



WEBINAR

Centraide of Greater Montreal's Investment Strategy

Episode 1:

Guidelines for Territorial Equity



Centraide
of Greater Montreal

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Introduction and background | A vision founded on the values of equity and social justice

Centraide strives to help create a strong and supportive community fabric for vulnerable people. This commitment is reflected in Centraide's constant pursuit of equity both in the funds it allocates to different neighbourhoods and the support it provides to agencies based on diverse socioeconomic and demographic realities.

Territorial equity aims to guarantee fair access to resources for all people in vulnerable situations, no matter where they live. Historically, Centraide has concentrated its investments in Montreal's central neighbourhoods that have great needs and more community stakeholders. However, neighbourhood realities have evolved and populations and needs have changed. Centraide must therefore aim to allocate its investments more equitably based on current neighbourhood conditions.





Questions | Answers

About investments



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Questions | Answers

About investments

- 1. Do we have an idea of the current distribution of Centraide funds by neighbourhood? This will give us an idea of future variations.**

Yes, all our investments in Greater Montreal are broken down by neighbourhood. This technical breakdown is easy enough to demonstrate. However, it is essential to note that many agencies serve populations **outside their respective neighborhoods**. This data must therefore be analyzed with caution, and we do not officially communicate it from this perspective. Nevertheless, you can always consult our website to find out about our investments by agency and project.

- 2. Are commitments with agencies annual or over three years?**

Contracts can be for one, three or six years. Centraide aims to establish long-term partnerships with agencies. Most collaboration agreements are for a three-year period and can be renewed. However, Centraide sometimes offers one-year contracts for a variety of reasons, such as one-off projects, agencies in follow-up or the need to perfect a thought process. For all these reasons, many commitments are made on an annual basis.

- 3. Why are we announcing this intention for equity when, personally, I've been hearing about it for the past two years?**

Moving towards greater investment equity is an intention we shared in 2021. Over the past few years, we have taken concrete steps in this direction by investing more steadily in areas historically under-invested by Centraide, and by announcing reductions in investments to certain agencies, in order to ensure a more equitable distribution of resources. A few years ago, we began to base our decisions on evidence, taking into account territorial equity in certain neighbourhoods, and ensuring that we were moving in the right direction. This approach has enabled us to better understand the impact of our actions and to adapt along the way, reinforcing our determination and intention for the future. Today, we are reiterating this determination and announcing our intention to step up our efforts over the coming months. From 2025 onwards, all investments will be analyzed with territorial equity in mind.

- 4. If I understand correctly, these analyses will be taken into account for investments from 2025-2026. But what about investments from 2024-2025?**

Indeed, the equity perspective will be integrated into all investments made in 2025 and 2026. However, we have maintained a certain degree of equity in investments made in 2024-2025, particularly in territories where analysis and reflection were more advanced.

5. How precise will the three-year scenario be? Will it target the amount per agency?

Targeted amounts will be allocated by territory, providing flexibility for the team and volunteers to prioritize certain issues based on territory-specific analyses.

6. Will neighborhoods be involved in investment decisions?

In keeping with our usual approach, our ongoing relationship will encourage exchanges with neighborhoods and agencies. These exchanges will enable us to finalize the analyses needed to make the next investment decisions.



Questions | Answers

About the methodology



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About the methodology

7. What do we mean by repositioning?

The repercussions of this approach will vary from one territory to another. Depending on local circumstances, the level of investment may be adjusted upwards, downwards or repositioned. In other words, at the end of a collaboration contract (because we intend to respect all our contracts), Centraide may choose to direct its investments towards other agencies, other issues or other target populations, whether in the same neighbourhood or in another territory.

The changes will be more noticeable in some areas. In areas where investment adjustments will be more significant, they will be carried out over several years to mitigate their impact.

8. We're talking about a redistribution of funding. Generally speaking, what percentage of changes do you plan to make to your overall investments?

Investment repositioning should represent less than 10% of our overall annual investment. It should be noted that not all territories will be affected by these repositionings.

9. How did Centraide come up with this portrait of poverty?

Centraide of Greater Montreal documents the evolution of poverty and the realities experienced on its territory, at the fine scale of neighbourhoods and municipalities. In addition to this territorial reading, we are interested in the socio-demographic factors associated with an increased risk of poverty.

Some groups of the population are more at risk of poverty: single-parent families, people living alone, people with disabilities, recent immigrants or those with precarious status (particularly non-permanent residents), and members of visible minorities. In the Greater Montreal area, these groups are more prevalent in certain neighborhoods and territories, requiring greater resources adapted to current realities. The areas where needs were once greatest are not necessarily the same today.

10. Will we have access to analysis tools?

The social development team carries out territorial analyses using a variety of sources, such as statistical data, social development plans drawn up by local communities and exchanges with local players. For many years, these exchanges have enriched our analyses by providing us with relevant perspectives. This approach will continue and contribute to improving equity-related parameters.

Given that we use several analytical tools, it would be delicate to share and present them out of context, as this could lead to misinterpretations. For this reason, we will share with you certain elements of these tools as required, but not their entirety. Beyond the tools, we are committed to explaining the decision-making process in detail, and to providing you with the

elements on which our decisions concerning your organization are based, as well as the analyses that underpin them.

11. What are the six indicators that will be used in the territorial analysis?

The principle of equity refers to a sense of justice which, in geographical terms, aims to ensure that **everyone has the same conditions of access to resources and to the various benefits of community life**. This is why we use a series of indicators, each of which is weighted. It's important to note that these indicators are based on the two lowest income quintiles, representing 40% of the least affluent people in the territory concerned. The indicators used are: low income (MBM), single parenthood, under-education, people living alone, visible minorities and newcomers.

Equity thus seeks to reduce social injustices linked to territorial organization, in order to meet the needs of the local population. However, equity does not mean that access to community resources is the same everywhere in Greater Montreal: the way each community is supported must be adapted to the specific characteristics of its territory and population.

12. How will Centraide analyze the territorial equity of agencies operating in several territories?

We are aware that some agencies concentrate their activities within a single neighbourhood, while others serve populations on the outskirts. This distinction between local and supralocal agencies (operating significantly in two or three adjacent territories) is established through the ongoing relationship between advisors and agencies, as well as through the information provided by the latter when they complete the profile form. This information enables us to weight an agency's service offering outside its neighborhood, and we take this weighting into account in our analysis.

13. Given that the tool used by the City and the DRSP on territorial equity has certain shortcomings, such as the absence of a causal link between the various indices and the use of census data, thus excluding people experiencing homelessness on the territory, will these shortcomings be taken into account in your own tool?

We have indeed taken into account and learned from the approaches previously undertaken by our partners. Since there is no such thing as a perfect analysis tool, we will be using several sources of information to guide our investment recommendations. We aim to establish clear parameters to provide a frame of reference for defining investment objectives, while taking into account other types of data and analysis, such as neighborhood plans, specific studies, data provided by agencies, etc., as we currently do. This approach allows us to explore different angles and make informed decisions. These analyses will be continually evaluated and can be improved and adjusted at the end of each contract cycle.

14. How are neighborhood evaluations carried out? How do you consider the vulnerability of a population in relation to the neighborhood as a whole? When a neighborhood grows richer, for example, it is often to the detriment of its vulnerable population, which becomes increasingly isolated. So, while our neighborhood is getting richer, our vulnerable populations are getting poorer and more isolated.

Territorial equity is one of the many elements taken into account in the decision-making process surrounding Centraide's investment recommendations. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion remains a top priority for Centraide. With this in mind, we have identified priority populations and issues on which we will focus our efforts, thanks in particular to discussions with community players. Even if these populations represent a small percentage, if they require more intentional support in line with Centraide's strategic orientations for social development, they will be prioritized in our investments.

It's also worth pointing out that we don't "assess" neighbourhoods, but rather profile them in collaboration with the community. We are currently making a special effort to reach out to stakeholders outside the Centraide network, in order to exchange perspectives on neighborhoods that may differ from our current analyses.

15. How often will the equity process be updated?

Centraide aims to have a clear, global vision of all its investments for the next three years. As this complex exercise must be carried out progressively, the scenario will be a sort of roadmap guiding the investments to be made between now and 2028.



Questions | Answers

About the agencies



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About the agencies

16. When will I receive information about my agency?

As part of our ongoing relationship, you will have the opportunity to share your comments and questions with the advisors responsible for your agency. This is a complex process, with many aspects to consider. It's normal to feel uncomfortable at times. Please note that our analyses have not yet been finalized for the entire territory, so it's possible that you won't get all the answers to your questions just yet. However, we are committed to completing our work by the end of 2024, so that we can share our investment scenarios with you before decisions are made for 2025-2026.

17. How will neighborhoods be informed?

If necessary, information meetings may be organized in the neighbourhoods to present Centraide's intentions for the coming years. In addition, as part of our ongoing relationship, you will have the opportunity to share your comments and questions with the advisors responsible for your agency.

18. A neighbourhood that isn't targeted may still have great needs. How can we make sure we don't let them down?

We're fully aware of the extent of the needs, and it's impossible for Centraide of Greater Montreal to meet them all. That's why we need to strengthen our alignment with our mission and orientations, focus our priorities and be intentional in our investments to maximize their impact.

19. What is the expected impact on agencies providing services across Quebec? Will they be affected by these orientations? Will an agency that already operates on a regional scale, i.e. not limited to a single district or borough, be affected by these orientations?

Centraide has been working with regional agencies since its creation, and will continue to support them in the years to come. The perspective of territorial equity will also be applied on a regional scale, in order to distribute our investments more equitably throughout Greater Montreal (Laval, Montreal and the South Shore).

Whether through support and participation in collective initiatives or concerted action, the development of projects or the staging of events, the contribution of all parties involved and impacted by social issues is of crucial importance. We aspire to adopt a global perspective across the entire territory, while taking into account our fields of action, in order to guarantee fair and equitable deployment of our investments across our network.

20. With regard to territorial equity, how do you plan to work with agencies located in highly vulnerable neighborhoods, in particular with time-limited agreements (three or six years)?

Contrairement à certains autres partenaires philanthropiques, Centraide ne dispose pas d'un important capital financier accumulé qui lui permettrait de faire des projections sur plusieurs années. Nous dépendons des campagnes de financement annuelles. Bien que les donateurs nous aient permis d'atteindre des records lors des campagnes des trois dernières années, nous ne sommes pas à l'abri d'une collecte de fonds moins importante que les années précédentes. C'est pourquoi nous devons prévoir des mécanismes nous permettant de mettre fin à la collaboration avec un organisme ou de réduire son financement en cas de difficulté, même si son action est très pertinente. Les contrats à durée déterminée nous permettent de gérer ce risque de manière responsable.

On the other hand, as we have seen in recent years, we are not immune to a major issue or crisis that could force us to react quickly to support agencies (such as the COVID crisis, massive migratory flows, or the issue of homelessness). If we wish to maintain, or even increase, this agility, we need to make a fixed-term commitment to ensure that we have the necessary funds to respond to emerging issues. However, if an issue persists on the territory and an agency remains relevant in tackling it, its contract will be renewed, as is currently the case for the vast majority of our contractual agreements.

21. Can under-financed neighborhoods expect an increase in funding?

Discussions have already begun in most of the areas concerned, leading in some cases to additional investments in recent years. In some cases, this has led to additional investment over the past few years, both in terms of consolidating investments in existing agencies, and in terms of new collaborations. Agencies wishing to express their interest in working with Centraide can do so via our website at <https://www.centraide-mtl.org/en/profiles-of-supported-agencies-and-projects/>