closely with Alpha House and the DOAP team - our van was unavailable for five days because we’re housed out of the Sheldon Chumir building – and so the DOAP team took on a lot of the responsibility of our resources for clients and also our peer outreach guys were both walking and bringing the news to the street about where to go in the downtown core – what services you could get and where you could find those. I think – we’ve always worked closely together, but I think that even increased the amount we work together and the connections that our two teams have with each other.

- **Volunteers:** Volunteer coordination was a huge challenge. Many organizations were too overwhelmed to be able to manage the “*flood of generosity*” that came in the form of volunteers. The Dream Centre took a lead role in recruiting and organizing volunteers. They drew over a 1,000 people who wanted to help out, and sorted them into one of three jobs:

We were planning it like a military operation. Here’s the frontline, here’s the attack, but if we don’t have the middle process, then we’re just going to bottleneck and we won’t be able to get the work where it’s needed, so we need someone to organize the volunteers, find out what their specialties are – ‘We need people to go in and pump, we need people to go in and clear debris, we need people to go in and clean up’ – so we made sure when we broadcast the message, we were like ‘Be ready for one of these three jobs. If you have pumps, if you have water gear, that’s what you should be prepared to do. If you’re just wanting to help and you can lift stuff, bring some gloves and bring a mask and be ready to lift and carry mud and debris. If your specialty is cleaning – like real sanitary stuff – bring your cleaning supplies. So people showed up and they were ready for one of three jobs and it was so effective.’

When asked about the biggest learning from this experience, one informant commented that the type of collaboration that was so effective in helping the city recover can be equally effective in helping client recovery:

The biggest learning? That we can do it. And that when you do it we’re stronger and recovery happens when people collaborate and they have a common goal. And so we’ve been able to apply that to our case management with individuals... And that’s what we did on a grand scale with the flood. And I think we need to apply that learning to people who are most vulnerable in our city every day.

- **Information:** Agencies worked together closely to ensure that clients had access to real-time updates on services and supports.

During the flood, InformCalgary staff worked especially closely with the DI and Alpha House, documenting their moves and services.

Case Example: Collaboration within the Sector

Fresh Start, NeighbourLink, Aventa, Simon House & CUPS

Aventa, an addiction treatment centre for women, was told to evacuate on the evening of June 20th. There were 41 women in residence that evening, and Executive Director Kim Turgeon needed to find a temporary site that would allow for continued services and not jeopardize these clients' recovery in any way. Months earlier, Mr. Stacey Petersen, the Executive Director at Fresh Start Recovery had jokingly commented that if Aventa ever needed a facility, they had a brand new gym...

It was late in the evening when Kim made the call to Fresh Start – which meant that they didn't have a lot of time to figure out where they were going to find beds. Melissa Nelson of NeighbourLink was with Stacey when he got the call. Melissa phoned her Executive Director and left him a message saying she was going to provide Aventa with beds from their storage facility.

I didn't even get him on the line, but his response later was 'Of course.' No sooner did I get done delivering the first 50 beds than [Fresh Start] got a call from Simon House saying they had been evacuated and had no place to go. "No problem," [Stacey] said, 'come on over.' I said 'you're going to need some more beds!' Coincidentally beds are one of the most limited items that we usually have here, so the beds that I actually had belonged to formal partnerships that we have.... So I phoned the Executive Director of CUPS and others ... and I said "Listen, you have beds in storage here – here's what's happening. Can I use them? I promise they'll go back into inventory – you'll have them available for your clients. And across the board they said, "of course" ... So in situations like that we were able to see a number of different agencies work together – and we were able to act as the conduit for that – which is what we do day to day anyways – we just did it on a much bigger scale.

By the time Aventa arrived, the place was all set up. Fresh Start staff had even papered all of the windows in the gym. (Putting 41 women in an all-male facility poses certain challenges...).

They helped to manage the situation because they set up some ground rules with the guys and we did with the ladies – and, I don't know, I thought we did a really great job between the two organizations. They had a hundred men there – they had 50 of their own guys and 50 came in from Simon House recovery centre, and then we had 41 – so it was almost 150 people in a facility that normally operates with 50. So we brought all of our staff in, and we ran our groups – we didn't really miss much of a beat.... We collaborate well in the first place, but you know, we actually really enjoyed getting to know these guys a bit more.

Aventa stayed at Fresh Start for seven days; Simon House for 14. Since that time, Aventa has met with Fresh Start a couple of times to discuss "different things that we learned while we were on site or that they thought was interesting that we were doing," Kim says, "and we'll continue to do that."

2.2 Multi-Sectoral Collaboration

The way that citizens, businesses, community groups and government stepped up to support the homeless sector during the flood was remarkable, as the case study on page 23 clearly illustrates.

"I think the surprising part wasn't that we as a sector did over and above for our clients and for others, [it was] the incredible response from the community associations, businesses, corporations."

Here are just a few of the many ways that Calgary pitched in to care for its most vulnerable citizens:

- **Facilities:** Post-secondary institutions, community centres, churches, motels, recreational facilities and schools all became temporary sites for evacuated shelters. Informants expressed deep gratitude for the way that community centres cancelled scheduled programming and events, motels relaxed policies, and academic institutions met the security needs of women fleeing violence. Private care providers also provided Designated Assisted Living beds for seniors with medical issues, and the Provincial Government stepped in to ensure that Alpha House was set up in temporary facilities that would meet their needs (discussed further in 2.2.3 *Funder Response*, below).

...between the Mount Royal staff and the Calgary Police Services who helped to assess it for safety before we moved people over, Calgary Transit who took us there – like it was really quite overwhelming and touching how much people were willing to do whatever was necessary to support people.

Housing operators in particular were exemplary in providing temporary accommodations for seniors displaced by the flood [and] Private Care providers, including Walden Heights Age Care and Millrise Place, provided Designated Assisted Living beds for tenants with medical issues. In total we had 11 housing operators offer vacant suites to us for displaced tenants. It was phenomenal.

- **Transportation:** Many shelters relied on Calgary Transit to transport their clients to evacuation sites. Tim Hortons was also instrumental in providing transportation. When Inn from the Cold needed to move 113 adults and children from a City reception site to facilities in Motel Village, they were at a loss for what to do. Taxis for that many people would introduce all kinds of complexities. Because of an existing partnership with Tim Hortons, they called to ask if they could use their camp bus. The bus arrived within 30 minutes of placing the call, and the families were all transported to the new location together.
- **Services and supports:** Informants cited multiple ways that citizens and government agencies offered on-site services and supports during the evacuation:
 - Alberta Health Services offered onsite mental health supports and wound checks
 - Doctors, nurses and paramedics volunteered their services at various evacuation sites
 - Calgary Police Services (CPS) added officers to areas where temporary shelters were located and escorted nurses into an evacuated shelter to get medical supplies
 - CPS also supported Alpha House in addressing community concerns

*We worked extremely well with the police.... [Interviewer: In what way?]
Talking about our work in the new neighbourhood. They also added a couple of extra beat patrols in the area.... We had to do a lot of community dialogue, and so we partnered with them, and Inspector Kathy Grant and I showed up and talked to community members who were concerned. All of that went really well.*

- **Food:** Multiple restaurants, food trucks, service organizations, community organizations, and citizens contributed to meet the nutritional needs of evacuated clients and staff. The response was overwhelming, in fact. The Calgary Dream Centre received so many food donations that they had to borrow two 52 foot refrigerated trailers to store it all. The Calgary Food Bank and Meals on Wheels also played a key role in supplying food to evacuated shelters during the crisis.

Meals on Wheels brought us food every day and didn't charge us, and the Jesus Loves Me Society gave us their kitchen as well to make sandwiches.

- **Resources:** Organizations used social media to broadcast their needs – and the response was so immediate that one informant said that it was like having “just-in-time inventory.”

[Participant 1]: I think we really saw how powerful Facebook and Twitter was during the flooding in terms of getting the word out. That was the way that a lot of people responded to asks – especially on a day to day basis as the situation was changing.

[Participant 2]: Well at our warehouse, it was changing hour to hour. We had two people on Twitter and if you asked for soap, that arrived within the hour, if you asked for towels, that arrived – so it was almost just-in-time inventory – it was an incredible experience to be part of.

The examples offered above show ways that the community supported the homeless sector – but the collaboration went both ways, with organizations within the sector also helping the broader community. For example:

- NeighbourLink worked with CEMA to set up reception centres on very short notice.

I remember one night I got a call at 3:00 am – CEMA asked if we could have 400 spots ready at new evacuation sites by 11:00 am – and I went “Oh sure!” knowing full well that we didn't have enough in our warehouse at that time. And knowing that when I got up at 5:00 am and we started to plug out the information [that it would all] come together.

- On numerous occasions, the DOAP team was called to pick up people from City of Calgary reception centres who were identified as having addictions or mental health issues. At one point, they were asked to retrieve people who were deemed disruptive from the University of Calgary dorms, but no one was able to provide them with names or room numbers, so the DOAP team reports that they were there “for two or three days with police, going door to door.”
- NeighbourLink and Fresh Start conceived of an idea to lighten the load for victims of the flood. Working with United Way of Calgary and Area and PwC (PriceWaterhouseCoopers), they sought out donations that would provide stress relief (e.g., passes to amusement parks, swimming pools, and laser tag facilities; a coupon for a free photography session to replace family photos that had been lost in the flood, etc.). They assembled 500 of these packages and delivered them to victims of the flood.
- Staff and clients from various agencies volunteered in areas that were hardest hit, helping to clear debris. They also helped to sort incoming donations.

We are already focused on recovery – we help people recover every day. So it was a natural thing that we help our city recover. So we're already attuned to crisis mentality, stepping in the gap and helping people get through a disaster.

Case Example: Multi-Sectoral Collaboration

The Calgary Drop-In and Rehab Centre (The DI)

Early on the morning of June 21, Debbie Newman, the Executive Director of the DI, received a phone call saying that the facility was being evacuated to its Greenview location. You can imagine the logistical nightmare involved in creating a temporary shelter for 1,000 clients in a space that has no operational kitchen and limited facilities. (They were actually 'written up' on the first day for insufficient toilets and showers). The DI was in need of food, water, clothes, hygiene supplies – you name it. Everything had been left behind in the evacuation. When they put the word out using Twitter and Facebook, the response was overwhelming.

Thank God for various forms of media – whether it be radio or tv or Twitter – I mean, Jordan [the Manager of External Relations] was just sending constant messages out to the community and letting people know what kind of support we needed, as were many other staff. And then ... in the wee hours of Friday morning, people were receiving the messages and this flood of donors and goods started coming in, and it did not stop for days. It was – I'm getting goose bumps thinking about it – because the endless lineup of cars coming in and bringing toiletries, cleaning supplies, food – it was like a buffet line. ...It was nonstop for days.

Here are just a few of the ways that citizens, businesses and government services came together to meet the needs of DI clients.

- **Transportation:** The City of Calgary sent 40 buses to pick up clients as they made their way across the Langevin Bridge on the morning of June 21
- **Food and water:** On the first day, multiple restaurants arrived with enough pizzas and sandwiches to feed every client twice over. Citizens and service clubs lined up with over 2,000 deliveries of food and clothing. And Labatt's Blue sent 70,000 cans of water from Ontario. (The water was actually in beer cans. Clients got a big kick out of this, joking that (given the watery taste), "*It must be American beer...*")
- **Kitchen facilities:** Food trucks came and parked at the temporary shelter so that the DI could have access to industrial kitchens
- **Toilets:** A construction company dropped off 20 Port-a-Potties
- **Security:** Calgary Police Services put additional officers on site
- **Laundry:** Citizens organized themselves to "*bring mountains of vital laundry home to several houses, and return it clean*"⁷
- **Coffee:** Tim Horton's provided free coffee and donuts for all of the clients and staff throughout the evacuation
- **Health services:** A Calgary EMT volunteered his time for five straight days, working 16 hours a day
- **Fuel:** An energy company delivered diesel fuel to the evacuated site so that the DI could keep its generators going

⁷ Calgary Drop-In and Rehab Centre. Connections. (Newsletter) Issue 37, Fall 2013. <http://www.thedi.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Fall-20132.pdf>

2.3 Funder Response

While funders have been cited in the examples of collaboration above, their good work was cited often enough to warrant a separate section highlighting their efforts. Informants were especially appreciative of the way that funders like United Way of Calgary and Area (UWCA) and The Calgary Foundation flowed dollars through to flood-affected agencies in ways that were efficient, effective, and relatively stress-free. UWCA was also quick to convene the community in order to better understand the impacts of the flood to the agencies it serves.

United Way played a key role as well, and the Calgary Foundation too – but the United Way stepped forward with supports and funds that we could access. And I think people were scrambling to figure out – okay, there’s this money, what is it for – and I think they were very nimble if I could say that, and very proactive to say ‘This is what you need and you don’t have to fill out fifteen pages either to get the funding’ – and that was really a relief to agencies....

The Government of Alberta was also commended for moving funds into impacted areas quickly, without being overly constrained by bureaucratic processes. “*I’ve never heard of cheques issued that fast. Overnight. One decision could override mounds of paperwork.*” Informants from Alpha House also expressed deep appreciation for the way that Province assisted them in acquiring the old Science Centre as a temporary location and helping them to modify the space to meet their needs.

...the Province was tremendous to us, the Assistant Deputy Minister came down from Edmonton and helped us to move boxes. ... And the Science Centre was made comfortable for us. ... They did some renovations, put in some office space, made sure we had appropriate showers, and yeah, they did a lot.

3.0 Challenges

Given the scope and scale of the disaster, it is not surprising that a few challenges emerged as the sector worked to evacuate clients and ensure continued service during the crisis. Six key challenges emerged in the interviews and focus groups: 1) communication, 2) emergency preparedness, 3) meeting the needs of a specialized population, 4) funding issues, 5) bureaucratic issues, and 6) managing the ‘flood of generosity.’ These challenges are documented here because there is much that can be learned from the issues that arose.

3.1 Communication

The most oft-cited challenge, by far, was communication. None of the flooded agencies had access to their servers during the evacuation; nor did they have contact information stored on a separate server. For this reason, almost all of them struggled to contact staff, funders, media and other agencies. The word “confusion” was used by multiple informants to describe the first two days of flooding as they struggled to find out what was happening:

It felt, I think at the time, we all felt a little bit cut off because there was no real single source of information – we were all talking to each other and waiting to hear what so-and-so had heard and piecing it together until a good week in when CEMA had got past the worst of it and was able to start issuing sort of blanket statements and that sort of thing.

For the most part, agencies compensated by making good use of social media. However, communication problems did present challenges, including issues with letting staff know when to return to work and challenges letting clients know where a particular agency had moved. Lack of communication also impacted resource distribution at one point: NeighbourLink had been delivering to one of the reserves for a couple of weeks when a news broadcast stated that the reserve hadn't received anything. As it turns out, there are two sites on that reserve, and NeighbourLink (not being familiar with the reserves because they are normally out of scope for that organization), did not realize that the other site existed or that the sites were not in communication with one another.

3.2 Emergency Preparedness

There was a huge range of emergency preparedness among agencies. Some organizations, like the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter (CWES) and Aventa had Emergency Evacuation and Service Continuity Plans in place, and regularly *practiced* these plans. As a result, they were highly organized when they evacuated. Aventa handed each of their clients a garbage bag and instructed them to put their bedding, toiletries and two days of clothing inside. They remembered to take client medications with them when they left, as well as any necessary files. Similarly, CWES had a bag of emergency blankets already prepared, and their protocols included taking the appropriate files and switching their emergency number over to a cell phone. Other organizations were less prepared, and were therefore forced to improvise when medicines and essentials were left behind.

While many organizations had emergency plans, no one considered what would happen if the entire downtown core was evacuated. Therefore, shelters that had planned to go to other shelters or facilities in the core needed to come up with another plan. This represented a significant gap in emergency preparedness. Other gaps that informants reported finding in their plans included: communication protocols; access to a mirrored server; protocols around medicine and methadone; protocols around staffing reassignment; and security at evacuated sites.

3.3 Meeting the Needs of Specialized Populations

Several informants applauded the efforts of the Calgary Emergency Management Agency, and said that CEMA was particularly helpful during recovery. However, many expressed concerns about the City's approach to emergency management during the first few days of the flood, saying that the needs of specialized populations were not adequately considered. In emergency planning, a general rule of thumb is that 3-5% of evacuees will require assistance finding temporary shelter. (The remainder have the means and/or connections to secure alternate shelter for themselves).⁸ This calculation generally held true during the 2013 flood.⁹ However, it was not true for those housed in drop-in and emergency shelters in the downtown core: When flooding began last June, approximately 2,000 people needed to be evacuated from shelters and transitional housing – and, of course, they were in those facilities in the first place because they did not have the resources to find alternative accommodation. Rule of thumb for this population, then, should likely be that 100% of them will need assistance securing temporary shelter upon evacuation.

⁸ Personal communication, CEMA representative, February 6, 2014.

⁹ Three per cent of evacuees in Calgary (2,400) required assistance with immediate short term shelter. (Personal Communication, CEMA representative, February 6, 2014).

In an interview for this report, a representative from CEMA stated that his agency had just begun working with the Calgary Homeless Foundation to better address the needs of vulnerable populations in the City's disaster response plan when the flooding began – so the timing was unfortunate.

We had been moving towards a couple of areas – one being extreme temperatures and cold, the other being floods, and we started to get together with those groups when the flood hit us.

The CEMA representative conceded that this is an area that requires additional attention, and his agency will be working with the social sector to better address the needs of vulnerable populations in disaster planning.¹⁰ However, he also emphasized that CEMA's role is primarily one of coordination, and the Agency functions on the assumption that organizations have emergency plans in place to address the needs of their clients during an evacuation. In a follow-up email clarifying the role of CEMA, he writes:

Most of an emergency response occurs with support from CEMA assisting by coordinating different agencies in order to accommodate vulnerable populations. As not much emergency or business continuity was in place with some businesses and/or alternative housing centres, it made the coordination and accommodation of the vulnerable population even more challenging i.e., things can go wrong, for example, by not having pre-planned specific medications when the population needs to be evacuated.

The reception centres that are coordinated are in place only to provide the basic needs of evacuees – that is, food, shelter, and clothing. They are not set up to replace the day-to-day specialized functions that shelters, etc. provide. That is why those providing those services need to consider their own plans.

Three shelters were initially evacuated to City of Calgary reception centres. This did not work very well – which is likely why each was quickly relocated. Inn from the Cold, for example, was asked by reception centre staff to find an alternate location because they were “*experiencing difficulties in meeting [the clients'] needs in that setting.*” The organization ended up in a motel for five days, and then – because Stampede reservations were starting to come in – they moved their families to a community centre. Clients from a large domestic violence shelter were also initially put in a City of Calgary reception center. The organization needed to arrange alternate accommodations for their clients because of the safety risks posed by this very public site (e.g., there was a lot of media presence at the sites, and this could have compromised the safety of women fleeing violence by revealing their location).

Informants identified several challenges associated with meeting the needs of specialized populations during an evacuation, including the following:

- Limited ability to provide additional supports - Agencies that were evacuated to City of Calgary reception centres did not have operational jurisdiction; therefore, they had limited capacity to put appropriate supports in place for their clients.
- Challenges associated with placing clients who struggle with addictions – The CEMA representative said that one of his learnings was that a majority of those who accessed reception centres were vulnerable citizens – people who had neither the means nor the connections to

¹⁰ The City of Calgary's Community and Neighbourhood Services (CNS) is also in the process of developing the *Vulnerable Populations Strategy and Implementation Plan*, which will help to outline strategies for meeting the needs of vulnerable populations in an emergency.

secure alternate shelter during the evacuation. However, the vulnerability created by chronic addictions creates a different set of challenges, and many people at the reception centres were uncomfortable with these types of clients. The CEMA representative said that identifying these clients earlier in the process would have been helpful.

- NIMBYism – Agencies that established temporary shelters in suburban neighbourhoods experienced considerable push-back from community groups. The Executive Director of Alpha House estimates that about 80% of her time was spent assuaging community fears and trying to address NIMBYism.

3.4 Funding Issues

On the whole, informants were very pleased with the agility and speed with which funding was dispersed. However, some challenges did arise. Some of the major disaster funding available was not provided in the time needed. Informants suggested that something like a “Draw Down” account would have been helpful. They also said that, going forward, CACHH might play a role in helping to facilitate a conversation between the homeless sector and major disaster funders so that further clarity can be achieved.

I think there's room for greater clarity around fundraising for disasters.

...early on, there's a whole bunch of us could have used, you know, \$10,000 to draw down on that people had donated to Red Cross but it was, you couldn't get to it. At best, a family could get a gift card or whatever it was. So I think the learning within our sector is we're nimble – it takes us minutes or maybe hours to respond, but a big organization like that took six weeks and ... they've still got a big chunk of money. We needed the money, right?

Another funding-related issue that arose during the flood centred on eligibility for the Alberta Government's Emergency Payments (i.e., Debit Cards):

Debit cards were an interesting challenge [...] We were doing some advocacy around them because our [clients] were deemed ineligible for the debit cards in the initial assessment because they were in short term supportive housing. ... The program was rolled out so quickly that for government to craft it in a way that was equitable for vulnerable populations, so that was really challenging. So if someone was in deeply subsidized housing and evacuated, they would have received a card. ... because they lived [in short-term supported housing], they did not – so we started to do advocacy around that and in the end ended up getting the cards for the [clients] here – it took a month.

Interestingly, a number of organizations seemed to address the same challenge individually, suggesting that there may be a role for a Go-To organization so that policy issues like this can be addressed as a sector, rather than in an ad-hoc fashion by organizations that already have enough on their plate.

3.5 Bureaucratic Issues

One of the shelters encountered bureaucratic issues that added to the stress of the evacuation. The shelter was “written up” for serving sandwiches made in a non-commercial kitchen, and for having inadequate toilets and showers. Informants said that managing health concerns in a disaster can be important, however, there are likely more supportive ways of doing that.

On the other side, if you have to be a critic, just what type of support could the province or the municipality bring to your side? You know, instead of having Alberta Health Services come in and write you up for not having enough toilets, why not say 'I'm going to support you in getting you what you need so that we have safe conditions for everyone.' Because, you know, it's how you frame the question... I think when you are dealing with crisis you need people to support you.

Another bureaucratic issue that arose was the expectation that shelters would continue to track clients during the emergency in the way they always did. Under the circumstances, it was very difficult to comply with this request.

I think the biggest challenge would have been with the Provincial Government in terms of clients, but some of that was just trying to get them to understand what we were going through. ... And so it really managing their expectation of, okay how are we going to track every shelter client – where they went, because that's impossible in the case where it was a city emergency, it wasn't just one facility.

3.6 Managing the “Flood of Generosity”

“The flood of generosity,” as one informant called it, was in many ways a good problem to have. Calgarians were extraordinary in stepping up to provide what was needed. While the distribution of goods was handled very well on the whole, it required a considerable amount of work and coordination. NeighbourLink is set up to handle the distribution of resources, but others had to put systems in place. The Dream Centre, for example, invested considerable effort in developing a tracking system. (Some of their clients had expertise in supply management and were able to help with this). One of the things that agencies learned within the first couple of days was to be very specific in their requests.

I think another learning – and it took us a bit – but that direct ask for what is needed, right? So getting the wrap on that really quickly on the onset of something and just being really clear about what was coming in. You know, we can't control that necessarily but... [...] It didn't take long – I would say within the first week we figured out “No, no, no - we need to do it this way.”

Even with precise requests, however, it was rare to get only what was asked for, and the sheer number of donations could be overwhelming at times.



I had contacted my community association... and we did a donation drive for two hours in the Marda Loop Community Hall, and we asked for three things: hygiene supplies, underwear and cash. And we filled that hall in two hours. It was unbelievable. People brought all sorts of things – things that we weren't asking for. We ended up with more toothpaste than you can imagine. It was completely overwhelming. ... We ended up with so much of this stuff that immediately my panic became ‘Oh crap – now what are we going to do with it’?

Volunteer management was also an issue. Calgarians responded generously to the call for help. In some instances, however, the agencies who initiated the call were not clear on what they needed, and volunteers were sometimes turned away.

We had way more volunteers than I think we could have used so we ran into trouble trying to figure out what to give them to do.

We had lots of people step forward [to help]... and you have to be so ready to figure out how to handle all of these folks that are coming in and willing to assist but you're in the middle of the crisis yourself and not organized to that point yet – so it's quite challenging to be ready to store the stuff that people are bringing to you, and to make use of the time and efforts of the people that show up at your door and to really make that work.

4.0 Learnings

The events surrounding the 2013 flood offer a great opportunity for learning. Having experienced an evacuation of this scale, the homeless sector can more easily identify gaps in emergency preparedness. It can also build on the many things that worked well, some of which offer lessons not only for emergency situations, but also for everyday interactions. This section briefly outlines learnings that have arisen out of challenges and successes experienced during the flood.

4.1 Emergency Preparedness

Several informants reported that they have already made changes so that their organizations are now better equipped for an emergency. Changes include:

- Back-up generators
- Sand bags on site
- Emergency supply kits packed and ready to go, including: blankets, head lamps, contact lists, first aid kit, etc.
- Mirrored servers
- Communication protocols and contact lists (available off-site), including staff cell phones numbers and contact information for health providers, politicians, funders, and transportation

Informants also said that they had a new appreciation for the importance of a well-developed emergency response plan – one that includes contingency plans in the event that the primary evacuation site is unavailable. In addition to all of the factors normally considered in an emergency response plan¹¹, agencies will need to work through special considerations for their particular populations. For example, client medications were a significant gap in many evacuation protocols, with one agency having to ask emergency personnel to escort them back into their evacuated building in order to retrieve medications. The availability of methadone was another gap identified by the Addictions Sector Committee:

[Participant 1]: We only had one issue during that whole process ... and that was we have clients on methadone, and that was tough because we had to get new prescriptions written for them. And you know how do you get all that done when you're in that situation? ... So we need to get some stronger established relationships and cell phone numbers for doctors so if we run into trouble, that they can just deal with the situation. [Participant 2]: That was the same for some of the people staying with us – they go downtown, they need to be there at a certain time

¹¹ According to the CEMA representative, templates for emergency response and business continuity plans are available. CEMA has already shared these templates with the Calgary Homeless Foundation.

to get their methadone and I said 'downtown's closed.' ... And I didn't know how to help them at that point.

Sector Committees could brainstorm a list of considerations specific to their populations, and work together to develop strategies to address those considerations in emergency situations.

The CEMA representative underscored the importance of “exercising” the plan, by which he meant table top exercises that consider various crises and contingencies and/or actual simulations. Two of the agencies interviewed for this report said that they practice their emergency procedures regularly – and this was key in helping them to be calm and organized in the face of the flood.

We practice emergency evacuations on a monthly basis. Because we do that, we have a bag of emergency blankets already packed – so I just grabbed that. And we knew to take our files and switch our crisis line over to the cell phone.

In addition to organizational emergency response plans, informants underscored the importance of a sector-wide response plan, one that considers the possibility of a large, multi-agency evacuation (e.g., evacuation of the downtown core). The sector should also have a communication plan with designated “point people” and cell phone numbers. (Discussed further in *Recommendations*, below).

CEMA suggested that, in developing a plan, the sector might wish to consider developing Mutual Aid Agreements with organizations in Edmonton (similar to the arrangements that Edmonton and Calgary Police and Fire Services have). Thus, a sector-wide emergency response plan could be conceived more broadly than Calgary to include assistance from service providers elsewhere.

4.2 Building on What Worked

Much of the sector's response to the crisis was highly effective. Below are ways that informants felt that the sector could build on its successes, not just in a crisis situation, but also in everyday interactions.

4.2.1. Maintaining the level of responsiveness

One of the strengths most often identified in the interviews and focus groups was the sector's capacity to be nimble and responsive in the face extraordinary challenges. Decisions were made quickly, and people mobilized in ways that created immediate impact. Some informants felt that this type of responsiveness could be integrated into day-to-day functions as well.

I think we managed to do things quickly because there was this urgency of the crisis around us. [...] If we can be this responsive, why aren't we this responsive all the time? Why do we allow ourselves to get sort of entrenched in 'Okay well, let's have a conversation as front line staff and then let's push that up to our management teams and have them have a conversation' – you know? I think that people were empowered to make decisions differently so we just did.

I think that we kind of got over ourselves, right? [That's] the biggest learning.... I think if we can just stop thinking about the reasons why we won't do it – it's all of those classics – well it's hard, and we're going to mess it up, and we're going to offend somebody and we're going to leave somebody out and we're not going to consult and blah blah blah blah – it's like, well there was no time for any of that so we just did it. And is someone else offended that I gave the underwear to the Dream Centre? Like I don't know. Maybe they are and if they are I'm sorry – but we did it quickly and it meant that we just got it done. I think it's that sort of 'mistakes will be made' approach.

Informants would like to see this level of responsiveness from other sectors as well. For example, Alberta Health Services offered onsite mental health services to some of the agencies during the flood. One informant pointed out that those kinds of services are needed every day, not just in an emergency.

It was really quite overwhelming and touching how much people were willing to do whatever was necessary to support people. And there was a part of me that was completely heartened by that, and another part of me that thought 'Crap – why does it take a disaster for this – for people to step up'?... You know – we had Alberta Health Services onsite offering mental health supports and offering physical health supports and being there to do wound checks and that sort of thing – and it's like 'We need that 365 days a year! We don't need that only during flooding.' But all of a sudden now people are rolling up their sleeves and providing service in a much more nimble way. So it was on the one hand super positive and I'm wholly so grateful and on the other hand, I'm like 'Well... where are you the rest of the time?'

4.2.2 Maintaining relationships

Most informants attribute the effectiveness of the collaboration that took place during the flood to the strength of pre-existing relationships. They said it is important to continue developing these relationships through networking opportunities and Sector Committee meetings.

I think you respond well in an emergency if you've spent a lot of time cultivating those relationships and connections when there's not an emergency. You have to pay attention to maintaining strong relationships and building that social capital within the sector – so that they're there when we need to draw on them in an emergency situation.

A number of new relationships were also developed during the flood, particularly with community associations and private enterprise. Informants suggested that the sector should find ways to further cultivate these relationships on an ongoing basis.

And even beyond the sector – because it was a, you know, a multi-sectoral response – there was a lot of support provided by other sectors, by partners, by unexpected people in organizations – so that's something you have to cultivate on an ongoing basis if you want to have the extent of collaboration that we saw.



Volunteer from NeighbourLink

4.2.3 Maintaining unity of purpose

A number of informants said that there was a “real feeling of unity” during the flood – and some suggested that this is something to aim for in the everyday work of the sector. When asked how to best support this type of unity, one informant suggested that the sector needs to keep the “big picture” at the fore of its thinking. Building on the disaster experience, another suggested that the sector think about homelessness as a type of slow-moving “unnatural disaster”:

Really, from the private sector, from foundations, from other social serving agencies, to the individuals in our community, there's been a real feeling of unity and looking at solution where previously sometimes we can get protective where you're looking out for the best interests of

your organization – and I don't think that that's any different than any other business – looking out for your own interests. But finding new ways of doing that together.

I think the thing that bound everybody together was, obviously, this natural disaster. And I think if I look at homelessness as a natural – or unnatural – disaster, I still don't know that we're united in this front of recognizing that. ... Some agencies are really good at it, but others are not. Others are still, you know, 'this is my turf.'

It's hard. We're human. That's the biggest thing, right? It's hard and we're human and it really is imperative that we put aside our biases and really rise above that sort of, that episodic view and see the thematic of what we're trying to achieve. One of the biggest learnings for me was, wow, there are so many moving parts to this thing – and without that thematic, big picture map, it's kind of hard to really see all that was happening.

One informant pointed out that one way to demonstrate unity might have been to “communicate gratitude as an entire sector” after the flood. While individual agencies have thanked the community in various ways, sending that communication as a sector “shows the community that we're in this together...”

Another suggested that the sector work together to communicate with the public on a regular basis.

Perhaps the Sector itself needs a more public-facing group or forum that sends messages to the public about issues in the sector. These are hard, because many working on homeless have very divergent views on how to solve things. But even if it were a big flashy Homeless Awareness Day, where agencies show off their services, make appeals, recruit volunteers, etc., that might be a start.

4.2.4 Addressing bureaucratic silos

One informant said that the flood offered an opportunity to demonstrate the artificiality of bureaucratic silos. She pointed out that women fleeing violence can access counselling supports that are not available to other women experiencing homelessness. When both groups were evacuated together during the flood, she said,

...it demonstrated to us, not only as an organization, but also to government, ... that these are the same women, and these are women who have very similar needs and it's by construct of our funding contracts and our, you know, sort of bureaucratic arrangements, that we treat these things as very different. So that has led to some really interesting conversations with government moving forward about the fact that if you pay for counselling services for women in a domestic violence shelter, the homeless women who we serve have a similar history of trauma. So if we believe that one is deserving of this kind of service, what does that say about the other? So I think it was an interesting test case. I think we would probably all get to those same conclusions eventually but you get thrown into in a crisis and all of a sudden it becomes really obvious. When we were walking around [at the evacuation site], no one could have identified which woman came from [a domestic violence shelter] versus which one had come from [short term supported housing]. And that's kind of the point. These are women who are vulnerable and it doesn't actually matter what their driver for services is. So to me I think that's the broader lesson – and I think that's a broader lesson for the homeless serving sector as well.

The sector has an opportunity to continue to build on these conversations with funders and government.

4.2.5 Mobilizing the community to support the less fortunate

Agencies were bold in making their needs known to the public during the flood – and the way that Calgarians responded to those requests was truly remarkable. Some informants felt that this is something that could and should continue. Informants suggested that the sector continue to use social media and other broadcasting vehicles to mobilize the community in support of Calgary's most vulnerable.

The real win in this was community awareness, we're not alone – when we're in trouble, the greater community wants to know and will step up and help if we ask – so I think we need to continue those relationships, be bold to ask when we have things that we'd like to see happen. When we asked them they stepped up, so let's continue to ask.

4.2.6 Further maximizing efficiencies through economies of scale

Many informants acknowledged the good work of NeighbourLink, and said that the flood might have helped to generate awareness about the role that that organization can play in supporting bulk purchases, thereby achieving efficiencies through economies of scale.

NeighbourLink was outstanding...Going forward, how do organizations give them more resources to distribute and how do we make sure we're better plugging into them. To take advantage of that, right, and to be – to be efficient. So how do we view that as a supply chain?

Recommendations

Below is series of recommendations for ways that the Calgary Action Committee on Housing and Homelessness (CACHH) can support the homeless sector in:

- 1) Strengthening emergency preparedness;
- 2) Facilitating recovery; and
- 3) Enhancing Collaboration.

Recommendations for Ways to Further Strengthen Emergency Preparedness

1. Secure funding to provide training and support to agencies to develop Emergency Response and Service Continuity Plans
2. Support the development of a sector-wide emergency response plan, one that:
 - Considers different types of risks (e.g., epidemic, fire, flood, ice storm, wide-spread power loss) and contingencies (e.g., what happens when all the shelters in the downtown core need to be evacuated)
 - Includes a communication plan with designated point people
3. Support Sector Committees in developing emergency response and service continuity plans specific to the needs of particular populations (e.g., addictions, mental health, families, aboriginal, seniors, etc.)
4. Work with CEMA to develop effective strategies for meeting the needs of vulnerable populations
5. Consider developing Mutual Aid Agreements with the homeless-serving sector in other jurisdictions (e.g., Edmonton)
6. Consider potential roles that CACHH and/or the Calgary Homeless Foundation could play in disaster response. Potential roles include:
 - Offering real-time updates during a crisis (e.g., tweeting the location of temporary sites for those shelters that have been evacuated)
 - Serving as a primary point of contact in a crisis¹²
 - Working with funders to develop further clarity around dispersing funds during a disaster

¹² While there was some ambivalence around the efficacy of centralized decision-making in a crisis, many informants said that it would be helpful to have a designated body to serve as “Point Person” for issues that arise. For example, during the flood, it would have been helpful to have an administrative body that could have taken on the policy issue related to eligibility for the Province’s Emergency Funds (i.e., debit cards).

Recommendations for Ways to Further Facilitate Recovery

1. Seek funding for the development and implementation of a long-term crisis management/recovery plan for the sector. Long term needs are likely to include:
 - Mental health assessment and support (e.g., Funding to enhance assessment upon intake so that clients are screened for trauma and referred quickly and appropriately)
 - Housing issues
 - Increased demand for services
2. Undertake research to help substantiate the need for these additional supports
3. Seek top-up funding for agencies whose revenues (earned and fundraising) were impacted by the flood.

Recommendations for Ways to Further Strengthen Collaboration in the Sector

1. Continue to create opportunities to cultivate relationships within and between sectors. This might include:
 - Hosting networking and information-sharing events
 - Supporting the development of an “External Relations” strategy for the sector as a whole (e.g., How to communicate to the public as a sector; how to build on the relationships with businesses, government and community organizations that were developed during the flood)
2. Continue to support sector-wide distribution of resources and integration of supply chain management, including:
 - preparedness procurement
 - warehouse storage of supplies, and
 - real-time response for sorting, storing and distributing resources and donations.

Appendix

1. Participating Agencies

Organizations that participated in the interviews include:

- Alpha House
- Aspen (Sustainable Families HomeStay Prevention Program)
- Aventa Addiction Treatment for Women
- Calgary Dream Centre
- Calgary Emergency Management Agency (CEMA)
- Calgary Emergency Women's Shelter
- Calgary Housing Company
- CUPS Calgary
- The DI (Calgary Drop-In & Rehab Centre)
- DOAP Team (Downtown Outreach Addictions Partnership)
- Fresh Start Recovery
- InformCalgary
- Inn from the Cold
- John Howard Society
- The Mustard Seed
- NeighbourLink Calgary
- The Salvation Army
- YWCA

Organizations that were consulted in order to provide context include:

- CEMA
- City of Calgary Community and Neighbourhood Services (CNS)
- United Way of Calgary and Area

Sector Committees that participated in the consultation via focus group or alternate forms of data collection (questionnaire or report) include:

- Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness
- Addictions Sector
- Family Sector
- Women Fleeing Violence Sector
- Seniors and Special Needs Housing Sector
- Calgary Interagency Council on Homelessness
- Immigrant Housing Sector

2. Interview Guide

1. How did the 2013 flood impact your agency?
 - Any impacts to: Clients? Fundraising? Communication? Volunteer management? Staff/HR? Public relations? Resources/resource management? Services? Decision making?
 - Any “second wave” impacts or impacts that emerged only after the initial crisis was over?
2. Do you think that the flood impacted collaboration in the sector? (If yes, how?)
 - Were existing collaborative relationships or activities strengthened during this time? (If yes, how?)
 - Did the culture of the sector change in any way? (If yes, how?)
 - Did your agency find itself working in new ways with other organizations?
 - Did you witness other agencies working together in new ways?
 - What was the best example of collaboration you witnessed during or after the flood?
3. Have any of these changes been sustained?
 - If yes, how?
 - If no, why not? What would have helped?
4. Do you have any recommendations for how to build on what worked during the flood?
 - Any implications for: Funding? Processes/Practices? Policy? Tools or structures to support shared resource management or decision making?
5. What (if any) collaboration-related issues or challenges arose during or after the flood?
 - Were there any collaborative issues in: Meeting client needs? Communication/information management? Decision making? Resource management/distribution?
6. What is needed to address these issues?
 - Any implications for: Funding? Processes/Practices? Policy? Tools or structures to support shared resource management or decision making?
7. Reflecting on the way the sector did (or didn't) work together during the flood, what has been your biggest learning about collaboration?
 - What (if anything) would your agency do differently next time?
8. Do you have anything else to add?

3. Sector Committee Discussion Guide

1. In what ways (if any) did the flood impact collaboration in the sector?
 - Were existing collaborative relationships or activities strengthened during this time? (If yes, how?)
 - Did any new collaborative relationships or activities emerge during or after the flood?
 - Did the culture of the sector change in any way? (If yes, how?)
 - Does anyone have a good example of collaboration that they can share?
2. What (if any) collaboration-related issues or challenges arose during or after the flood?
 - Were there any collaborative issues related to: Meeting client needs? Communication/information management? Decision making? Resource management/distribution?
3. Do you have any recommendations for how to build on what worked or address what didn't work?
 - Any implications for: Funding? Processes/Practices? Policy? Tools or structures to support shared resource management or decision making?
 - Anything that you would do differently next time?
4. Do you have anything else to add?

4. Questionnaire

CACHH Stars and Stories from the Flood of 2013

We need your help! CACHH is gathering stories about how the homeless sector worked together during and after the flood. The information will culminate in a report for agencies and funders that will offer recommendations for how to further strengthen collaboration in the sector.

Please take a few moments to respond to the questions below and send them via email to Elizabeth Dozois at Word on the Street Consulting by **January 30, 2014** (wordonthestreet@shaw.ca). Your answers can be typed directly into this document. (Note: While we may quote you directly in the report, we will not include any identifiers).

Feel free to contact Elizabeth or Sean French if you have any questions or concerns. Elizabeth can be reached at (403) 230-3785, and Sean can be reached at (403) 718-8548.

Name:

Organization:

1. Do you feel that collaboration in the sector was strengthened, weakened or stayed the same during the flood? Why?
2. What examples of good collaboration (if any) did you witness during the flood?
3. What (if any) collaboration-related issues or challenges arose during or after the flood? (Is there anything you would do differently next time?)
4. Do you have any recommendations for how to build on what worked or address what didn't work? (Are there any implications for: Funding? Processes/Practices? Policy? Tools or structures to support shared resource management or decision making?)
5. Do you have anything else to add?

Thank you for participating.

Please email your responses to wordonthestreet@shaw.ca by January 24, 2014.

