

Growing Together at Weledah

Weledah Garden Case Study



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ECOLOGY NORTH





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1 THE PROGRAM

Growing Together at Weledeh is a school-based gardening program that facilitated hands-on learning with students, teachers, and volunteer community garden mentors. Students have been learning the joys of growing their own food in the garden for the past five years. Weledeh Catholic School (WCS), the Yellowknife Community Garden Collective (YCGC) and Ecology North have worked together to deliver the program each year.

2 HOW IT STARTED

In the fall of 2009, Weledeh Catholic School and the Yellowknife Community Garden Collective partnered to build a school - community garden on the playground at Weledeh School. This initiative was sparked by the vision of former Weledeh principal Merrill Dean, who sought to create a school garden that would provide hands-on educational opportunities in local food production for Weledeh students and their families.

In 2010, Yellowknife Community Garden Collective volunteers wrote grant proposals to secure funding for garden construction materials, and held a series of work bees to build the Weledeh community - school garden. Some Weledeh students spontaneously joined in for the weekend and evening work bees to help move soil and learn how to paint and pound nails!

In 2011, Ecology North and the Yellowknife Community Garden Collective were excited to partner with Weledeh School to develop a school garden education program, "Growing Together at Weledeh". This program brings together Weledeh students, teachers and experienced gardeners to engage in hands-on, fun learning about local food production.

3 PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Growing Together at Weledeh consists of a six-week program of hands-on educational activities to stimulate the curiosity, skill-development and confidence of Weledeh School students in growing vegetables at the Weledeh School Garden, and a fall harvest sharing celebration.

The overall goals of the project are to engage Weledeh students and staff in planning and planting vegetable garden plots at the Weledeh School garden, in cooperation with members of the Yellowknife Community Garden Collective. By participating first-hand in growing and harvesting a garden, students develop an interest and skills in food production and preparation of healthy, locally grown foods.

Specific objectives of the program include the following:

- Engage Weledeh students and staff in planning and planting vegetable garden plots at the Weledeh School garden, in cooperation with members of the Yellowknife Community Garden Collective.
- Support Weledeh students in developing interest, hands-on skills and confidence in growing a garden.
- Stimulate curiosity and interest in growing and harvesting local foods.
- Develop activities and curricula that can be used by local educators to integrate learning about growing a garden into math, science, language and health curricula.
- Build community by encouraging interaction and learning among Weledeh students and staff and community garden members.
- Encourage inter-generational learning and interaction.



4 THE PARTNERS

Ecology North partnered with Weledeh Catholic School and the Yellowknife Community Garden Collective since the inception of the *Growing Together at Weledeh* program.

4.1 WELEDEH CATHOLIC SCHOOL

The idea for this program was originally developed in close cooperation with Weledeh Catholic School. It was former Weledeh Principal, Merrill Dean, who envisioned building a school - community garden on the Weledeh playground, and developing educational programs to engage Weledeh students in hands-on, experiential learning in local food production.

The community garden is located on the school grounds, protected by a fence. The main liaison teacher coordinates the school involvement in the program. She describes the program to the grade 3 teachers, discusses the schedule with individual teachers, determines the best day and time for students to leave the classroom and join Ecology North staff and volunteers in the garden to learn. The main liaison teacher also facilitates communication and messaging with parents, students, and school staff about the garden, potlucks and any other garden related activities.

4.2 YELLOWKNIFE COMMUNITY GARDEN COLLECTIVE (YCGC)

Yellowknife Community Garden Collective volunteers have led and carried out the construction of the garden. Garden Collective volunteers wrote grant applications to raise funds for garden construction materials and soil, built the garden with volunteer labour through a series of work bees in 2010.

They decided to modify the normal structure of gardens to allow for the development of this program. Every community garden in the collective has an obligation to donate a quarter of their crop to charity organizations around town to increase local food security. Charity organizations include places like the Salvation Army, the Centre for Northern Families, and Lynn's Place. However at the Weledeh Garden the donation quarter of each plot goes to the school. As a result, the students garden alongside the community gardens. Students use the garden's infrastructure like water, watering cans, and tools.



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As the program developed, the role of YCGC gardeners became less pronounced since it was not obligatory to volunteer with students. However, they fill a key role by continuing to water the student's gardens or donation plots. Without this contribution the gardens would not thrive.

YCGC plays an ongoing role in communication with gardeners about the program, volunteer opportunities, promotion of shared events and troubleshooting with the school and Ecology North.

4.3 ECOLOGY NORTH

Ecology North plays a key role bringing the partners together, and facilitating the delivery of the program. Ecology North recruits and schedules volunteer garden mentors, facilitates sessions with students, and takes care of other logistics such as coordination of supplies. Ecology North also coordinates communication between all program participants. Ecology North plays a less central role in the Garden Club activities.

5 PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Growing Together at Weledeh is a six-week program of hands-on educational activities to stimulate the curiosity, skill-development and confidence of Weledeh School students in growing vegetables at the Weledeh School Garden. The program runs in May and June. At the end of the garden season, in September, fall harvest celebrations bring together student gardeners, their families and volunteer garden mentors.

Ecology North has aimed to link the *Growing Together at Weledeh* program to the curriculum and learning objectives for the classes involved, and also to make involvement in this program as straightforward for teachers as possible. The first session takes place in the classroom. By the second session the weather is better so that learning can take place outside in the Weledeh Garden.

Students in the participating classes are organized into teams of 4-5 students; each team gets the donation section of a specific garden plot. Teams are matched with a volunteer mentor. Ecology North organizes the volunteer mentors, who normally are Community Garden Collective gardeners, Ecology North members or other gardening enthusiasts connected to Ecology North. Each session starts with some brief group learning including a review of the rules, and the garden song. Most of the session is spent in the small groups, learning and working with the garden mentors on their garden plots.

Topics of the educational program include the following:

- What kinds of plants can we grow in our garden? Planning a garden, learning about what plants need to grow and what plants grow well in Yellowknife
- Starting plants indoors
- Soil & Preparing the soil for planting (Composting, manure, etc.)
- Planting the garden
- Seeds - what is a seed, life of a seed, choosing seeds for our garden
- Nutrients, plant nutrition and human nutrition (nutrient-cycle game that students act out)
- Plant nutrition and human nutrition
- Observing the garden, preliminary harvest (if possible)
- Garden maintenance (Weeding and thinning)
- Fall harvest activity and celebration meal (after-school, for all students who had been involved the previous year) in September

5.1 PLANNING FOR THE MISMATCH IN TIMING BETWEEN THE SCHOOL YEAR AND GARDEN SEASON

We recognize that one of the challenges for school gardens in Canada is that the school year and growing season do not match well in most regions of Canada. This program has been planned in the following ways to minimize challenges associated with this timing:

- This school-based education program engages students in hands-on learning about preparing to plant, planting a garden and the first stage of early harvesting, as possible within the school year calendar.
- Each student garden team is matched with two gardeners who grow vegetables at a plot of the Weledeh Community Garden (garden plots are always shared between two gardeners). Community garden plots are approximately 4m by 5m in size (20 m²), and one quarter of the plot is used to grow food for community organizations that help to address local food security needs. Within the community garden, this is referred to as the "donation quarter" of each garden plot. At the Weledeh School Community Garden, each student team with their volunteer mentor uses the "donation quarter" from one garden plot to plant their vegetable garden.
- Effort is made each year to ensure that Weledeh garden students have the opportunity to meet the community gardeners who they are sharing a plot with. As a back-up plan, if Weledeh students are not always able to visit their garden through the summer, the community garden members maintain these special student garden plots that form a quarter of their garden.
- We understand that teachers are often away in the summer, and we do not expect teachers to maintain the garden plots of their students over the summer holidays.
- The harvest activity is another opportunity for interaction between the community gardeners and the student gardeners.

Expectations for teachers participating in the Growing Together program:

- Interest in engaging students in a hands-on, fun program to stimulate learning and skill-development in growing vegetables.
- Willing to dedicate one 40-minute class / week to this program.
- Willing to meet with the main liaison teacher once or twice before the start of the program, to ensure smooth delivery of the program and to maintain communication between the teachers and *Growing Together at Weledeh* program.
- We understand that teachers are often away in the summer, and we do not expect teachers to maintain the garden plots of their students over the summer holidays.

5.2 SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

The six-week garden education program takes place in May and June. Each of the participating Weledeh school classes partakes in one 40-minute class per week. These 40-minute sessions are held back-to-back to make the most efficient use of the time of adult volunteers who come to the school to work with the students. Teachers may choose to spend additional class time carrying out associated class projects or learning.



A spring Potluck and barbeque is hosted annually to facilitate interaction between the students, parents, teachers, volunteers, and Weledeh gardeners.

A harvest activity and fall celebration for all participating in the Growing Together at Weledeh program is scheduled each September.

The following information is circulated to Yellowknife Community Garden Collective gardeners and other potential volunteers each year.

Schedule of Activities

Session	Date & Time	Activities and Learning	5-7 Volunteers Needed
1	Wednesday, May 14 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning our garden What plants grow well here? Starting seeds indoors to later transplant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No volunteers needed (in class session)
2	Wednesday, May 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soil Preparing the garden for planting Composting, adding manure 	
3	Wednesday, May 28 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planting the garden 	
4	Wednesday, June 4 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caring for our garden Planting continued if needed 	
5	Wednesday, June 11 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nutrients Plant nutrition and human nutrition 	
6	Wednesday, June 18 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observing the garden Starting to harvest Weeding, thinning 	

Schedule for each day of activities:

Time	Activities
10:55-11:05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of the day's activities for volunteer garden mentors at the picnic table at the garden Facilitators prepare materials for the day's activities
11:05-11:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Class
11:45-12:20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Second Class

**Specific Dates and times are modified each year depending on class scheduling.

6 GARDEN CLUB

Garden Club was created in 2013 because of student interest. Elizabeth Munroe (our main teacher liaison) had students asking about the garden. They wanted to garden! They also knew their class would not have the opportunity because they had participated in a previous year. One thing led to another, and the Garden Club was born. It is a great way to engage students, who moved to the school after grade 3 and want to garden; who have older siblings gardening and don't want to miss out; and who loved it so much they are excited to continue growing their own food.

Part of the success of Garden Club is the fact it grew organically. It was a response to student demands. The *Growing Together at Weledeh* program is a real success since it inspires students to the point that they want to participate in Garden Club.

Participants in garden club are generally much more self-directed then during the class sessions. They seek out advice and guidance, but generally are self-motivated to plant, make their garden plot look good, and keep it looking good (this is to say, keep it free of weeds). Garden Club allows students to spend more time in the garden. They have from 1-1.5 hours in the garden, whereas the classroom sessions are limited to 40 minutes. The added time creates a really nice relaxing work atmosphere in the garden.

7 CHALLENGES

7.1 ECOLOGY NORTH

Over the past five years the program experiences recurring challenges including access to water, funding, volunteer predictability, strong links between students and gardeners, and timing.

- Water can be a challenge for any outdoor sessions scheduled in May. The garden is serviced with above ground water. The City of Yellowknife hooks up the water in a scheduled approach which sees residence (on trucked water) serviced first, and facilities (like gardens or baseball parks) serviced second. As a result, the planting session almost definitely falls a week before the water is hooked up (or the week it is being hooked up). Therefore, logistics are a little bit more challenging and water has to be hauled from the school.
- Funding is a challenge for Ecology North. The biggest challenge is securing funds to cover staff time from year to year. It is often easier to get funding to cover the cost of supplies. However, hours are required to ensure the program runs smoothly.
- Volunteers are the heart of this program. Yet, it can be challenging to recruit sufficient numbers of people in a consistent and predictable way. Somehow you always have to be ready to roll with the fact there may be less volunteers then anticipated.
- Timing

- School year vs growing season. Any school program is faced with the challenge of the school year, not syncing up with the growing season. Although, this could be seen as an insurmountable issue the program has been set up in a way that has allowed for less negative impacts of school being out all summer, which could cause plants to die.
- One year, getting classes to the garden on-time was the biggest challenge. Every week the classes were late, or the teacher forgot, or wanted to leave early. This was challenging because a lot of work had been put into preparing the sessions and volunteers were prepared and waiting for students to arrive. We didn't want to waste our volunteer's time.
- Lastly, the partners had hoped to facilitate the relationship between students and community gardeners. However, to date that has not been a huge success. That being said, one or two relationships have flourished as a result of this program. The student and community gardeners would happily meet to water and care for their garden plot throughout the summer. However, it did not always go according to the vision.

7.2 SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 1

Question	What was the top challenge to get the <i>Growing Together at Weledeh</i> program up and running? Over the past 5 years? Moving into the future? How were/can the challenges (be) addressed?
YCGC/Ecology North (EN)	<p>From my perspective, the top challenge to get <i>Growing Together at Weledeh</i> up and running initially was mobilizing a wide variety of volunteers to fundraise to gather funds to build the garden, organize and coordinate volunteers to construct the garden, and then to organize and coordinate the start of the <i>Growing Together at Weledeh</i> educational program. Dwayne was instrumental in this initial work as a super-star volunteer extraordinaire, raising funds, designing the garden, ordering materials, being the volunteer general contractor and coordinator for eager, but not so construction-skilled volunteers!</p> <p>The educational program is made stronger by the involvement of many diverse people: staff and students at Weledeh, community gardeners, EN staff and volunteers -- it takes a lot of time to coordinate all of these people so everyone gets the most out of the experience! In particular, an on-going challenge has been to support community gardeners in understanding what their role in the <i>Growing Together at Weledeh</i> program is - especially when there is turnover each year in gardeners.</p> <p>Over the past five years, from my perspective the top challenges have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing funding each year to cover the time for EN staff to coordinate the many people involved in the <i>Growing Together at Weledeh</i> program. Staff time to provide coordination is instrumental to the program's success; yet it is often difficult to access funding for on-going programs, even if the program has shown to be successful. First-time project funding is often easier to obtain than funding for on-going programs. • It takes a lot of time to coordinate the many different people who are involved in making the program a success each year. • Supporting YCGC gardeners in understanding their role in the <i>Growing Together at Weledeh</i> program; ensuring good communication with Weledeh gardeners (especially in this

	<p>age of many emails, where gardeners don't always read email communication sent to them). It is also a challenge to ensure that all gardeners obtain their criminal records checks prior to the garden season -- it can be tedious and challenging for the membership coordinator to get everyone to go obtain their criminal records check. It's equally challenging then to determine what to do when people don't get around to getting their CRC done - should they be removed from the garden?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vandalism of garden plots and garden shed at Weledeh Garden <p>How were these challenges addressed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination of EN staff in seeking out new funding sources [...]. • Using templates and past communication tools in future years - to try to reduce the administrative burden of communicating / coordinating with many different people each year. The creation of an MOU among Weledeh School, YCGC and EN helped to clearly describe relationships and expectations at the start of the project. • YCGC gardeners - In 2014, YCGC wrote up a short 'guide to gardening at Weledeh' to help gardeners understand their role, interaction with students in the <i>Growing Together at Weledeh</i> program etc. We tried following up by having a YCGC volunteer board member call each new gardener at Weledeh early in the growing season to see if the gardeners had any questions re. the <i>Growing Together at Weledeh</i> program, how it worked, etc. There is likely still opportunity for a bit more work in this area[...]. • Vandalism: Caihla has had some creative solutions -- working directly with youth who have been found vandalizing the garden etc. Jennie has also taken some very positive and proactive actions on this front in the past [...] Due to vandalism concerns, some gardeners request to not garden at Weledeh.
YCGC	<p>Timing and organization to have proper seeds to plant has been a challenge. This year we are requesting donations from Canadian Tire early. Not having enough Volunteers for the after school program has been an issue sometimes. We could get more parents involved, and have more outlets to find volunteers.</p> <p>Kids in the garden after school hours have caused some distress to gardeners - ripping up plants, trampling through gardens, Tools and other items in toolshed have gone missing. Having the students know the combination for the lock, has allowed for non-gardening students to know as well. We could change the code after the school year is done, but I do believe it is important for the students to have access in the summertime.</p>
YCS – Main liaison teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing 3 different organizations to have volunteers, money etc. • We need to meet at the end of the year after the harvest to set out tasks to ensure there is less of a scramble every spring. • The weeds in the garden are a hindrance. They have been getting worse over the years.
YCS – Founding Administration	<p>Growing Together was part of the "whole" idea of a community garden at Weledeh. As the principal who visioned the program it was really the desire to see a garden plot at the school, where students would have an opportunity to learn something about gardening and growing food, while at the same time, seeing some unused playground land put to use. Originally I had toyed with doing a school garden - but how would you keep it cared for over the summer -- as well, I was concerned that there would be difficulties with corporate history (keeping it alive after I left). Going the Community Garden route seemed to be the best idea.</p> <p>When I approaching the Community Garden Collective there were a group of people who supported the idea and ran with it. Between support from our board, the KCTC (who donated the shed), a bit of funding from outside sources and some committed volunteers from the Garden collective it was born.</p>

	<p>We built on that with composting and worms as well.</p> <p>I think it was Shannon and [another volunteer] who really made the Growing Together aspect work. I think originally we had the YCGC members commit to having a buddy gardener, but then the plan changed to some classes and education with Ecology North and the use of some of the 25% of community donation plots for growing. Unfortunately, in June of the start up year I had a pretty significant accident that put me in hospital for a long time -- as a result, Shannon et. al. sort of took it on and did all the work! As a result, I really don't have a good handle on the changes in the program.</p>
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8 PROGRAM BENEFITS & SUCCESSES

8.1 ECOLOGY NORTH

Over the passed five years *the Growing Together at Weledeh* program has experienced many successes. The most noteworthy include Garden Club, existing for five consecutive years, student recognition, requests from other schools, and expansion.

- Garden Club!
- 5 consecutive years in operation:
 - 75 average number of students participating per year.
 - 375 total number of students reached over 5 years.
 - 58 volunteers (positive experience interacting with youth & sharing garden knowledge).
- Student Recognition:
 - Weledeh Catholic Schools student group Eco-wolves invited Ecology North to an Assembly for an official thank you & program recognition.
- Request from other schools:
 - Schools request in-class sessions throughout the school year. For example, the St Joseph's School leadership and resiliency program wanted to learn more about soil and composting for their garden.



- Schools request information about starting up programs similar to Growing Together at Weledeh. For example, Ecole J.H.Sissons School.
- Letters of support are requested for similar initiatives. For example the parents advisory committee (PAC) from Mildred Hall School requested a letter of support for funding towards building a garden on their school grounds.
- Expansion
 - Ecology North was invited to facilitate sessions for the first year of a Mildred Hall Garden in 2015.
 - Ecology North received funding to write a garden curriculum, part of which can serve as a guide for teachers to deliver programs in other school similar to the *Growing Together at Weledeh* program.

8.2 SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 2

Question	What do you see as the greatest achievements of the program? What contributed to these successes?
YCGC/EN	<p>From my perspective, the greatest achievements of the program are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The many wonderful moments of learning shared in the garden by students, adult garden mentors and school and EN staff. One of the most rewarding and exciting outcomes of this program has been seeing the sheer excitement of the students taking part in the program, and observing their very active learning through the program: from students showing off their vegetables to describing how they prepared the soil to exclaiming on the street how they had harvested veggies in the summer with their family and made a new dish at home! I will always remember the first year of the program having a young student come up to me at the grocery store in August to tell me about how he and his family had harvested beets from their plot and made a new curry dish with the beets which was so delicious!! I beamed the whole way home reflecting on how exciting it was to see how thrilled the student was and how his whole family had become involved in the <i>Growing Together at Weledeh</i> program! EN staff have created some fun and creative curriculum that supports the <i>Growing Together at Weledeh</i> program, which is instrumental in making the learning fun for everyone! • The fantastic inter-generational and community learning and sharing that is taking place through the program. In addition to the learning the students are experiencing, there are many adult gardeners who are finding much joy in interacting with the students as volunteer adult garden mentors. The dedication of volunteers, and the enthusiastic and friendly coordination by EN staff have contributed to this! It's fun to volunteer for this project -- which always helps in the volunteer recruitment! • The continuity of the program: I'm so appreciative and thrilled that the program has now continued for 5 years, thanks to the dedication and great working relationships among EN staff, Weledeh School and YCGC.

YCGC	The number of students at Weledeh interested in growing food and caring about their gardens has increased. It is a healthy learning activity for many youth who live in the area and it piques interest from other kids in the area. The Concepts of growing food and food sovereignty being taught to grade 3 sticks with them for their future. Getting kids outside and playing in the dirt is really positive and bonding.
YCS – Main liaison teacher	Children have, who in many cases have never seen food outside of a grocery store, been able to plant, care for and grow food in their own gardens. They have learnt patience and how to be helpful. There is a greater respect for nature with many of these students. Many students have experienced the class program and have continued for years in the club bring with them experience and a joy of gardening, nature and food.
WCS – Founding Administration	When I drive by the school, or are going in for work and I see a group of students down in the garden learning about fertilizer and manure, working in the soil, I think -- THIS IS WHAT IT IS MEANT TO BE! I would love to see more involvement and more buy by more classes at the school, but at the same time, just having some kids have the opportunity to be exposed to gardening and sustainable food production is positive for me.

9 VISION FOR THE FUTURE

The final three questions explored in our survey are about the vision for the future of the program. Subsequently, participants were asked to identify which organization would be responsible for implementing any specific visions or recommendations. Ecology North is trying to determine the type of involvement that is sustainable for our organization into the future. Some internal suggestions include scaling back in order to better serve other schools with fledging programs or no existing programs. Although this is currently the most popular suggestion within our organization, the results of this survey indicate something different.

9.1 SURVEY RESULTS - QUESTION 3

Question 3	What is your vision for the future of the program?
YCGC/EN	I very much hope that this program can continue for many years into the future, and be a source of great learning, laughter and community sharing for many years to come! It would be so very exciting to see the program expand to take shape at other schools - especially Mildred Hall School, with its new garden. It would be exciting for community gardeners who garden at Weledeh to take on a more active role in the program, and to fully understand and realize their important role in this program!

YCGC	It would be great to increase knowledge into seed saving. To have students return throughout the summer with their families to continue to care for their gardens. Having parents involved more to help with the start up but to also continue into the summer.
YCS – Main liaison teacher	I would like to see the garden site expanded by a few plots if possible. As far as the garden education program is concerned, I would like to see it continue with our grade 3 classes and the club for grade 3-7s (and siblings in grade 1&2)
WCS – Founding Administration	I would like to see the program continue -- with students engaged in some lessons in the spring and fall about gardening -- learning how to fertilize and make productive soil naturally, how to determine what can be grown in our northern climate - the composting and 'renewable' aspects of gardening. And I want the students to see how things grow! I also want to see a continued building of self-help and resiliency that comes from understanding that you can affect your environment and situation - and I truly believe that gardening helps do that.

9.2 SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 4

Question 4	In the future, how do you see the program functioning? How can we keep the program sustainable? Could you see the program succeeding with Ecology North playing a different role?
YCGC/EN	Did not respond
YCGC	The continued inclusion of school, Ecology North, and garden Collective truly makes it a sustainable project. Having Community Garden members have more contact with their garden buddies would allow for more care to happen in the gardens in the summer. More communication between the two. Ecology North plays a strong role in the teaching and the programming around “Learning Together”. I think that should stay the same.
YCS – Main liaison teacher	I could see the classroom teachers starting to play a bigger role in the garden education program. This is problematic when we have combined classes 2/3 & 3/4 if whole homerooms are out then we have no space for the club [since garden plots will be full of classroom program students]. Large numbers of grade 1s and 2s are difficult to manage in the garden The garden club gets many [inquiries and] phone calls over the year. It is one part of the program I feel that can't be lost.
WCS – Founding Administration	I think that keeping up corporate history is important. Unfortunately, programs die because the people who started them do not necessarily pass on the passion for what is being done. Weledeh will have their fourth principal since this program began in the fall of 2016 -- I really think it needs to be a combined vision and dream of the actors involved now and the administration and staff of the school. Perhaps, with changes of people, and thus the corporate history, it is time to 'revision' with the school, the garden collective and Ecology North -- part of that visioning could include exploring possibilities of funding from outside sources if the need exists. I don't know if Ecology North is having difficulties sustaining their commitment to the program

9.3 SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 5

Question 5	Which partner organization should be responsible for implementing your
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	recommendations/vision? a. Ecology North b. Weledeh Catholic School c. YCGC d. Other: _____
YCGC/EN	Did not respond
YCGC	ALL Of the organizations should work together to continue implementing.
YCS – Main liaison teacher	a. Ecology North: volunteers, you guys do such a great job putting on the activities. Seeds b. Weledeh Catholic School: club, seed purchasing, school plot allocation, and parent volunteers (through PAC?) c. YCGC ---weeding, volunteers, seeds
WCS – Founding Administration	It needs to be a team....Ultimately, the agreement between YCGC and WCS must be done. I think it was for 5 years. So renewal of the partnership(s) really should happen at this point I think in terms of dream and vision.

The results of these questions emphasize very strong support for a continued partnership and teamwork. The suggestion of doing a five-year 're-visioning' exercise with the partner organizations is a great suggestion! It would facilitate clear communication, changes in tasks would be transparent, and it would allow for the creation of a shared vision. This exercise could allow for a transfer of corporate knowledge, but more importantly it would create a shared dream with the people involved currently.

Other noteworthy suggestions include increasing the understanding and involvement of community gardeners, increasing the role of parents, and maintaining clear communication with all partners. One suggestion that will be easy to implement is the idea of bring all three-partner organizations together after the harvest to plan for the following season. Currently, this meeting happens on an ad hoc basis.

10 NEXT STEPS

As a result of this case study, Ecology North sees the next steps for the Growing Together at Weledeh program as follows:

- Meet with Weledeh Catholic School to discuss logistics of the 2016 program;
- Meet with the Yellowknife Community Garden Collective to promote this year's program and recruit volunteers;

- Secure funding for on-going Ecology North involvement (modify involvement based on funding and meeting with Weledeh Catholic School);
- Suggest a 'Re-visioning' exercise with the partners to happen September-October 2016 (scale determined by amount of funding for Ecology North participation);
- Add a meeting of the partner organizations into the planning for shortly after the harvest, so that it becomes part of the yearly schedule;
- Complete a more detailed analysis of the program, including teacher and student or parent feedback.

