



BUILDING CAPACITY:

A \$1.5 million dollar campaign to build resiliency and capacity in First Nation communities.

Research has shown that First Nation communities in Canada are more vulnerable to injury, natural disasters, family violence and suicide. Their children are disproportionately subject to sexual exploitation and abuse relative to other Canadian children.¹ Despite these challenges, First Nation communities are becoming increasingly empowered.

Unfortunately, very few communities have the capacity to implement sustainable programs that will help improve the quality of life, health and safety of their residents. The Strength and Spirit Campaign is an initiative of the Ontario Zone of the Canadian Red Cross. It is intended to improve and enhance relationships and partnerships with First Nation communities across the province in order to more effectively deliver humanitarian assistance and improve the lives of vulnerable people across the province.

CANADIAN
RED CROSS

Make a powerful change in Canada's future. Invest in the efforts of the Canadian Red Cross to improve the quality of life for our First Nation communities.



A UNIQUE AND INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIP: HOW THE RED CROSS WILL HELP

The successful completion of the Strength and Spirit Campaign will see the Canadian Red Cross work in partnership with First Nation communities to develop their capacity to promote health, prevent abuse and violence, and prepare for and respond to disasters and emergencies. Ultimately our goal is to improve the quality of life for members of these communities.

One of the first significant components of the Strength and Spirit Campaign will be the establishment of two Red Cross satellite offices in First Nation communities – one in northern Ontario and the other in southern Ontario. These satellite offices will be the first of their kind in the province, and will act as hubs of excellence to support the development and delivery of programs and services to meet the needs of surrounding communities.

The satellite offices will be a partnership between the communities where they are established and the Canadian Red Cross. This will help to not only build capacity, but also ensure sustainability. An existing Red Cross branch will provide mentoring for the First Nations satellite offices to ensure consistency of Red Cross programs, policies and procedures.

Staff and volunteers for the new offices will be drawn from the community to ensure programming addresses the cultural diversity of First Nation communities. Programs in our two satellite offices will initially focus on disaster management, and violence and abuse prevention.

The Canadian Red Cross has a strong mandate in emergency response – not just internationally, but right here in Canada – and we are able to quickly mobilize our expertise and a network of trained volunteers to respond to needs immediately. The Red Cross will educate community members and build capacity for future emergencies through preparedness activities and volunteer training.

The Canadian Red Cross violence and abuse prevention program acknowledges the history, challenges and potential of First Nation communities as it explores issues relating to abuse, neglect and interpersonal violence. The program empowers participants to name and reclaim the past, and begin the transition from the cycle of violence, to the circle of healing.

In addition to these two programs, the community will also benefit from an emphasis on injury prevention. Injuries are higher in the First Nations population compared to the provincial average. Treating injuries in rural and remote communities is more complicated because fewer health care facilities and hospitals are available. By training community members in first aid and water safety, the Red Cross will help to make those communities safer for all residents.

A reverse RFP (Request for Proposal) process will be used to select the location of Red Cross satellite offices. Interested First Nation communities will demonstrate

“The efforts of the Canadian Red Cross have been instrumental in addressing immediate, short-term needs and will help to ensure the safety and well-being of our most vulnerable community members during the winter months.”

~Chief Theresa Spence, Attawapiskat First Nation,
following the community's housing crisis in December, 2011.



FIRST NATION FACTS

The Chiefs in Ontario (CIO) recognize 133 First Nation communities within the province. One in four of these communities is accessible only by air year-round, or by air and ice road in the winter. Life in these communities is very different from what other Canadians may be used to.

- Poverty reduces the ability of some Aboriginal people to fulfill their basic needs. That ability plummets further when disaster strikes (such as flooding or forest fires). An estimated 80% of Aboriginal people living on reserves have an income of less than \$30,000 per year.²
- The child poverty rate for non-Aboriginal children in Canada is 15%. The poverty rate for Aboriginal children is almost 30%. Living in poverty has shown to result in poorer health conditions, over-crowded housing, lower educational attainment, increased risk of deviant behaviour, depression and other emotional problems and a higher instance of family dysfunction³.
- Injuries are the greatest single cause of death for Aboriginal people under 45 in Canada, a much higher rate than in the general Canadian population.⁴
- Drowning is the second most common cause of death among all Aboriginal people. In some communities boating-related drownings exceed the number of motor vehicle fatalities.
- First Nations, Inuit and Métis youth are disproportionately vulnerable to abuse. Nearly 40% of First Nations children living on reserve had experienced exposure to family violence.
- The overall suicide rate among First Nation communities is about twice that of the Canadian population. Aboriginal youth are 5 to 6 times more likely to die of suicide than their peers in the general population.
- Ontario has the largest Aboriginal population in Canada, with an estimated 21 per cent of Canada's total Aboriginal population living here. The population is growing, with an increase of 28.7 per cent from 2001 – 2006, compared to an increase of just 6.6 per cent in the general population. More than a quarter of Ontario's Aboriginal people are 15 years of age or younger.

their interest, involvement and investment in a partnership with the Canadian Red Cross to serve their surrounding region.

In November 2012, the Red Cross, along with community officials, were pleased to announce that the first Red Cross satellite office in an Ontario First Nation community will be located at Moose Cree First Nation in Moose Factory. The community of Moose Cree will be the focal point of activity and act as a hub of excellence, providing support for the surrounding First Nations communities including Attawapiskat, Kashechewan, Fort Albany and two independent bands. It is anticipated that the partnership between Red Cross and Moose Cree First Nation will increase capacity in this community and be a sustainable model that will be replicated in Southern Ontario.

Establishing Red Cross satellite offices in First Nation communities across the province is only one component of the Strength & Spirit campaign. The campaign will also fund innovative projects designed to expand Red Cross programming throughout the entire province. Disaster preparedness and response, as well as violence and abuse prevention programs are key strengths of the Canadian Red Cross and we will work to bring these services to as many First Nation communities as possible. Working in partnership with these communities, we can help their citizens to lead healthier and safer lives.





The Canadian Red Cross has been identified as the top humanitarian service organization for the public, corporate Canada and governments on both domestic and international fronts.⁵

Our national reach and long history of working in partnership with First Nation communities, organizations and individuals gives us the necessary understanding to continue helping communities build their own capacity and reduce vulnerability. Through respectful and productive relationships, the Red Cross recognizes the strength and diversity of First Nation, Inuit and Métis communities. The Red Cross will work to

educate those living in First Nation communities about making safe choices, preventing injuries and responding to emergency situations. Changes that will make a significant difference in the quality of life for members of First Nation communities.

The Red Cross is committed to providing long-term services and support for communities requiring our assistance.

CONTACT US

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¹ Assembly of First Nations, "Sexual Exploitation/Abuse of First Nations Children". See <http://64.26.129.156/cmslib/general/Sex-Ex.pdf>

² First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey, 2002-2003.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Assembly of First Nations, "Injury Prevention Fact Sheets" (2006).

⁵ Environics Marketing Study. (2008, April). Public Safety Canada Public Survey.



"The Canadian Red Cross is poised to make a significant impact for First Nation communities. With the help of our donors, we will implement long-term, sustainable solutions leading to a better quality of life."

~Diana Borowski, Director, Department of Philanthropy