

Background

Héma-Québec, a non-profit organization, is responsible for managing the blood supply in Quebec (Canada).

- 1,000 donations of blood per day are needed to meet the demand from Quebec's hospitals.
- 2089 blood drives are held annually, of these:
 - Δ 86% are held on mobile blood drives;
 - Δ 13% in permanent blood donor centers and;
 - Δ 1% on a mobile unit (bus);
- Over 16,000 people volunteer in these blood drives every year.

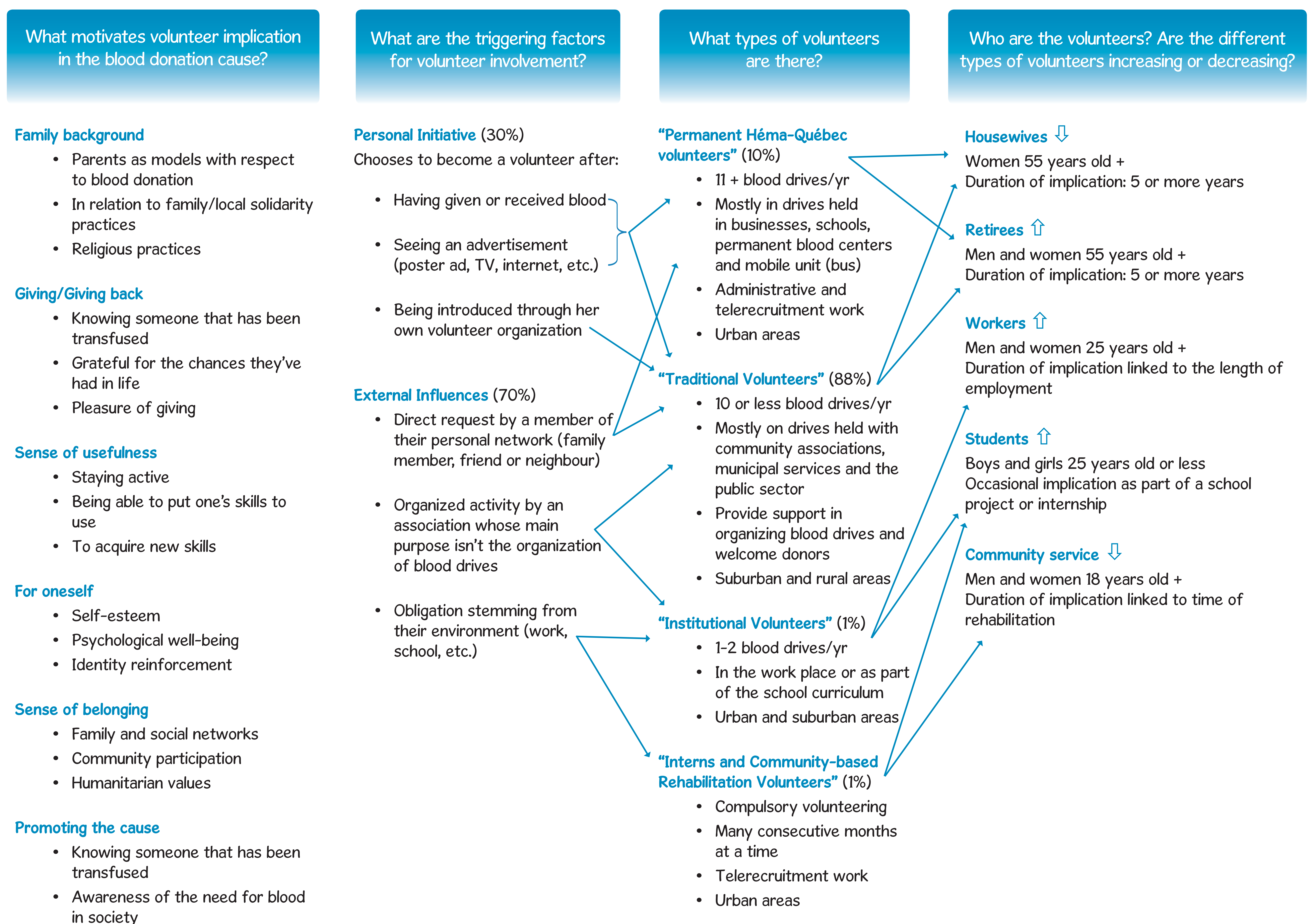
Methods

The research team conducted 64 2-hour long semi-structured interviews with 19 Héma-Québec's member staff and 45 volunteers. Various selection criteria were used in choosing the informants (volunteers), including: age, sex, location, duration and type of involvement.

Objectives

- Describing volunteer profiles and histories of implication
- Understanding volunteer motivations
- Examining their role in the organization of blood drives
- For different volunteer profiles, identify potential future problems for recruitment and retention
- Identify possible solutions to insure long term recruitment and retention of volunteers

Current Volunteer Profiles in Quebec's blood drives



Conclusions

Issues Involving the Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers	Suggested Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The aging of current volunteers • The "housewives" category is decreasing...but the "retirees" group is growing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue pairing associations in order to alleviate their workload and keep the volunteers motivated
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges with regards to the recruitment of new retirees in light of other competing volunteer work and leisure activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch marketing recruitment campaigns based on volunteer motivations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers are mainly recruited by their peers (word of mouth) • Recruitment is limited to the volunteers' social networks, restricting generational and ethnic plurality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform volunteers of the importance of their contribution in recruiting new volunteers • Encourage volunteers to actively participate in recruiting new volunteers • Rely on volunteers who are willing to put in extra effort and show leadership qualities • Support those willing to participate in recruitment drives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places of initiation to volunteer work have changed (from church to school and to the workplace) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow through with continued presence in school and workplace environments (new places)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decline of traditional community organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach new community organizations (in urban areas : volunteer action centers and ethnic communities)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention problems in the "student" and "worker" volunteer categories. They get involved in a limited number of blood drives for a limited period of time (for example, as long as they are students) • Retention problems with school and business blood drive partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rewards program • Focus on encouraging loyalty with partners (schools and businesses) to insure the continuity of blood drives in spite of volunteer turnover.