

## Partners in Action Evaluation Project:

### A learning journey in building the evaluation capacity and evaluative culture of a local community coalition

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July 17, 2015

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to thank everyone who supported me during this process including:

My supervisor, Dr. Catherine Althaus for her words of encouragement and valuable insight;

My client, Annette Sharkey with whom I shared this learning journey;

My family for their patience, support and ongoing belief in me;

And to Darlene McKay, my neighbour, who taught me the importance of community.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### *Introduction*

While community coalitions are a popular way for communities to address local issues, they are notoriously difficult to evaluate due to the complexity and dynamic nature of their work. The many methodological issues are well documented in the literature (Brown, 2010; Chavis, 2001; Feinberg, Greenberg, & Osgood, 2004; Kubisch, 2010; Wandersman, 2003). Nevertheless, there are increasing demands for accountability, and the requirement for evaluation is often driven by funders who expect a return on their investment (Carman, 2007; Janzen, Seskar-Hencic, Dildar, & McFadden, 2012; Wolff, 2010). Similar to other community-based organizations, local community coalitions often lack the necessary time, skills and resources in which to meaningfully engage in evaluation.

The Partners in Action Committee (PIA) is a coalition of representatives from non-profit, governmental and business organizations in Vernon, British Columbia that seeks to address solutions to local social issues with a community development approach (Partners in Action Committee, 2014). Although a well-established committee in the community with a history of successfully working together, the PIA has acknowledged that they have lacked an overall evaluation plan that could assist them with decision-making and learning from the successes and challenges of their work. With their funding contract up for renewal in 2014, the PIA seized the opportunity to examine their relationship to evaluation through this project.

### *Research Question*

The original proposal for this project was to assist the Partners in Action Committee to set up processes and develop tools of how to evaluate their work in the community as well as their work together as a committee. In developing the scope of the project, however, the Coordinator proposed that the project also explore the evaluative culture of the PIA. Thus this report specifically answers the following question:

How do you build an evaluative culture within the Partners in Action so that:

- a.) Members have the tools to recognize if/how their work together is effective;
- b.) Members have a process with which to reflect upon the Committee's interventions and experiences;
- c.) The Committee has the ability to make decisions based on evaluation findings;
- d.) The Committee is accountable to funders, themselves and the community.

It was hoped that through this project, PIA Committee members would increase their understanding about the purpose of monitoring and evaluation and embed evaluation practices into their work together.

### *Methodology*

This case study adopted a community-based participatory research perspective in which the PIA Coordinator and I worked closely to design the activities and methods to answer the research question and meet the associated objectives. The project was a collaborative venture in all phases of the research and resulted in the co-production of knowledge between the PIA, the Coordinator and myself, as a researcher. Over the course of a year, various methods and activities were used to explore the research question.

### *Conceptual Framework*

A conceptual framework was developed to synthesize the various streams of evaluation literature that have been applicable to the research question. This conceptual framework for the literature synthesized the various strands of relevant evaluation concepts and practices into a practical application, relevant to the PIA and their objectives. The conceptual framework also stands as an important contribution to the evaluation literature in its own right by providing a practical summary of insights relevant to the state of play of how to build an evaluative culture within a community-based organization.

### *Findings*

In reviewing the literature, I could not find specific research regarding the building of evaluation capacity or the evaluative culture of a community coalition. According to scholars, an evaluative culture is one that embraces continuous evidence-based learning in the daily work of the organization through ongoing dialogue, reflection and questioning to help guide decision-making (Mayne, 2009; Preskill & Torres, 1999). Dedicated leadership, strong organizational structures and an emphasis on learning are some of building blocks that help to foster an evaluative culture (Mayne, 2009).

In the case of the PIA, the members demonstrated readiness to expand their evaluation capacity by embracing this project. Overall, the PIA reported that they felt quite comfortable with evaluation. The meetings with the membership provided opportunities for reflection and discussion. Using Patton's (2011) revision of Gunderson and Holling's Adaptive Cycle (2002, as cited in Patton, 2011, p. 207) helped the PIA to understand the different purposes of evaluation. The PIA discussed their own theory of change and agreed upon a logic model that represented their work. In reviewing PIA reports, the results indicated that PIA not only had a solid monitoring system in place, but in analyzing the reports from 2007-2013, the Coordinator discovered new information about the PIA. Weekly meetings with the Coordinator provided dedicated time and support to think evaluatively about the Committee and resulted in an evaluation framework that combined aspects of the existing monitoring system with their new theory of change. The Coordinator reported increases in her own knowledge, skills and confidence about using evaluation practices in her work. The PIA has added evaluation as a standing item on their monthly meeting agendas and has established an evaluation advisory group to support the Coordinator in evaluation activities.

### *Discussion*

The project was successful in achieving its three main objectives: 1.) to determine the type of evaluation(s) best suited for the Committee's purposes; 2.) to develop an approach that would be useful; 3.) to increase the evaluation capacity of the Coordinator. This project has provided the PIA Committee with an opportunity to reflect and discuss the importance of evaluation for their coalition. Furthermore, the Coordinator reports that the evaluation framework that was developed as a result of this project has helped the Committee link their activities more closely to their mission and their reporting has shifted to become more outcomes focused. During presentations, the Coordinator is now able to share the many accomplishments of the PIA's work with both the funder and the community that they had previously been unable to capture.

This case study attempts to add to a body of knowledge about how community coalitions can develop a useful evaluation framework that can guide their work, and integrate evaluation practices into their everyday work. Specifically, it is new research in an area that appears to be poorly represented in the evaluation literature. In addition, this report documents an original approach in the co-production of knowledge between academic and non-academic communities, as I did not identify as an expert in evaluation. In my opinion, this approach promoted a greater investment from the Coordinator and resulted in increases in her evaluation capacity than if an evaluation expert had been hired. Co-production of knowledge in fact built capacity. Finally, this study synthesizes various niches of evaluation research presented in the literature review and applies them to the findings from this case study.

### *Recommendations and Conclusion*

At the end of the project, I met with the PIA Committee and shared the research and practical project findings, as well as made several suggestions moving forward:

- 1) Continue the work that has already been done so that the evaluation capacity that has been built becomes embedded in the structures and processes of the PIA Committee.
- 2) Develop meaningful indicators that will measure progress toward PIA outcomes.
- 3) Moved toward shared measurement through a collective impact approach of evaluation.
- 4) Develop a budget for evaluation.
- 5) Investigate access to current evidence-based literature regarding PIA priorities.
- 6) Other options offered for consideration within the context of the project included:

- Seek opportunities with local post-secondary institutions to provide access to students with interests in research methods and data analysis (Arnold, 2006).
- The PIA could initiate an evaluation learning circle to support the development of community organizations' evaluation capacity. Topics selected could be based on their relevance to needs and interests (Cohen, 2006).

In addressing how to build the evaluative culture of a community coalitions, the following themes emerged as lessons learned from a research perspective:

- 1.) Pay attention and build on the areas that the group already demonstrates readiness and enthusiasm.
- 2.) Nurture “evaluation champions” and provide an ongoing network of support for them.
- 3.) Use theory of change/logic model frameworks with coalitions to build common purpose and understand the bigger picture.
- 4.) Focus on a performance measurement system for community coalitions who lack the resources for evaluation.
- 5.) Offer opportunities for reflection and sense-making by creating space and time for questioning and discussion.

This case study provides questions for future research. It would be of value to understand how community coalitions of various sizes perceive their own evaluative culture. In addition, there are often many different agencies within community coalitions. How does their agency's evaluative culture affect a coalition as a whole? Finally it would be important to explore what effect the community coalition structure has on a coalition's ability to use evaluation.

This report documents a year-long journey in which a community coalition with few resources capitalized on an opportunity to learn more about evaluation and explore how to strengthen their evaluation capacity and evaluative culture. This project is evidence that evaluation activities can “help improve and strengthen the capacity to learn through the collection, analysis and co-interpretation of data in timely and actionable ways” (Preskill, Gopal, Mack, & Cook, 2014).

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Purpose and Importance of the Project**

The main objective of this project has been to increase the evaluative culture of a local community coalition, and in particular to build the evaluation capacity of its coordinator. What makes this project unique is twofold: 1.) there is a dearth of research with small community coalitions seeking to establish or improve evaluation practices; 2.) the researcher (myself) identifies as a non-evaluator; thus, the project has been a co-learning experience.

### **1.2. The Issue**

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, national and community foundations as well as governmental health initiatives began promoting formal collaborations as a way to address complex social issues. Over the years, community collaborations have become a popular strategy to address local public health and social problems in North America and are often a requirement for government or foundation support (Backer, 2003; Chavis, 2001; Janzen et al., 2012).

This growing emphasis on community coalitions as a solution for local and regional problems and the accompanying financial investment from funders has resulted in greater demands for accountability (Carman, 2007; Francisco, Schultz, & Fawcett, 2003; Janzen et al., 2012; Preskill & Boyle, 2008b). Government, foundations and other donors are requiring that community-based organizations produce information about the evaluation and performance measurement of the public services they provide and report on how their work is making a difference (Carman, 2007).

With this increasing pressure to demonstrate results, smaller local community coalitions have had to figure out a way to evaluate their work together without the human, financial and technical resources often associated with traditional evaluation.

### **1.3. Rationale**

The Partners in Action Committee (also known as the “PIA” or “the Committee”), like many other smaller local coalitions are charged with the task of proving how its work makes a difference in the community of Vernon, British Columbia (BC). This project was identified by the PIA in large part because of their use of “action teams”, ad-hoc subcommittees designed to address a specific issue. At the time there was no consistent method to monitor, evaluate and follow up with the actions; the Coordinator reported that she relied on a patchwork of data collection sources for reporting to various stakeholders.

Similarly, while Committee members could provide anecdotal evidence about changes as a result of the Action Teams, the Committee did not have the resources to explore a more comprehensive approach to monitoring and evaluation and were not able to afford an outside evaluation consultant with which to assist them.

Often community coalitions engage in an evaluation process because it is required for their funding, however, in designing this project, the PIA and I understood that the most successful and useful evaluation activities occur when coalitions decide to answer questions of importance for themselves (Fetterman & Wandersman, 2005; Wandersman, 2014; Wolff, 2010). It was clear that the Committee members were a dedicated and invested group of individuals; they wanted to know if their interventions were making any kind of change in the community and wanted to share their progress with their funders and the community. As added incentive, municipal elections were held in the fall of 2014 and the funding contract provided by the City of Vernon for the coordinator position of the PIA Committee was up for renewal in 2015. The presence of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for the client provided a healthy context within which the project was conducted. It is notable, especially, because of its importance to project context.

#### **1.4. Organization of the Report**

This report recounts the year-long project of building the evaluation capacity of the Coordinator and increasing the evaluative culture of the Committee as a whole. It is organized as follows: The introduction describes the purpose and rationale of the project as well as briefly introduces the client. The second section provides background about the PIA Committee, offers a context for the project, clarifies terminology and then outlines the research question and objectives. Section three reviews the literature related to community coalition evaluation, stakeholder involvement approaches to evaluation, performance measurement and building evaluation capacity and an evaluative culture. Section four outlines the methodological framework and offers an overview of the methods and activities. Section five presents the findings and results, as well as suggestions for the PIA Committee moving forward. Section six discusses the lessons learned from the project, the role of researcher, strengths and limitations of the study and future research for this topic. Section eight concludes the report.

## 2. BACKGROUND

### 2.1. Client Information

The Partners in Action (PIA) Committee (referred in this report as the “PIA” and/or “Committee”) was originally created in 2006 as an initiative “to prevent crime and improve the overall health of the community of Vernon” (Sharkey, n.d.).

Incorporated in 1892, Vernon is a community of approximately 39,000 people and the commercial hub of the North Okanagan region of British Columbia. People are attracted to the Vernon for its beautiful lakes, easy access to outdoor recreation and long warm summers and mild winters. According to most recent Vital Signs report, 74% of residents surveyed report a strong or somewhat strong sense of belonging in their community (Community Foundation of the North Okanagan, 2013).

Traditionally the area has been largely agricultural, but over the past few decades, construction, tourism and manufacturing have played a large role in the community’s economy (City of Vernon, 2012). Many of the jobs in the agricultural, tourism and service sector tend to be lower paid positions without benefits or pensions. As a result, the median income for full-time year round employment in Vernon is lower than the provincial average (\$47, 354 locally compared to \$49,153 provincially)(Community Foundation of the North Okanagan, 2013).

The cost of living in Vernon has been significantly impacted by rising housing costs as a result of the housing boom in the early 2000’s. Currently, 53% of renters and 28% of owners pay more than 30% of their household income to housing costs (Community Foundation of the North Okanagan, 2013). According to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), households should be paying less than 30% of their household income on housing in order to maintain a healthy balanced lifestyle (Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation, 2014).

The low wages and high cost of living reflects in the socio-economic issues that tend to arise due to poverty. Over the past seven years, the PIA Committee has worked with various community representatives in addressing such concerns as affordable housing, food security and crime reduction as well as acted as a facilitator for increased networking and partnerships between various sectors of the community.

#### **Partners in Action Committee Mission:**

*“To identify and implement manageable solutions in our community by coordinating and mobilizing community based action teams” (Partners in Action Committee, 2013).*

*Structure and Membership*

The PIA consists of an overarching coordinating committee that oversees ad-hoc action teams. When an issue or problem is identified to the Committee, an action team is formed. Key members with the necessary skills, knowledge and networks are drafted from the community based on the resources needed to problem solve the issue. Once the action team has completed its work, the group is disbanded.

Funding from the City of Vernon is provided to the Social Planning Council of the North Okanagan to hire a coordinator and to act as the umbrella “backbone organization” (Kania & Kramer, 2011). The coordinator acts as facilitator, project manager and data manager for the initiative.

Membership includes members of various non-profit organizations, governmental representatives and the business community (see Table 1).

The coordinating committee meets monthly to share information, review progress of action teams and discuss potential new action teams.

Table 1		
<i>Current Membership of the PIA Committee</i>		
<b>Non-Profit Organizations</b>	<b>Governmental Agencies</b>	<b>Business Organizations</b>
Community Futures North Okanagan	City of Vernon	Downtown Vernon Association
Independent Living Vernon	Interior Health Authority	
John Howard Society	RCMP Safe Communities Unit	
Kindale Developmental Association		
North Okanagan Early Years Council		
North Okanagan United Way		
North Okanagan Youth and Family Services		
Restorative Justice Program		
Social Planning Council of the North Okanagan		
Upper Room Mission		
Vernon Immigrant Services		
Vernon Women’s Transition House		

*History of PIA Committee*

In 2005 Vernon initially established the Partners for a Safe and Healthy Downtown through federal National Crime Prevention funding. In 2006, the Social Planning Council of the North Okanagan applied to the Province of BC Safe Streets and Safe School Program for funding to adapt and test a new model of action planning for crime prevention in the community. The members wanted to change the structure of the committee to a model developed by the Vernon Safe Communities Unit that

was based on an approach that prevented crime through social development (CPSD).

In January 2007, additional funding was supplied by the City of Vernon, Community Futures of the North Okanagan and the North Okanagan Columbia Shuswap United Way for the ongoing coordination of the committee. Due to the success of the committee, the City of Vernon assumed the funding for 2008-2010. The contract was extended for an additional five years in 2011, thereby ensuring funding for the coordination of the Committee until December 2015.

Since 2007, approximately 85 different action teams have been initiated and completed by the Committee within areas such as homelessness, affordable housing, accessing recreation, early childhood development, food security and community capacity building across the Vernon area (see Table 2). Over the years, this committee has worked together to build a new homeless shelter in the downtown core of Vernon; implemented recreation discounts for people on fixed incomes; initiated plans for a therapeutic farm on the property of Okanagan College and coordinated an affordable housing plan for Vernon.

Table 2  
Representation on the 85 PIA action teams from 2008-2014

32	• Nonprofit Organizations
29	• Governmental Organizations/Departments
12	• Businesses
3	• Churches
13	• Private citizens
8	• Other Committees

In terms of structure and process, the overall aims of the PIA include:

1. Identifying, describing and analyzing specific community challenges;
2. Coordinating action teams to address the challenges;
3. Support action teams to implement solutions;

4. Monitor and evaluate the results (Social Planning Council of the North Okanagan, 2012).

The fourth goal was where the PIA Committee requested assistance. They felt that the timing was right; they had evolved into an established and stable coalition which had successfully initiated many action teams. The Committee identified their limited expertise, as well as a lack of resources regarding monitoring and evaluating their results. They were ready to invest the time and energy so that they could become better versed in evaluation practices. This project provided an opportunity for the Committee to bring in an outside resource which was very appealing.

## **2.2. Context of this Project**

There were two major influences in my interest with this project. Firstly, in my role as the quality assurance manager in a non-profit organization, I have participated in various forms of learning over the years about performance measurement and monitoring, data collection methods and reporting. However, I must admit that when I began this project, my awareness of the theory and practice of evaluation could best be described as piecemeal. In doing this project, I wanted to expand my knowledge of evaluation and gain a deeper understanding of the different perspectives within the field and how they fit together.

Secondly, as a member of a community coalition, I have had firsthand involvement with the struggles and complexity of measuring the effectiveness and potential impact of a coalition's activities. In my experience, I found a lack of knowledge and skills as well as financial and technical support for community coalitions to embrace various forms of evaluation beyond accountability purposes.

While I had not worked directly with the PIA Committee, I had heard examples of their effectiveness in working together in solving community issues and was excited at the prospect of a collaborative partnership to both learn more about evaluation as well as explore the Committee's relationship with evaluation. At the same time, the project met my own professional learning objectives and satisfied the necessary criteria to meet the MACD 598 project requirements.

From its inception, this project has adopted a community-based participatory research approach to identify and answer the research problem and associated questions (see Table 3). The project has been a partnership in all phases of the research and has consisted of both joint learning and capacity building particularly among the Coordinator and myself (Israel et al., 2003) and fits within a co-production of knowledge approach to research. Emphasizing research "with" communities rather than "on" communities, the key elements of co-production in research include striving for an equal partnership, understanding issues through dynamic relationship, creating knowledge together and then implementing findings for transformational social change (Beebejaun, Durose, Rees, Richardson,

& Richardson, 2014, p. 41). This study has attempted to address a community-identified need and was undertaken so that the learning that emerged from the research process could improve the work of the PIA Committee (Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoecker, & Donohue, 2003).

Table 3

*Key Principles of Community-Based Participatory Research*

Community members and researchers contribute equally and in all phases of research
Trust, collaboration, shared decision-making and shared ownership of the research; findings and knowledge benefit all partners
Researchers and community members acknowledge each other’s expertise in bidirectional, co-learning process
Builds on strengths and resources of the community
Integrates knowledge and action for mutual benefit of all partners
Involves a cyclical and iterative process
Involves a long-term commitment by all partners
Emphasizes local capacity building, systems development, empowerment and sustainability

(Blumenthal, Hopkins, & Yancey, 2013; Horowitz, Robinson, & Seifer, 2009)

Finally, it is important to acknowledge the emergent nature of this research project. As in life, this process has been “unpredictable, emergent, evolving and adaptable” (Westley, Zimmerman, & Patton, 2007). Community coalitions are complex initiatives characterized by “unpredictability, interdependence among members who themselves adapt and co-evolve, emergent outcomes created by the connections or relationships from this system, and nonlinearity, such that outputs and inputs are not directly correlated” (Shiell, Hawe & Gold, 2008 as cited in Zimmerman et al., 2011). Likewise, their interventions are both multi-faceted and moving targets (Gabriel, 2000). Thinking about how to build the evaluative culture of a community coalition has been equally as messy - there is no agreed upon best practices for such a highly contextualized process. As Westley et al. (2007) advise, “Expect that when real change starts, your own interactions and those of others will change. Expect this to feel risky” (p. 50).

### 2.3. Research Question and Objectives

In June 2012, I was invited to meet with the Committee by Annette Sharkey, PIA Coordinator (referred to as “the Coordinator” in this report), to explore potential topics that might be of interest to them for my MACD 598 project. Members decided that the committee would benefit from focused attention on their performance monitoring and evaluation activities, particularly in relation to their action teams.

Several course assignments from ADMN 437 in 2013 served as opportunities to refine this project; our preliminary discussions viewed the project as a technical exercise in building a performance measurement and evaluation framework for the Committee. However as a result of an assignment exploring the evaluative culture of the PIA, the Coordinator reported a “huge realization that the PIA Committee did not set aside time for self-reflection and perhaps had become too focused on task completion at the expense of learning from its results” (A. Sharkey, personal communication, April 2, 2013). It is with insight in mind that the Coordinator emphasized that building an evaluative culture was key to this project in order that work could continue after this project was completed.

Additional conversations with the Coordinator helped to hone the following research question and objectives for this project:

**How to build an evaluative culture within a municipal cross-sectoral community coalition in a mid-sized community so that:**

- a.) Members of the Committee/coalition have the tools to recognize if/how their work together is effective;
- b.) Members of the Committee/coalition have a process with which to reflect upon the Committee’s interventions and experiences;
- c.) The Committee/coalition has the ability to make decisions based on evaluation findings;
- d.) The Committee/coalition is accountable for its expenditures of monies to funders, themselves and the community.

The overall purpose of this project was to build evaluation capacity within the PIA Committee that would assist the group to:

- 1.) Determine the type of evaluation(s) best suited for the Committee’s purposes:
  - Clarify the purpose of an evaluation and its uses (formative, summative, developmental);
  - Clarify the difference between performance monitoring and evaluation.
- 2.) Develop an evaluation approach that would be helpful in:
  - Building on the Committee’s current system of performance monitoring;
  - Following up on the success of past strategies;

- Maintaining the Committee’s focus and sense of purpose;
- Integrating reflection, understanding and decision-making about the Committee’s work.

3.) Increase the evaluation capacity of the PIA Committee Coordinator by:

- Providing skills, understanding and insight for the Coordinator through this process.

As can be seen from this question and objectives, the project is very practical in application. There is also an important theoretical objective to meet the requirements of the MACD 598 report. In determining the research question it became quickly apparent to me that there is a significant dearth of literature to help address the specific aspects of the question and that an important objective for the project was therefore to identify, piece together and synthesize relevant literature into a coherent framework to help the client address its needs. As such, the report provides a significant practical and theoretical contribution.

## 2.4. Terminology

The following section details a number of key concepts relevant to the project that require clarification and definitional precision. Literature across the evaluation and community development fields contain multiple meanings for these concepts warranting precision here for reader clarity.

### *Community Coalition*

In this report, the term “community coalition” is used to describe community multi-sectoral committees such as the PIA. There appears to be several terms used in the literature depending on the focus. Documents from the community development field tend to use “comprehensive community initiatives” while health prevention and promotion scholars generally refer to community collaborations or collaboratives. There are also references to place-based initiatives and multi-sectoral partnerships. I am using “community coalition” to define a locally based group of representatives that:

- Encompass cross-sectoral membership;
- Share common goals, activities, responsibilities and resources;
- Establish a structure to promote coordination and communication; and
- Work collaboratively to address social issues and achieve systems change at many levels (Butterfoss, 2007; Janzen et al., 2012; Kubisch,

Fulbright-Anderson, & Connell, 1998; Taylor-Powell, Rossing, & Geran, 1998; Torjman & Leviten-Reid, 2003; Wolff, 2003).

*Capacity*

Although there is no broadly accepted definition on the concept of capacity, Baser and Morgan’s view (2008) is a valuable standpoint for this purposes of this report. While the authors differentiate between individual and collective capabilities: (*individual capacity* seen mainly as skill development and individual training, and *collective capacity* as the “the ability of an organization or system to carry out a particular function or process either inside or outside the system” (p. 24), they use the term *capacity* to refer to the evolving combination of individual competencies and collective capabilities that enable organizations and other human systems to create value (p. 33).

In her dissertation about building evaluation capacity in violence prevention programs, Lanum (2004) applies the dimensions of community capacity described by Goodman, Speers, McLeroy, Fawcett, Kegler, et al. (1998)and presents nine core principles of building community capacity specific for developing the evaluation capacity of organizations (pp. 4-15) (see Table 4):

<b>Table 4</b>
<i>Core Principles of Capacity Building</i>
Principle 1: Trust between the organization and the provider is essential.
Principle 2: Every organization has its own history and culture.
Principle 3: All people and all parts of an organization are interrelated.
Principle 4: An organization must be ready for capacity building.
Principle 5: There must be willingness for ongoing questioning.
Principle 6: Team and peer learning are effective capacity building tools.
Principle 7: Capacity building should accommodate different learning styles.
Principle 8: Every organization is capable of building its own capacity.
Principle 9: Capacity building takes time.
(Lanum, 2004)

*Evaluative Culture*

Mayne (2008a) suggests that the term “evaluative culture” describes an organizational culture in which its members seek out and use evidence-based information to learn how they can deliver and improve their programs and services in order to meet their overall mission. He proposes that an organization with a strong evaluative culture engages in self-reflection and self-examination,

provides ongoing opportunities for evidence-based learning and encourages experimentation and change.

### *Evaluation*

Taylor-Powell, Rossing and Geran (1998) suggest that the way in which evaluation is defined influences how one goes about doing evaluation. In the literature, there is not one working definition; rather the multidimensional quality of evaluation can best be described as on a continuum of purposes, approaches, activities and contexts (Poth, Lamarche, Yapp, Sulla, & Chisamore, 2014).

The American Evaluation Association defines evaluation as “a systematic process to determine merit, worth, value or significance” (American Evaluation Association, 2014). However, in my experience, I find this definition is not specific enough to represent what many organizations and community groups look for in evaluation. Therefore for the purposes of this report, I use a working definition of evaluation as *the shared process among coalition members to systematically collect, analyze and report information to learn, make decisions, take action and improve results* (Hearn & Mackay, 2013; Preskill, Parkhurst, & Splansky Juster, 2014; Taylor-Powell et al., 1998).

### *Clarification of Evaluation Terminology*

In writing this section of my project and as a non-evaluator, I found the terminology for different aspects of evaluation particularly mystifying. In reading the literature, I discovered that at times, particular terms mean different things, and different terms are interchangeable (Duigan, 2009); however, a discussion regarding the debates about terminology within the evaluation literature is beyond the scope of this project. In order to provide clarity, I have outlined my use of the following terms and how I conceptualized the different aspects of evaluation for the PIA:

Evaluation approaches: Broad, often philosophical orientations to evaluation (e.g., utilization-focused evaluation, empowerment evaluation, participatory evaluation, theory-based evaluation, experimentalist evaluation) (Duigan, 2009).

Evaluation frameworks: Step by step guides on how to systematically collect, analyze and report information to learn, make decisions and take action.

Evaluation options or types: Classification of evaluations depending on the purpose of the evaluation activity, and how the evaluation activity will be used.

- a) *Summative evaluations*, such as impact outcome evaluations, judge the overall effectiveness, merit, worth and significance of an intervention, program, or model and thus, are often requested by funders (Patton, 2011). Butterfoss (2007) suggests that for community coalitions, this refers to the

assessment of the coalition's impacts and outcomes, or immediate and long term outcomes (p. 439).

- b) *Formative evaluations* focus on ways of improving and enhancing interventions, programs or models (Patton, 2011); this would include activities during the formation, implementation and maintenance of a community coalition and its interventions the coalition and its programs and refers to the assessment of the coalition's process or short-term outcomes (Butterfoss, 2007).
- c) *Developmental evaluations* are used in complex, dynamic situations when there is disagreement about the best way to proceed and outcomes are unable to be predicted; thus something new must be developed (Gamble, 2008). Developmental evaluation is particularly useful for early stages of community coalitions as well as when ongoing adaptation is necessary to respond to ongoing changes in the environment (Patton, 2011; Preskill, Parkhurst, et al., 2014).
- d) *Performance measurement and monitoring* is the regular collection of output and outcome data to assess the extent to which what was planned was actually accomplished; the purpose is to demonstrate accountability and to improve performance (Hatry, 2014; McDavid, Huse, & Hawthorn, 2013). Wolk, Dholakia and Kreitz (2009) suggest a performance measurement system provides an efficient way for social impact organizations to collect and use data about their initiatives and operations (p. 1). *Performance management* refers to using performance measurement data to drive decision-making and performance improvement (Hatry, 2014; Mulvaney, Zwahr, & Baranowski, 2006). In this report, the PIA evaluation framework is more accurately a performance measurement and monitoring system with which the PIA Committee tracks the progress of its action teams toward established goals.

Evaluation methods: Data collection tools (Duigan, 2009).

While these definitions have helped to clarify the many terms I have encountered in the process of this project, I am aware that the terms described above shift according to evaluation context. For example, while I have listed developmental evaluation as an evaluation option, Patton would also argue that Developmental Evaluation also has strong philosophical orientation, and thus should be classified as an approach (Patton, 2011). Conversely, although Fetterman outlines ten principles that distinguish empowerment evaluation as an evaluation approach, one can also categorize empowerment evaluation as an evaluation framework when implementing its three steps (Fetterman & Wandersman, 2005; Fetterman, 2001). Additionally, the evaluation options are also interrelated, and commonly

used according to the various stages in the life cycle of a coalition (Butterfoss, 2007; Duigan, 2009; Patton, 2011; Preskill, Parkhurst, et al., 2014)(see Table 5).

	Developmental Evaluation	Formative Evaluation	Summative Evaluation
Stage of Community Coalition Development	Coalition is exploring and in development (Preskill, Parkhurst, et al., 2014, p. 19)	Coalition is evolving and being refined (Preskill, Parkhurst, et al., 2014, p. 19)	Coalition is stable and well-established (Preskill, Parkhurst, et al., 2014, p. 19)
	Formation (Butterfoss, 2007, p. 73)	Maintenance (Butterfoss, 2007, p. 73)	Institutionalization (Butterfoss, 2007, p. 73)

## 2.5. Language of the Report

As this study is based upon community-based participatory research principles, I venture from traditional scholarly writing in various parts of the report by including personal pronouns to:

- a.) *Identify myself as both a researcher and practitioner.* Canagarajah (1995) suggests that the researcher’s values, ideologies and experiences that shape the research activity and findings are hidden in traditional academic discourse (p. 324). The use of personal pronouns enhances my ability to display my own reflectivity throughout the process, as well as my dual identities of both researcher and practitioner of evaluation.
- b.) *Describe the process of qualitative research.* Adopting the term “researcher” often conveys a sense of detachment from the process and assumes that the researcher is separate from the researched (Canagarajah, 1995). As outlined by Siegle and McCoach (2008), writing in first person is well suited to describing the process of qualitative research in which “the researcher and the research are interwoven and inseparable” (p. 373). Given the nature of the co-production that took place, personal pronouns reflect the personalized nature of the research process and experience. In naming myself, the Coordinator and the PIA, I hope to underscore the importance of the interactions and ensuing relationship that were built.
- c.) *Increase the accessibility of the report.* Accessible dissemination is a tenet of community-based research and using personal pronouns bridges the gap between research and praxis and makes this report more accessible to readers (Norton & Early, 2011, p. 417). Like academic discourse, evaluation can be an overwhelming and often inaccessible for small, local community-based organizations with few resources. In essence I want to present this study in a way that it will also be read by my community. Readability is

important, and using personal pronouns facilitates the flow of the report so that the reader fully understands that building an evaluative culture is a complex process that requires co-learning, ongoing reflection and strong trusting relationships.

### 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### *Setting the Stage*

As the project began to take shape, I realized that I needed to become better versed in the fundamentals of program evaluation in order to lay the groundwork that would strengthen my understanding, and ultimately the PIA Committee's understanding of and priorities for evaluating their coalition. I completed ADMN 437: Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement which enhanced my knowledge of program evaluation and introduced me to the idea that performance measurement could be understood as complementary to program evaluation (McDavid et al., 2013).

As I learned more about the program evaluation and discovered that handbooks and texts outlined a common series of steps, I also uncovered a rich diversity of perspectives within the field of evaluation, some of which appear to be better suited than others for the evaluation of community coalitions. Much of the literature about the evaluation of community coalitions has emerged from the fields of preventative public health initiatives and community development collaborations and/or neighbourhood initiatives.

Building from Wallerstein, Polascek and Maltrud's (2002) summary of the research on community coalition evaluation about alternative approaches to traditional program evaluation, I have organized this review into five main strands of relevant literature which I consider the most applicable to this project: 1.) Research focused on the internal functioning of coalitions that affect effectiveness; 2.) Challenges to researching the ability of coalitions to produce results; 3.) Literature regarding alternative approaches and frameworks for monitoring and evaluating the work of community coalitions and; 4.) The complementarity of performance measurement and evaluation in organizations; 5.) Research into building the evaluative capacity and culture of organizations. The extent of all these literatures is such that this review can only be brief and provide a strategic overview in order to place this project within the broader research and thinking within the academy produced to date.

The following synopsis suggests that while there are many different strands in the literature that may be relevant to the evaluation of community coalitions, there does not yet appear to be a synthesis of the various schools of thought into a cohesive and practical framework for use by smaller local coalitions. A recent series of reports (Preskill, Gopal, et al., 2014; Preskill, 2014) from the non-profit organization, Foundation Strategy Group (FSG), are promising additions to the discussion, with an integrative framework that emphasizes continuous learning through a combination of a variety of performance measurement and evaluation activities based on an initiative's stage of development and maturity. Nevertheless, FSG materials assume a well-sourced initiative with the time as well as the internal capacity to devote to evaluation. Cramer, Mueller and Harrop (2001) suggest that most locally-based coalitions do not have the

ability to analyze complex problems, develop measurable indicators for programs, particularly when the group addresses a wide range of issues (p. 465).

### 3.1. Research on the Internal Functioning of Community Coalitions

Research about the evaluation of coalitions has tended to focus on two main areas: a.) coalition *processes* with the emphasis on gathering data about how an initiative functions and how it can be improved; b.) coalition *outcomes* which highlights the extent to which a coalition empirically meets its objectives and its impact on the community as a whole (Backer, 2003; Butterfoss, 2007; Lachance et al., 2006; Wolff, 2003; Zakocs & Edwards, 2006).

Much of the research on the evaluation of community coalitions has examined collaborative partnerships, and in particular, the internal dynamics that may determine a coalition's effectiveness (Wallerstein, Polascek, & Maltrud, 2002). In describing factors for effective coalition functioning, scholars describe a long list of factors that contribute to success. In their review of collaboration in health, social science, education, and public affairs, Mattessich and Monsey (1992, as cited in Backer, 2003) identified 19 factors organized within six categories (environment, membership, structure, communication, purpose and resources) as critical to coalition success (p. 11). Many of these factors are similar to those listed in a well-cited review of research studies on collaborations by Roussos and Fawcett (2000). In their review, Roussos and Fawcett analyzed 34 studies of coalitions working primarily at a local level and found seven common factors that impact a coalition's ability to create community change:

- a.) Having a clear vision and mission
- b.) Developing an action plan
- c.) Developing and supporting leadership
- d.) Providing documentation and ongoing feedback about progress
- e.) Providing technical assistance and support
- f.) Securing financial resources
- g.) Making outcomes matter

A subsequent review of the empirical literature in (2006) by Zakocs and Edwards suggested six coalition-building factors related to coalition effectiveness: formal governance structures, strong leadership, active participation from members, diverse membership, collaboration among member agencies and group cohesiveness (p. 358). These characteristics have also been described in other health promotion/prevention research as essential processes to foster community capacity and ultimately facilitate a coalition's capacity to implement community

change (Allen, 2005; Butterfoss, 2007; Foster-Fishman, Berkowitz, Lounsbury, Jacobson, & Allen, 2001; Wolff, 2010; Zakocs & Guckenburg, 2007). While Nowell in her study (2009) agreed that strong leadership as well as collaborative and reflexive decision-making practices are key determinants of effective coordination, she also suggested that cooperative stakeholder relationships are the strongest predictor of positive community change.

Most evaluations of community coalitions have tended to focus largely on implementation processes rather than outcomes and studies on factors that affect coalition outcomes have been slower to emerge (Chaskin, 2003, p. 62). Granner and Sharpe (2004) assert that many of the success factors detailed in the literature have been derived from experience, but not empirically tested. In their summary of measurement tools for assessing coalition effectiveness, the authors contend that the measurement tools used to evaluate coalition effectiveness lacked information about validity and reliability, and incorporated a varied range of concepts (p. 514). Consequently, Granner and Sharpe found that the assessment of individual and group characteristics were measured the most, with impact and outcome measures being the least numerous.

Similarly, in other references on the evaluation of coalition outcomes, there seems to be few published studies of empirically collected data (Berkowitz, 2001). Overall the research within health promotion and prevention literature has been ambivalent about whether community coalitions have been effective in their endeavours (Backer, 2003; Berkowitz, 2001; Chavis, 2001; Feinberg et al., 2004; Foster-Fishman et al., 2001; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000). Zakocs and Edwards' review (2006) demonstrates the wide variation in coalition-building factors and outcomes studied, as well as the differences in the research in how these factors were conceptually defined (p. 356).

Although there are examples of coalitions that demonstrate positive results, systematic reviews and cross site evaluations only show modest or mixed results (Wandersman, 2003). It has been unclear about how much is really known about the effectiveness of community coalitions and their development, in part because of the many conceptual and technical challenges regarding their evaluation (Brown, 2010; Chavis, 2001). Barriers to conducting evaluations of community coalitions are discussed in the next section.

### **3.2. Challenges of Evaluating the Outcomes of Community Coalitions**

The difficulties in using traditional evaluation designs and methods due to the complexity and dynamic nature of community work is widely documented both within health promotion/prevention and community development fields (Backer, 2003; Baum, 2001; Berkowitz, 2001; Brown, 2010; Connell, Kubisch, Schorr, & Weiss, 1995; Earl, Carden, & Smutylo, 2001; Fiester, 1998; Granner & Sharpe,

2004; Hollister & Hill, 1995; Janzen et al., 2012; Kelly, 2010; Kubisch, 2010; Lafferty & Mahoney, 2003; Patton, 2011; Sridharan, 2011; Taylor-Powell et al., 1998; Torjman & Leviten-Reid, 2003; Wallerstein et al., 2002). Table 5 summarizes some of the formidable obstacles in evaluating community coalitions using traditional evaluation tools.

Table 6	
<i>Summary of methodological issues using traditional evaluation design and measurement tools to evaluate community coalitions</i>	
Issues	Description of Obstacle
Design Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absence of a comparison community or control group with which to compare; community coalitions are unique and not necessarily representative of one another;</li> <li>• Community coalition interventions are multifaceted and moving targets;</li> <li>• Difficult to specify target population-community coalitions aim for change at multiple levels (individual, family, organization, community, systems);</li> <li>• Boundaries of what constitutes community is permeable and often changes over time;</li> <li>• Community coalitions are dynamic, flexible and changing and often look different from year to year;</li> <li>• Community coalitions implement interventions that are flexible and evolving-no standard approach;</li> <li>• Unique political, economic, and cultural influences in the environment affect every community coalition intervention and their ability to impact outcomes might depend on a series of other contingencies</li> </ul>
Measurement Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community coalitions set broad goals which are imprecise with often no agreed upon definition of concepts (e.g., community capacity); outcomes are difficult to operationalize and measure;</li> <li>• Community coalitions set outcomes at multiple levels that interact so need to assess the cumulative effects of intervening at multiple levels on outcomes;</li> <li>• Interactions between the different parts of a community coalition difficult to track and measure</li> <li>• Synergy between the multiple levels important part of the work;</li> <li>• Implementation may never be complete and is difficult to track;</li> <li>• In a complex real world situation, difficult to fully specify and control for all the extraneous variables as well as the combination of interactions between them;</li> <li>• Impossible to attribute changes solely to the work of a community coalition;</li> <li>• Impossible to measure just the impact of the community coalition intervention-can't know what would have happened without the intervention;</li> <li>• Takes many years, if not decades for progress to be made;</li> <li>• Variables affecting community coalition outcomes may be differently operative at various stages of community coalition development.</li> </ul>

(Baum, 2001; Berkowitz, 2001; Connell et al., 1995; Connell & Kubisch, 1998; Fiester, 1998; Gabriel, 2000; Gambone, 1998; Lafferty & Mahoney, 2003; Sridharan, 2011; Taylor-Powell et al., 1998)

McDavid, Huse and Hawthorne (2013) assert that programs with low probability technologies and high uncertainty of success, as well as multiple environmental factors and numerous interventions at multiple levels make it next to impossible to determine what affects what; there are too many rival hypotheses to singularly attribute change to the work of one group (p. 66). These challenges have also driven some researchers, evaluators and practitioners to seek out new alternative approaches of community-based evaluation that have embraced interpretative understandings of evaluation and a variety of participatory and engaged involvement (Butterfoss, 2007; Frusciante, 2004).

### **3.3. Alternative Approaches and Frameworks to the Evaluation and Monitoring of Community Coalitions**

There are multiple approaches and frameworks within the literature that attempt to provide alternative ways of evaluating community coalitions. According to Butterfoss (2007), the evaluation of community coalitions is rooted in three main paradigms: interpretivist, theory-based and participatory evaluation. Popular approaches have generally emerged from action research, empowerment evaluation and community-based participatory research (Francisco et al., 2003).

In this section, several approaches and methods are discussed that seem to be practical, accessible and possible for the PIA to understand and to actually incorporate aspects into their own framework. In determining these criteria, evaluation literature was examined that mirrored the community coalition's values of collaboration and partnership, as well as works that emphasized local context and use that could strengthen what they were already doing. While many may argue that performance measurement is not an evaluation approach but rather a separate activity conducted internally by organizations, performance measurement is also included as a valuable and complementary form of knowledge production in building an evaluative culture within a community coalition (Hatry, 2013; Lahey & Nielsen, 2013; McDavid et al., 2013).

#### *Program theory evaluation*

In North America, by the late 1990s, new methods of community coalition evaluation were beginning to develop that addressed the complexity of community change, insisted on stakeholder involvement, applied theories of change and logic models and tracked a broad range of outcomes (Wallerstein et al., 2002). The Roundtable on Comprehensive Community Initiatives for Children and Families was a forerunner in the field, and in 1994 created a steering committee on evaluation where members engaged in comprehensive initiatives met to discuss the pressing issues in community-based evaluation (Kubisch et al., 1998).

The initial results of the Roundtable's work were a volume of papers produced by the Aspen Institute that outlined some of the difficulties in evaluating

comprehensive initiatives (Connell et al., 1995). Within this collection, a well-cited article by Weiss (1995) proposed that using a Theory of Change (TOC) approach could address some of the barriers to evaluation presented by community coalitions. Based on Chen's Theory-Driven Evaluation, the TOC approach is a very popular and well documented way to explain the how and why an initiative works (Baum, 2001; Judge & Bauld, 2001; Lafferty & Mahoney, 2003; Weiss, 1995, p. 16). The TOC approach systematically and cumulatively studies the links between the activities, outcomes and contexts of a community coalition's work (Connell & Kubisch, 1998, p. 16). Early adopters included the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the United Way of America and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention to evaluate human service programs, community change initiatives and public health programs and interventions (Coryn, Noakes, Westine, & Schroter, 2011, p. 200).

Various scholars discuss a TOC or theory-based evaluation with reference to community coalitions and use visual representations such as logic models and outcomes chains to systematically describe the expectations of what needs to happen in order to attain community change and what actions are needed to achieve those desirable results (Funnell & Rogers, 2011; Judge & Bauld, 2001). A group's statement of how change will occur and how they think their interventions contribute to the results is known as their program theory (Funnell & Rogers, 2011, p. 31). The program theory of a community coalition initiative is then used to develop key intermediate outcomes that ultimately lead to long term outcomes. Butterfoss (2007) explains that by documenting their progress toward those intermediate outcomes, community coalitions can tell whether they are on track or whether their logic model needs adjustment to increase the potential for achieving long term impacts (p. 435). Proponents of the TOC approach suggest that it builds consensus among stakeholders, strengthens the planning and implementation of an initiative and clarifies the measurement and data collection of the evaluation process (Connell & Kubisch, 1998; Kaplan & Garrett, 2005; Weiss, 1995). A good theory of change according to Connell and Kubisch is that it is "plausible, doable and testable" (p. 17).

While some believe that developing a testable theory of change helps stakeholders to critically think about what is required to bring about a desired social change (Anderson, 2005; Butterfoss, 2007; Connell & Kubisch, 1998; Kaplan & Garrett, 2005), there are challenges in implementing a TOC approach to evaluation, particularly for groups that lack resources. First, participants are required to invest time in discussing their mental models of how they believe the initiative is supposed to work and ideally, to come to consensus. This includes time being allotted for agreeing upon indicators, target population, thresholds and timelines (Connell & Kubisch, 1998; Funnell & Rogers, 2011; Judge & Bauld, 2001; Weiss, 1995). Second, even though time is invested, there are no guarantees that the resulting TOC will be useful. Sridharan (2011) suggests that program theories of community initiatives are often vague and incomplete which affects the

implementation of the initiatives as well as their evaluation. Third, there could also be political risks in making assumptions explicit, particularly if the resulting theory of change does not match with that of the funders (Weiss, 1995, p. 87). Finally, there are not only issues regarding the design of a theory of change, but also its measurement and generalizability as local factors of community coalitions are unique and require their contextual interpretation (Weiss, 1995, pp. 88–89).

Other scholars also have reservations in applying a program theory to community coalition initiatives. Rogers (2008) questions whether simple linear logic models are appropriate for more complex interventions and warns that logic models have a tendency to omit other factors that contribute to observed outcomes (p. 34). She suggests that simple logic models are best suited for interventions that are predictable and standardized or when it is understood that they are simplifications and not accurate models (p. 35). Because of the dynamic nature of community coalition initiatives, Rogers and others (Fishman, Farrell Allen, V., & Eiseman, 2000; Janzen et al., 2012) propose that a community coalition's TOC may not be necessarily unified or stable, but rather evolves over time in response to a complex and dynamic environment.

Further criticism regarding the TOC approach includes Stufflebeam (2001) in his rather blunt assessment of theory-based program evaluation. He found little to recommend, suggesting comprehensive and validated program theories are very difficult to develop and getting it wrong can be "highly counterproductive" (p. 39). Others highlight that while there literature about what to do in a theory-driven evaluation, there appears to be not much written about how to do it (Coryn, 2009 as cited in Coryn et al., 2011). In a systematic review of 45 cases of theory-driven evaluation over the past 20 years, Coryn et al. (2011) examined how closely the practices mirrored the key concepts as described by leading scholars in the field. They found that theory-driven evaluation lacks a common vocabulary, definition and shared conceptual and operational frameworks as evidenced by the numerous terms sometimes used interchangeably: program-theory evaluation, theory-based evaluation, theory-of-action, theory-of-change, program logic, logic frameworks, realistic evaluation (p. 200). Moreover, Coryn et al.'s research concluded that theory-driven evaluation did not fare better or worse than other forms of evaluation.

However, there are proponents that recommend that theory-based evaluation combined with stakeholder involvement is a practical and essential part of any community change effort (Judge & Bauld, 2001; Lafferty & Mahoney, 2003; Organizational Research Services, 2004; Rogers, 2008). Early frameworks that incorporate a TOC approach include the Kansas University Evaluation Workgroup Handbook and the Center for Disease Control evaluation models that were developed in the early 1990s. In fact TOC continues to be progressed in research and practice. Outcome Mapping (OM) is a model used widely around the world to

assist complex initiatives to unpack their theory of change (BetterEvaluation, n.d.). Developed by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in 1999, OM provides an outline of how to monitor and evaluate an initiative's contribution to changes within its sphere of influence (Earl et al., 2001). Contribution analysis is another iterative step-by-step method that seeks to confirm a theory of change while assessing other factors that may have influenced outcomes (Mayne, 2008b).

### *Stakeholder Involvement Approaches to Evaluation*

Over the years, there has been increased attention and growing interest in the evaluation literature regarding the involvement of stakeholders when conducting an evaluation to a point where today, it is essentially an assumed requirement (Coombe, 2012; Daigneault, Jacob, & Tremblay, 2012; Daigneault & Jacob, 2009; Rodríguez-Campos, 2012b). Stakeholder involvement approaches share the belief that by including stakeholders in an evaluation, there will be greater buy-in and a sense of ownership resulting in the increased likelihood that stakeholders will use the evaluation results (Cullen & Coryn, 2011; Patton, 2008; Rodríguez-Campos, 2012a, p. 57). While these principles are common themes within this field, there are multiple ways in which evaluation scholars conceptualize, describe and implement stakeholder participation and overall consensus has not been reached (Cullen & Coryn, 2011). Nevertheless overall, most stakeholder involvement approaches to evaluation are a good fit for community coalitions with their joint emphasis of relationships, collaboration and local knowledge.

This section briefly describes the strengths and limitations of involving stakeholders in an evaluation and clarifies the various labels used within this field. An overview of three popular approaches to stakeholder involvement in evaluation is then outlined. These popular approaches are: Empowerment Evaluation, Utilization-Focused Evaluation and Developmental Evaluation. This section discusses how the unique ideas of these approaches can be applied to the evaluation of community coalitions. While these three approaches prioritize different elements of evaluation, they all share the belief that stakeholders share ownership of the process and should be involved in all aspects of the evaluation design and implementation (Coombe, 2012).

One of the strengths of involving stakeholders in an evaluation is that stakeholder participation can help to overcome suspicion of evaluation and ultimately increase use of evaluation findings and promote decision-making based on evaluation data. Additionally, by involving stakeholders in the evaluation design and decision-making, evaluations tend to be more sensitive and responsive to community needs and local contexts (Chouinard, 2013; Sufian et al., 2011). However, research suggests that it is the relationships between stakeholders and evaluators that are essential to evaluations being used (Johnson et al., 2009). Scholars propose that stakeholder involvement connects community and external evaluators in a collaborative learning partnership that can ultimately lead to organizational

learning and improvement (Coombe, 2012, p. 358; Patton, 2011; Preskill & Torres, 2000).

With a greater number of evaluations implementing stakeholder involvement approaches, there has emerged a branch of evaluation research that is interested in *process use*, or the changes in attitude, thinking and behaviour as a result of one's participation in an evaluation (Patton, 2007). Process use is grounded in social constructivist learning theory which suggests that individuals construct knowledge and develop a shared reality through relationships with others (Preskill, Zuckerman, & Matthews, 2003). Patton (2008) distinguishes between six outcomes that could occur as a result of involvement with an evaluation (pp. 158-159) (see Table 7).

Table 7 <i>Stakeholder benefits of involvement with an evaluation</i>	
1.	Infusing evaluative thinking into the organizational culture
2.	Enhancing shared understandings
3.	Supporting and reinforcing the program intervention
4.	Instrumentation effects and reactivity
5.	Increasing engagement, self-determination and ownership
6.	Program and organizational development

(Patton, 2008)

While there is undeniably a close association between process use and evaluation capacity building (another area of interest for evaluators), scholars disagree on what that entails. Some argue that process use is a “by-product” that occurs from stakeholder involvement in an evaluation whereas evaluation capacity building is established as intentional learning by an evaluator (Harnar & Preskill, 2007, p. 40). Conversely, Patton (2007) contends that evaluation capacity building is the activity, whereas process use is the outcome. In recent years, it appears that there is a growing body of literature that identifies evaluation capacity building as a separate activity from actually conducting evaluations (Labin, Duffy, Meyers, Wandersman, & Lesesne, 2012). Regardless of the various conceptualizations of process use, encouraging stakeholders to learn throughout an evaluation helps groups such as community coalitions develop a common purpose and shared meaning of the process, better understanding of what they are evaluating, as well as an opportunity to define their own evaluation practice—all important steps toward building an evaluative culture.

However, stakeholder involvement in evaluations is not a panacea for increased evaluation use. Research suggests these approaches require more time, motivation and commitment from stakeholders who may not have the necessary knowledge, skills or other resources to participate in this form of evaluation (Cousins & Earl,

1992; Daigneault & Jacob, 2009). There are also concerns regarding bias, conflict of interest, and misuse of data findings as assumptions about evaluator objectivity is not maintained (Coombe, 2012; Fawcett et al., 2003; Sufian et al., 2011; Wallerstein et al., 2002; Zukoski & Luluquisen, 2002). Moreover, funders often insist on more technocratic forms of evaluation that produce a judgement about the worth of a program or initiative, which is generally not the emphasis of stakeholder involvement approaches (Chouinard, 2013). Finally, while Scriven (as cited in Donaldson, Patton, Fetterman, & Scriven, 2009, p. 23) agrees that participatory approaches to evaluation may build the relationship between evaluator and client, he argues that these kinds of evaluations can often overlook how a program actually benefits its consumers.

An overall assessment of the literature regarding stakeholder approaches to evaluation uncovers considerable confusion regarding the way in which common terminology is applied. Terms such as participatory evaluation, collaborative evaluation and even empowerment evaluation mean different things to different evaluation theorists which has led to a lack of clarity as the terms are often used interchangeably (Cousins, 2005, p. 183; Cullen & Coryn, 2011; Daigneault & Jacob, 2009; Patton, 2008, p. 175). Some scholars argue that the term participatory evaluation is best used as an umbrella term among which the following commonly used approaches could be classified: Stakeholder-Based Model; Practical Participatory Evaluation, Transformative Participatory Evaluation, Collaborative Evaluation, Developmental Evaluation, Empowerment Evaluation, Responsive Evaluation, Utilization-Focused Evaluation (Coombe, 2012; Cullen & Coryn). Alternatively, Cousins, Whitmore and Shulha (2013) prefer to use the terms “collaborative evaluation” or “collaborative inquiry” as an overarching term that encompasses these various approaches and question efforts to compartmentalize various approaches (p. 14). In a response to Cousins et al., Fetterman, Rodríguez-Campos, Wandersman and O’Sullivan (2014) argue that differentiating among stakeholder involvement approaches helps to enhance conceptual clarity. They place the three major stakeholder approaches on a continuum of stakeholder involvement and suggest that with collaborative evaluation the evaluator is in charge; with participatory evaluation there is joint ownership of the evaluation and finally, with empowerment evaluation the stakeholders are in control. Patton (2008) suggests that because terms such as “participatory evaluation” and “collaborative evaluation” have multiple interpretations, they must be defined in each setting where they are used.

One model that has been useful in conceptualizing the various forms of stakeholder involvement evaluation has been the framework introduced by Cousins and Whitmore in 1998. This model differentiates between two forms of participatory evaluation, namely Practical Participatory Evaluation (P-PE) and Transformative Participatory Evaluation (T-PE). The authors propose that P-PE’s main purpose is geared toward enhancing evaluation use for organizational decision-making,

learning and change (p. 6), while the T-PE is rooted in community and international development, with the empowerment of vulnerable and marginalized individuals and groups as its primary function (p. 8). Cousins and Whitmore provide a set of three “process dimensions” as a way of distinguishing between various forms of stakeholder involvement approaches.

Building upon the conceptual framework of Cousins and Whitmore, Daigneault and Jacob (2009) refine the dimensions and propose that all three process dimensions must be evident in order for an evaluation to be considered participatory. The first dimension is the *extent of involvement*, which refers to the level of involvement by non-evaluator stakeholders in the technical tasks of the evaluation process. The second dimension is the *diversity of participants*, which assumes that the greater variety of stakeholders involved, the more participatory an evaluation is, and finally, the third dimension is the *control of the evaluation process*, which proposes that the more control that non-evaluator stakeholders have over the tasks of the evaluation process, the more participatory the evaluation is (pp. 338-343). Different forms of evaluations are located on these continua according to extent of involvement, who participates and who controls the process. Evaluations that score at the negative end of the scale on the three dimensions are not considered participatory. An evaluation where all three dimensions are at the positive end of the continuum suggest that non-evaluation stakeholders are completely in charge of the evaluation from beginning to end and considered a “self-managed democratic evaluation” wherein the stakeholders in effect become evaluators (Daigneault & Jacob, 2009, p. 337).

So what kind of stakeholder involvement approaches to evaluation best match community coalitions? And how do evaluations of community coalitions fit within this framework? Key features of community coalitions include a common purpose, a deliberate and comprehensive approach to community-based planning and local capacity building, collaborative partnerships and flexibility, ongoing learning and responsiveness to meet evolving community needs (Auspos & Kubisch, 2004; Kubisch et al., 2002). Based on these characteristics inherent in many community coalitions, the guiding principles of T-PE (community participation and ownership, inclusion, collaboration, equity as well as the application of findings to promote action and change at multiple levels) correspond well (as cited by Cousins & Whitmore, 1998 in Coombe, 2012). However P-PE approaches that score high on the above three dimensions would assist also benefit community coalitions in systematically using evaluation information for decision-making and organizational improvements. Therefore it appears that either stream of participatory evaluation would be appropriate, subject to the overall goals and purpose of the evaluation. For this research the following stakeholder involvement approaches seem to be most applicable for use with community coalitions: Empowerment Evaluation, Utilization-Focused Evaluation and Developmental Evaluation. Recommended by both academic and grey literature as evaluation

options for community coalitions, these three popular perspectives are broad enough to bridge both participatory streams depending on the priorities and requirements of a coalition.

*Empowerment Evaluation*

Empowerment Evaluation (EE) was first introduced by David Fetterman at the 1993 American Evaluation Association National Conference as an approach that helps groups conduct their own evaluations and ultimately foster self-determination (Fetterman, 1993, p. 115). The role of the evaluator is to act as a coach, facilitator, or “critical friend” who provides the tools of evaluation to community agencies and coalitions for planning, implementation, self-evaluation and improvement, thereby continuously improving the quality of their work and the likelihood of achieving outcomes (Alkin, 2013; Fetterman, Kaftarian, & Wandersman, 1996; Fetterman & Wandersman, 2005; Fetterman, 2013; Wandersman, 2003, 2014). Fetterman (2013) contends that when stakeholders are engaged in their own evaluation, they are more likely to make decisions and take action based on their own evaluation findings (p. 304).

In 2005, Fetterman expanded the foundation of this approach with ten EE principles that guide practice (see Table 8). Specific empowerment evaluation techniques include Fetterman’s 3-step model and Wandersman’s Getting to Outcomes, a 10-step method. However, Wandersman and Snell-Johns (2005) suggest that there is not one definitive empowerment evaluation method, but rather the approach involves significant collaboration between evaluator and stakeholders and various evaluation methods are applied according to EE principles (p. 422).

While many evaluators, program staff and community groups find EE and its principles very appealing, this approach has also been the subject of skepticism and criticism from other

evaluation theorists. Some have been outspoken about EE as not constituting a valid evaluation approach. Detractors argue that since the overall goal of evaluation is to render judgement, EE’s main tenet of building evaluation capacity does not constitute evaluation. Accordingly, EE’s use of self-evaluation is not considered a credible means for obtaining accurate evaluative conclusions; EE has been called “amateur evaluation” and a “softer substitute for the real thing” (Scriven, 2005, p.417; Smith, 2007; Stufflebeam, 1994). Cousins (2005) suggests that while EE supporters have represented this approach as a means for

1.	Improvement
2.	Community Ownership
3.	Inclusion
4.	Democratic Participation
5.	Social Justice
6.	Community Knowledge
7.	Evidence-Based Strategies
8.	Capacity Building
9.	Organizational Learning
10.	Accountability

(Fetterman & Wandersman, 2005)

establishing accountability, he doubts that EE is appropriate for rendering difficult decisions about the continuation, termination or expansion of a program (p. 206).

Another criticism levelled against EE has been its conceptual ambiguity. Cousins (2005) argues that there is not much that differentiates EE from other stakeholder involvement approaches that help organizations to build an evaluative culture. Critics argue that EE lacks a theoretical explanation that links how the practice of EE results in evaluation capacity, increased effectiveness of programs, as well as the broader goals of self-determination and empowerment (Cousins, 2005; Donaldson et al., 2009). While proponents suggest that adhering to the ten EE principles can result in empowered outcomes, Miller and Campbell (2006) in their systematic review of 47 case examples found that the application of the ten principles varied greatly. Although the principle of community knowledge was consistently applied in the case studies, few cases adhered to the principles of democracy and social justice despite the fact that EE is often used with programs that serve vulnerable populations (p. 314).

To those who believe that empowerment is not a legitimate evaluation outcome, and who are skeptical of EE's claims toward self-determination and improved program results, the EE's approach has many conceptual inconsistencies and practical challenges. However, as Wandersman and Snell-Johns (2005) point out, EE is an appropriate approach for stakeholders who are interested in collaborating with an evaluator to learn the tools of systematically planning, implementing and evaluating their own programs and using their own evaluation data for decision-making.

#### *Utilization-Focused Evaluation*

The first edition of the book by Michael Quinn Patton *Utilization-Focused Evaluation* (U-FE) was published in 1978. Since then, U-FE has emerged as an approach to designing and delivering evaluations for and with specific intended users for specific intended uses; in other words doing evaluations that are useful and actually used (Patton, 2008). A basic premise underlying U-FE is to actively involve participants in all aspects of the evaluation as intended users are more likely to use evaluation findings if they understand and feel ownership of the process (Patton, 2013). A systematic review of empirical literature on evaluation use from 1986 to 2005 emphasized the importance of stakeholder involvement in facilitating evaluation use (Johnson et al., 2009).

Highly personal and situational, U-FE does not subscribe to any particular evaluation theory, model or method (Patton, 2014). Instead, the process of U-FE starts with the evaluator developing a working relationship with intended users to assist them in selecting the kind of evaluation they need given their individual situation. Decisions about evaluation purpose, design, data collection and focus are determined between the intended users and the evaluator, based on how the

evaluation will be used (Patton, 2008). In *Essentials of Utilization-Focused Evaluation*, (Patton, 2012), the author provides an overall framework that incorporates 17 critical steps on how to produce useful evaluations that actually get used (p. xx).

There are several underlying principles of U-FE that are also of importance to community coalitions (Patton, 2008, pp. 570–573). First as potential intended users, community coalitions have specific information needs about both the functioning and the outcomes of their initiatives; providing relevant data about these two areas would be very helpful to coalitions. Second, similar to U-FE, local situational factors and conditions such as history, politics and resource allocation play a significant role in coalition decision-making. Finally, community coalitions are often a vehicle for organizations, businesses and citizens to participate and collaborate together while solving local issues; U-FE is built on a foundation of stakeholder involvement in order to make evaluations useful and used.

While U-FE's emphasis on intended user engagement and participation are attractive features for community coalitions looking at evaluation, this approach shares similar drawbacks to other stakeholder involvement approaches, particularly for smaller initiatives. Paying attention to evaluation use requires significant time and financial commitment which could be in short supply in less sourced coalitions. In addition, turnover of coalition members involved in the process could also affect the evaluation (Patton, 2008). That being said, U-FE has the potential to build the capacity of community coalitions to use evaluation for organizational learning and program improvement (Patton & Horton, 2009).

#### *Developmental Evaluation*

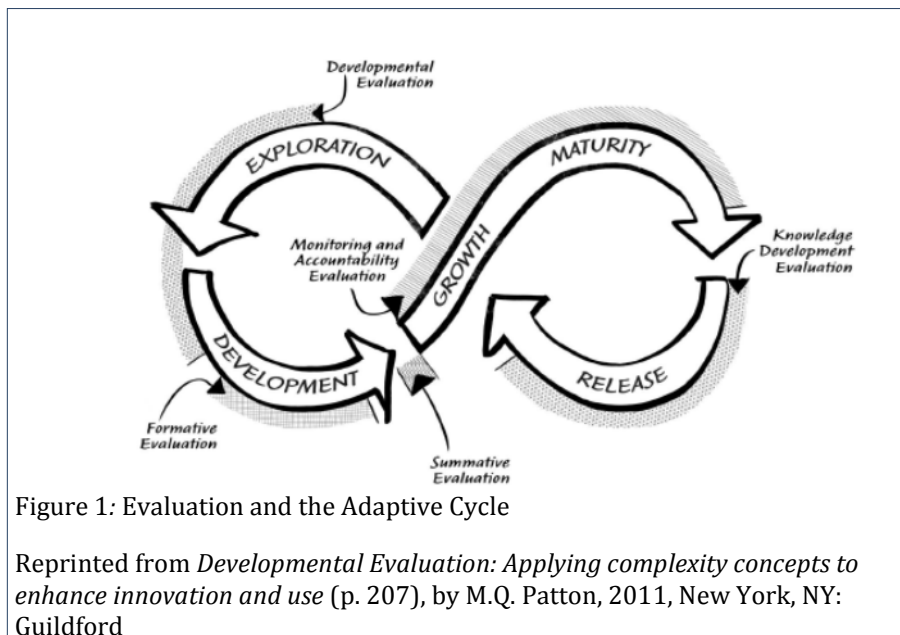
Traditionally the overall purpose of program evaluation has been categorized into two types: 1.) *Formative* which is conducted to provide feedback and advice for improving a program and 2.) *Summative*, which assesses the merit or worth of a program, and whether or not the program should be continued, expanded or terminated (McDavid et al., 2013). However, in 1994, Michael Quinn Patton introduced a third category: *Developmental Evaluation (DE)* (Patton, 1994). Patton explains that this new niche of evaluation supports program innovation by asking evaluative questions, applying evaluative logic, and gathering and reporting information and providing real-time feedback to facilitate decision-making along the way (Dozois, Langlois, & Blanchet-Cohen, 2010; Patton, 2006; Preskill & Beer, 2012; Preskill & Torres, 2000). Simply put, DE does not attempt to improve or judge; rather DE assists people working to address complex social issues to adapt to dynamic conditions, see what works and what doesn't work, make sense of successes and learn from failures (Patton, 2011, p. 52).

It is useful to differentiate between two kinds of programs when thinking about evaluation. There are *models* which provide replicable or semi-standardized

solutions using similar methods and procedures and *adaptive initiatives* which work well where conditions are continuously evolving and there is little consensus on a solution (Britt & Coffman, 2012). Community coalitions are often examples of adaptive initiatives that must be responsive and continually adjust to the dynamic and changing needs of their communities. In addition, there is often a lack of knowledge or consensus about the best way to tackle an issue. In many ways, it is as though community coalitions are “developing” interventions to address issues as they go along. Janzen et al. (2012) contend that it is important for coalitions to have the ability to reflect and learn about the effectiveness of their interventions in real time to inform future action (p. 63). Developmental Evaluation (DE) provides a process to systematically look back and look ahead to assess process, harvest learning from experiences and rigorously evaluate what is working and what is not (Westley et al., 2007, p. 84).

DE is a combination of the rigour of evaluation with the role of organization development coaching (Gamble, 2008, p. 18). The evaluator becomes part of the team and facilitates inquiry, decision-making, and adaptations with real time data and feedback (Patton, 2011). The evaluator not only needs basic professional evaluator competencies but must also have the necessary credibility and understanding of the field. The role can be internal or external, but requires strengths in strategic thinking, relationship building, and a complex systems orientation to the evaluation (Dozois et al., 2010; Gamble, 2008; Preskill & Beer, 2012).

While DE has no standard set of tools, its approach is deeply connected to U-FE with the expectation that the evaluator determine *situational recognition*, or individualize each evaluation to its specific users and other contextual factors. Nevertheless, Patton (2011) provides a sample of ten frameworks for developmental inquiry that match different sets of questions to particular types of complex situations. Moreover, he advises that not all situations are suitable for DE and proposes distinguishing between simple, complicated and complex interventions as well as applying Gunderson and Holling’s adaptive cycle (2002, as cited in Patton, 2011, p. 207) to evaluation (see Figure 1).



At this time, it appears that there is no written critique in the literature regarding DE (Cabaj, 2011). There may be some argument as to whether DE is actually a subset of formative evaluation, and while Patton (2011) makes a clear argument about the difference between developing and improving an intervention, he contends that the distinction is “neither absolute nor unambiguous and involves matters of intention and perception” (p. 50). In practice, Poth, Pinto and Howery (2012) outline several challenges while facilitating a developmental evaluation which includes introducing a new evaluation approach to program staff, defining the boundaries of the evaluation team and ensuring that technical resources facilitate data reliability and validity. As with other stakeholder involvement approaches, there are some necessary conditions required before DE is considered as an evaluation approach: strong leadership; an organizational culture that values reflection, ongoing learning and dialogue; adequate time, financial and human resources; open communication and accessible information both internally and externally (Preskill & Beer, 2012).

There is great potential for community coalitions to learn from the mindset of DE. Patton (2011) asserts that community developers tend to be so preoccupied with action that they fail to systematically track what is happening and document why they chose one path over another (p. 30). Instead he proposes that DE’s focus on inquiry helps groups to collect and use data in real-time to make sense of what is emerging at that moment. Moreover, as community coalitions are increasingly valued by funders, DE is an approach that helps to strengthen collaborations by identifying potential issues before they become a crisis and facilitates the sharing of assumptions, views and perspectives among members.

There is evidence that more community initiatives are incorporating DE into their work. In the Aspen Institute’s third report on lessons learned in evaluating comprehensive community initiatives, Brown (2010) suggests that increasingly evaluation is being used as a way to support real-time learning and decision-making, refine strategy and implement adaptations to their course (pp. 95-97). Others have labelled DE a “game-changing” approach for next generation evaluation (Gopalakrishnan, Preskill, & Shijie, 2013).

Since 2011, there has been a new form of collaboration called *collective impact* that has been sweeping community change initiatives throughout North America (Cabaj, 2014). Introduced by Kania and Kramer (2011), collective impact is a term used to describe when representatives from various sectors work together on a common agenda to solve complex issues in their community. The authors outline five conditions needed for collective impact to be successful (see Table 9). There has been a growing interest in how to develop a *shared measurement system* among many partners, as well as how collective impact initiatives should be evaluated (Almog & Habib, 2013; Cabaj, 2014; Kramer, Parkhurst, & Vaidyanathan, 2009; Preskill, Parkhurst, et al., 2014).

Recently, there has been a spate of documents about the future of evaluation from FSG, a non-profit consulting firm specializing in strategy, evaluation and research. Of special interest, FSG has published a guide to evaluating collective impact

Table 9 <i>Five conditions for Collective Impact</i>
1. Common Agenda
2. Shared Measurement Systems
3. Mutually Reinforcing Activities
4. Continuous Communication
5. Backbone Support Organizations
(Kania & Kramer, 2011)

initiatives that proposes the different stages of an initiative’s development determine the performance indicators and type of evaluation (Preskill, Parkhurst, et al., 2014). During the early years, when a collective impact initiative is in its infancy, DE is most appropriate as there is a high degree of uncertainty about what will work and how. As the collective impact initiative matures and becomes more refined, formative evaluation is a suitable choice.

When the collective impact initiative is stable and well established and its interventions are not changing, there is an opportunity for summative evaluation (Preskill, Parkhurst, et al., 2014, p. 11). However, Preskill et al. suggest that within each stage there may be opportunities to use each type of evaluation and stress the role of continuous learning and adaptation in this kind of work.

### 3.4. Performance Measurement

Some argue that performance measurement and management is often overlooked as a complementary and potentially integrative tool for timely information, organizational learning and decision-making (Auspos & Kubisch, 2012; McDavid et

al., 2013; Nielsen & Ejler, 2008). As governments and foundations capitalize on performance measurement as a way to improve outcomes in the non-profit sector, there is also a renewed interest in measuring results within multi-sectoral or collective impact initiatives (Auspos & Kubisch, 2012). In order for community coalitions to capitalize on the potential use of performance measurement for organizational learning and decision-making, it is important to understand that performance measurement and evaluation are best seen as complementary activities (Davies, 1999; Hatry, 2013; McDavid et al., 2013; Nielsen & Ejler, 2008; Nielsen & Hunter, 2013; Oswald & Taylor, 2010). There are strong parallels in the literature between performance measurement and the alternative approaches to evaluation discussed in the previous section.

Over the past 25 years, performance measurement has been garnering growing attention and resources (McDavid et al., 2013). By the 1990s, western governments began adopting a business-like approach, new public management, to the public sector that highlights accountability and values the achievement of results (Carnochan, Samples, Myers, & Austin, 2013; Chouinard, 2013; Davies, 1999; McDavid et al., 2013). Since then, organizations, programs and projects funded by various levels of government, as well as by philanthropic organizations, have emulated the changes that have occurred in the public sector and have been expected to track, compare and report their results (Auspos & Kubisch, 2012; McDavid et al.). With governments' focus on accountability and results, this has led to a more prominent role for performance measurement and a more limited role for evaluation within public sector reform.

Performance measurement has largely replaced program evaluation as an alternative to accountability for governments and foundations focused on more timely and less costly information about program efficiency and effectiveness (Davies, 1999, p. 153; McDavid & Huse, 2006, p. 55). Various health promotion/prevention as well as community development initiatives have also incorporated performance measurement or monitoring as a way of not only strengthening accountability to funders, but also as a tool for ongoing learning and improvement (Auspos & Kubisch, 2012; Butterfoss, 2007; Cytron, 2012; Fawcett, Foster, & Francisco, 2002; Fawcett, 1995; Preskill, Gopal, et al., 2014; Wolff, 2010).

Performance measurement and program evaluation share several similarities. First, both evaluation and performance measurement share a primary purpose to provide information to organizations to help them improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their services that is accurate, complete and timely (Hatry, 2013). Second, they both systematically collect and analyze information using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to judge the performance of how well a program delivers services (Nielsen & Ejler, 2008; Walker & Anderson Moore, 2011). Finally, they equally demand strong leadership, staff buy-in, an

evaluative culture and meaningful participation in order to promote use in an organization.

However there are also some important differences between these evaluation approaches as described in the literature. Typically, performance measurement and evaluation are differentiated as follows: 1.) performance measurement occurs at frequent intervals while program evaluation is done once or periodically; 2.) program attribution is generally assumed with performance measurement while evaluation is often used to determine causality; 3.) performance measurement objectives evolve over time in response to changes in the environment whereas an evaluation tends to have a specific mandate and scope; 4.) performance measurement is mostly likely to be used internally by managers and staff for continuous program improvement while a traditional evaluation is apt to be conducted by external evaluators for internal program decisions; 5.) the cost of performance measurement is absorbed as part of organizational operations; conversely an evaluation is offset as an one-off organizational expense (Hatry, 2013; McDavid et al., 2013; Nielsen & Ejler, 2008; Walker & Anderson Moore, 2011). Auspos and Kubisch (2012) assert that the key distinction between performance measurement and evaluation in complex place-based initiatives is that performance measurement is used for course correction while evaluation is used to assess the impact of an intervention (p. 11).

Some scholars within the evaluation literature promote the concept that performance measurement and evaluation are interdependent and explore the approaches' different yet complementary roles (Boris & Kopczynski Winkler, 2013; Davies, 1999; Dudding & Nielsen, 2013; Hatry, 2013; Lynch-Cerullo & Cooney, 2011; McDavid et al., 2013; Nielsen & Ejler, 2008; Nielsen & Hunter, 2013; Oswald & Taylor, 2010; Scheirer & Newcomer, 2001). Nielsen and Ejler(2008, p. 174) and Rist (as cited by Nielsen & Ejler) list four ways that performance measurement and evaluation interconnect:

- 1.) *sequential complementarity*: information about outcomes from a performance measurement system often raises questions that an evaluation can answer and vice versa (Wholey, Hatry, & Newcomer, 2010);
- 2.) *informational complementarity*: both performance measurement and evaluation derive information from the same data sources for different uses and analysis which avoids parallel information systems (Dudding & Nielsen, 2013);
- 3.) *organizational complementarity*: in some organizations, performance measurement and evaluation information are combined and continuously shared throughout the organization;

- 4.) *methodological complementarity*: both performance measurement and evaluation share similar tools and require a similar set of skills such as working with logic models, research designs and measuring constructs (McDavid et al., 2013).

Studies of performance measurement have typically examined single organizations or multi-agency coalitions that work on a few individual level outcomes (Auspos & Kubisch, 2012). Challenges of performance measurement systems in community coalitions are similar to those of evaluation: getting diverse stakeholders to agree on common goals and indicators and identifying common definitions for data tracking and measuring community level outcomes. In addition, the persistent change within a community coalition, the intractability of the issues addressed and the changing environment suggests a high level of unpredictability and non-linearity toward planned outcomes.

A performance measurement system for community coalitions needs to be flexible and adaptive, while still providing focus. In other words, a performance measurement system must both track whether a plan is being implemented as intended, but also be responsive to emergent outcomes created by unintended connections or relationships, circumstances and opportunities (Zimmerman et al., 2011).

This literature review on the evaluation of community coalitions suggests there is a synergy between performance measurement and evaluation and that using stakeholder approaches to evaluation with community initiatives seem to blur the lines between these two forms of knowledge production. Kelly (2010) contends that evaluation must include constant assessment and adaptation of interventions to new and unanticipated situations and conditions. Furthermore he asserts that evaluation must be implemented not only at the beginning and end of an initiative, but throughout its existence (p. 20). Annie E. Casey Foundation's *Framework for Learning and Results in Community Change Initiatives* (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2006) describes evaluation as an "iterative process...that leads to action by setting targets for results, identifying baseline starting points and measuring progress against benchmarks of success" (p. 24). Both descriptions of evaluation seem to have melded aspects of performance measurement and evaluation into a complementary framework. As more community coalitions and their funders turn to stakeholder involvement approaches to evaluation that judge less and inform more, there are several areas where these two evaluation activities intersect.

First, Developmental Evaluation (DE) defies the rule that evaluations are episodic while performance measurement is continuous. Auspos and Kubisch (2012) (2012) suggest that many community initiatives use developmental evaluation to learn more about their interventions for real-time feedback for decision-making. Patton (2011) asserts that DE requires "timely engagement and rapid feedback" (p. 77), both of which are more characteristic of performance measurement than

traditional evaluation. In addition, summative evaluations with traditional timeframes of projects (3-5 years) do not capture the slow speed of progress of community change. Ongoing data collection and monitoring of intermediate outcomes may be more informative for community coalitions (Butterfoss, 2007, p. 441).

Second, Nielsen and Ejler (2008) suggest that performance measurement is well suited to participatory methods as the data produced has the potential to be more meaningful for the staff involved. Collective consensus is important in community coalitions and stakeholder approaches to evaluation and performance measurement has the ability to challenge traditional hierarchical approaches to evaluation.

Third, logic models or theories of change are often used in both performance measurement and evaluation to develop a roadmap on how to achieve success and can inform both evaluation activities. Moreover questions that community coalition members want answered may be through evaluation, performance measurement or both. Funnell and Rogers (2011) suggest that a program theory is helpful in making decisions about which aspects of a program are best measured through performance measurement and which require a more in-depth evaluation study.

Fourth, performance measurement and evaluation are both essential to ongoing learning for community coalitions and the knowledge gained from these two evaluation activities increases the learning capital of the community coalition (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2006). Intentionally reflecting on the results of a performance measurement system helps to know what questions need to be probed further.

There are several resources from foundations and non-profit organizations that provide a combined monitoring and evaluation framework for community coalitions. A key aspect of Kansas University Workgroup Framework for Participatory Evaluation (Fawcett, 1995) outlines a monitoring and feedback system that consists of process and outcomes measures, an observational system for collecting the measures and regular feedback to various community stakeholders. Outcome mapping (Earl et al., 2001) offers an evaluation framework that synthesizes intentional planning, outcome and performance monitoring as well as evaluation into a comprehensive package for projects and programs.

In a recent publication about evaluating collective impact initiatives, Preskill et al. (2014) propose that the evaluation of community coalitions consists both of a performance measurement system to understand what progress is being made as well as incorporating different evaluation approaches depending on the coalition's stage of development. The authors assert that both evaluation activities are essential to the ongoing learning of community coalitions so that members can

access relevant, credible and useful information to inform decision-making (p. 20). Kelly (2010) argues that evaluations be designed to support coalitions in adapting their interventions to new and changing conditions and suggests evaluations be implemented throughout the life of an initiative, not just at the beginning and end (p. 20).

While the differences between these two evaluation activities are clearly outlined in the literature, the knowledge co-production experience from this project suggests that practitioners have little experience with evaluation and are instead exposed to performance measurement as their foray into the world of evaluative inquiry. With that in mind, most smaller community coalitions require a performance measurement or monitoring system that has a strong evaluative component that can provide them with ongoing information about their progress, and facilitate evaluative inquiry as their interventions unfold and evolve to address their local specific circumstances. It seems that community coalitions with few financial resources might consider developing a performance measurement system with outside expertise from an evaluator as the first step toward building an evaluative culture.

### **3.5. Evaluation Capacity Building**

In 2000, evaluation capacity building (ECB) emerged as a distinct practice when it became the theme of the American Evaluation Association annual conference; since then ECB has experienced increased attention in the evaluation literature (King & Stevahn, 2013; Preskill & Torres, 2000). There appears to be two main reasons that ECB has become a “hot topic for conversation” (Preskill & Boyle, 2008a, p. 443): First, ECB has developed into a popular approach for assisting community-based organizations to meet their funders’ demands for evaluation and performance measurement information about the programs they provide (Carman, 2007; Garcia-Iriarte, Suarez-Balcazar, Taylor-Ritzler, & Luna, 2011; Labin et al., 2012; Stevenson, Florin, Scott Mills, & Andrade, 2002; Taylor-Powell & Boyd, 2008; Volkov, 2008). Second, as stakeholder involvement approaches to evaluation have become more prevalent, there has been increased attention in the learning that occurs from participation in the evaluation process (Patton, 2008; Preskill & Boyle, 2008b).

The importance of ECB has increased due in large part to the expectation of funders and communities that organizations be able to demonstrate and report their results for the purpose of improving services and programs. This means organizations must have the capability to collect and share various kinds of evaluation and performance information to their stakeholders (Carman, 2007). Consequently, the demand that organizations develop their own capacity to continuously monitor and evaluate their programs and services has grown (Hoole & Patterson, 2008, p. 177).

While this literature review could find no research about evaluation practices of community *coalitions*, Carman's study (Carman, 2007) confirms that there is a wide range of evaluation practice among non-profit community-based organizations and demonstrates the inconsistency in how evaluation data is collected and even how evaluation is conceptualized (p. 60). Because there is little external support or funding for evaluation, it is often left up to individual organizations to navigate this unknown terrain with very limited resources and skills (Baron, 2011; Garcia-Iriarte et al., 2011; Scrafford, 2012; Stevenson et al., 2002; Stockdill, Baizerman, & Compton, 2002). ECB is a response to the need for organizations to build their internal evaluation capability to address these external accountability and reporting requirements.

Another compelling reason for community-based organizations to invest in ECB is the learning that occurs as staff build their own skills through collaborative evaluative inquiry (King & Volkov, 2005). Some researchers suggest a strong link between ECB and organizational development and learning; they suggest that ECB efforts help to develop systems for organizations to regularly engage in self-assessment and reflection (Bourgeois & Cousins, 2013, p. 301; Cousins, Goh, Clark, & Lee, 2004; Cousins, Goh, Elliot, & Bourgeois, 2014; Labin et al., 2012; Preskill & Boyle, 2008a; Taut, 2007; Taylor-Powell & Boyd, 2008). Organizations that view evaluation for learning and apply the results to make changes and improvements as opposed to using evaluation to solely meet accountability purposes appear to have more success with implementation (Hoole & Patterson, 2008).

In discussing the concept of ECB, it is worth mentioning that most scholars agree that ECB is a distinct and separate activity from program evaluation (Labin et al., 2012). Although various stakeholder involvement approaches to evaluation share similar principles, and indeed, are considered precursors to this field, ECB is not considered a type of evaluation (Pejsa, 2011, p. 10). However, some argue that ECB has not yet been clearly defined resulting in multiple conceptualizations of the topic (Compton & Baizerman, 2007; Naccarella et al., 2007; Taut, 2007). Nielsen and Attstrom's (2011) synthesis of the ECB literature confirms this assertion; they found ample conceptual pluralism and differing opinions about the purpose of ECB (p. 226). This should not be surprising as ECB interventions vary according to organizations' geographical, cultural and internal context. Some definitions view ECB as primarily an organizational activity, while others are focused on ECB at both the individual and organizational level (Labin et al., 2012; Nielsen & Attstrom). Most agree that applying one agreed-upon definition would be difficult to achieve (Taut, 2007, p. 120; Taylor-Powell & Boyd, 2008, p. 56). Furthermore, the array of definitions may not only be due to the contextual factors inherent in ECB, but also because the ECB field is still relatively young in its development.

The most commonly cited definition of ECB is that of Stockdill, Baizerman and Compton (2002): "ECB is the intentional work to continuously create and sustain

overall organizational processes that make quality evaluation and its uses routine” (as cited in Preskill & Boyle, 2008a, p. 445). More recent definitions have built upon Stockdill et al.’s reference. Labin et al. (2012) describe ECB as an “intentional activity to increase individual motivation, knowledge and skills and to enhance a group’s or organization’s ability to conduct or use evaluation” (p. 308) while Bourgeois’ and Cousins’ explanation (2013) of ECB refers to the changes undertaken by organizations to embed evaluation practice and use at all levels (p. 300). Preskill and Boyle (2008a) describe ECB as a process that teaches organizations and their staff how to both do and use evaluation so that they can collect, analyze and interpret data for decision-making and action (p. 444).

Although there may be different perspectives regarding a common working definition of ECB, scholars have found common threads interwoven throughout the literature. Bourgeois, Chouinard and Cousins (2008) discovered that in the studies they examined, ECB goals or outcomes were generally consistent and mainly concentrated on organizations’ capacity to do evaluation and their capacity to use evaluation (p. 229). Similarly, Labin et al. (2012) purport that while inconsistency exists in how ECB is described in the literature, their findings indicate that there are also shared themes. In their systematic review of the research, the authors concluded that overall, studies emphasized strategies of collaboration and participatory learning with the goal of mainstreaming evaluation into an organization’s policies, process and practices and adequate resources.

The empirical evidence of ECB provides a multitude of different ways to go about building the evaluation capacity, and ultimately, the evaluative culture of organizations. No one definitive method has been identified due to the unique environments, situations and contexts in which ECB is practiced (Pejsa, 2011).

Preskill and Boyle (2008a) list ten approaches that can be implemented at both an individual and group level (see Table 10). Meanwhile, Cousins et al. (2004) differentiate between *direct* ECB activities such as on-site workshops and formal training opportunities and *indirect* ECB interventions that consist of participating in evaluation activities facilitated by an evaluator.

However, some scholars argue that while there is an attraction in focusing extensively on the supply side of evaluation, strategies that assist organizations to use evaluation

Table 10	
<i>ECB Teaching and Learning Strategies</i>	
1.	Internship
2.	Written materials
3.	Technology
4.	Meetings
5.	Appreciative inquiry
6.	Communities of practice
7.	Training
8.	Involvement in the evaluation process
9.	Technical assistance
10.	Coaching or mentoring

(Preskill & Boyle, 2008a, p. 447)

findings for decision-making need to be better explored and emphasized (Bourgeois et al., 2008; Cousins et al., 2014, p. 10; McDonald, Rogers, & Kefford, 2003). Providing workshops, training and technical assistance may be tangible outputs for both evaluators and organizations, but both must also invest in the dynamic and emergent work of building organizational capacity in order that evidence-based decision-making becomes a priority.

As ECB is a highly contextual activity, it comes as no surprise that the research lists various factors that can impact the implementation and sustainability of an ECB initiative. Scholars agree that there are both individual and organizational factors that influence the effectiveness of an ECB initiative (Cousins et al., 2004; King, 2007; Labin et al., 2012; Preskill & Boyle, 2008a; Stockdill et al., 2002; Taylor-Ritzler, Suarez-Balcazar, Garcia-Iriarte, Henry, & Balcazar, 2013). Furthermore, there is evidence that suggests that the relationship between individual factors and effective ECB is mediated by organizational factors of culture and capacity. Taylor-Ritzler et al.'s (2013) findings indicate that even if individual staff members have the knowledge and inclination to adopt evaluation practices in their day-to-day work, their organization must provide the leadership, support, resources and necessary learning climate for those activities to occur (p. 200).

ECB strategies such as training, technical assistance and consultation are generally targeted at staff within an organization to develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes related to evaluation. Individual factors that can impact an ECB initiative include staff beliefs about evaluation and their personal readiness, their motivation to learn and engage, as well as their level of knowledge and skills (Preskill & Boyle, 2008a, p. 449; Suarez-Balcazar et al., 2010, p. 315). However, individual learning evolving into organizational processes and practices is heavily dependent upon the organization's climate and learning capacity (Taylor-Ritzler et al., 2013, p. 192).

An organization's climate and learning capacity includes both its external and internal environment which must be taken into account before selecting specific strategies for building evaluation capacity (Preskill & Boyle, 2008a, p. 450). Whereas some contend that the external demand for evaluation can act as a motivator, others suggest that excessive accountability requirements can negatively impact staff participation to engage in evaluation if it unaligned with the organization's mission (Bourgeois & Cousins, 2013; Gibbs, Napp, Jolly, Westover, & Uhl, 2002; Hoole & Patterson, 2008; King, 2007). Whether the organization has support for organizational change or instead exists within a highly charged political environment, the external context has bearing on whether an initiative can be successful (King, 2007, p. 48). The research suggests that established organizations with stability are more likely to have success with implementing evaluation activities (Carman & Fredericks, 2010; King, 2007; Stevenson et al., 2002).

Organizational capacity is an internal organizational factor that is likely to influence ECB activities that has a significant impact on the design, implementation and sustainability of an ECB initiative (Labin et al., 2012). Evaluation expertise, dedicated staff time, access to tools and technology as well as fiscal support are needed to build a solid foundation for an effective ECB initiative (Arnold, 2006; Cousins et al., 2004; Gibbs et al., 2002; King & Volkov, 2005; Preskill & Boyle, 2008a; Stevenson et al., 2002; Taylor-Powell & Boyd, 2008). The design of the initiative should be tailored to the level of expertise and capacity within the organization. Bourgeois et al. (2008) suggest that the number of staff who participate during the implementation of an ECB initiative improves the results. Additionally, organizational systems such as performance measurement, human resources and financial systems must be in place to sustain evaluation activities long term (Bourgeois et al.; King & Volkov; Volkov, 2008).

Lastly, there are implementation factors that can act as mediators in the effectiveness of an ECB initiative. The literature makes reference to several areas worthy of consideration. The timing of the initiative can have repercussions for the organization depending on issues that may focus attention away from ECB (Preskill & Boyle, 2008a). In addition, the way in which information is communicated about the initiative can affect staff opinion and commitment (King & Volkov, 2005). Furthermore, the ECB facilitator's skills can influence the extent to which staff learn from and about evaluation (Preskill & Boyle, 2008a). The frequency and quality of participation can also affect the outcome of an ECB effort; and well as potentially divert from the original design of the initiative (Labin et al., 2012; Preskill & Boyle, 2008a, p. 452).

What is actually known about the short and long term outcomes of ECB initiatives? Ironically, despite being part of the evaluation field, there is actually little evidence of the overall impact of ECB and few guidelines about how to choose among the myriad of ECB strategies (Baizerman et al., 2002; Bourgeois & Cousins, 2013; Preskill & Boyle, 2008a; Preskill, 2013, p. 3). Case studies are the most prevalent methodology. However, Labin et al. (2012) in their research synthesis of the ECB literature found that over 50% of studies did not report evaluation of the ECB project. Moreover discussion of measurement of outcomes was very rare and over 30% did not report data collection methods (p. 317).

There are several reasons for the lack of research. ECB is a relatively new field that is still under development; therefore agreed upon measures are difficult to find (Stevenson et al., 2002). Preskill (2013) observes that most ECB projects are short in duration and rarely include a contract for evaluating the results. In addition, similar to the evaluation of community coalitions, the evaluation of ECB efforts has comparable design and measurement issues that challenge traditional evaluation methods due to the complex and dynamic nature of organizational life.

While this literature review could not find any direct research regarding ECB efforts with community coalitions, there are several studies that could be applicable to community initiatives. First, Huffman, Thomas and Lawrenz (2008) describe their *collaborative immersion approach* to building ECB in which participants are immersed in complex real-world evaluation experiences rather than first trying to build evaluation capacity through individual skill training. The idea is that with an evaluator's support, this immersion approach motivates participants to build the knowledge and skills necessary to engage in evaluation.

Second, Garcia-Iriarte et al. (2011) present a case study in which ECB is focused on one staff member, using a catalyst-for-change approach to disseminate evaluation knowledge and skills as well as to promote evaluation use within the organization. They suggest that this approach could be applied to community coalitions that lack the financial and human resources to engage in more extensive ECB practices. The authors found that the staff member's new knowledge and skills were shared with others in the organization, and increased ownership of the evaluation process.

Third, in a recent article by Danseco (2013), she claims innovation is crucial to address the nonlinear, adaptive and dynamic nature of complex evaluation capacity building. Rather than a linear or formulaic approach, she suggests that the following interrelated ingredients are keys to successful ECB: curiosity or openness to learning and growing, courage in dealing with uncertainty, communication using multiple strategies and formats, commitment to the process and finally, engaging and collaborating together (Danseco, 2013, pp. 109–114).

Finally, Arnold (2006) recommends the use of logic models as a way of developing capacity for not only program planning but also understanding possible evaluation areas and methods (p. 259). This fits with others' suggestions that the use of logic/theory of change models helps to build common purpose and group consensus (Weiss, 1995).

As the evaluation field has been evolving in ways that are more participatory, pluralistic, and inclusive, there is a parallel interest in ECB to help community-based organizations develop the ability to do and use evaluation, not only for accountability, but also for continuous learning, adaptation and internal decision making and action. An organization's collective values, attitudes, goals and practices can strengthen or constrain evaluation capacity (Labin et al., 2012, p. 311; Newcomer, 2004).

### **3.6. Evaluative Culture**

While the impact of organizational culture is discussed extensively within the literature as a critical factor for successful implementation and sustainability of evaluation capacity building; there seems to be a gap in the evaluation literature about how to promote an evaluative culture within organizations, and specifically

within community coalitions. Mayne (2009) offers this description of an organization with a strong evaluative culture: engages in self-reflection and self-examination, engages in evidence-based learning, and encourages experimentation and change (p. 5). He suggests that organizations need to build a “culture of inquiry” that consists of three elements: leadership, organizational support structures and a learning focus.

Leadership within the organization plays an essential role in fostering an evaluative culture and is recognized as a critical component of successful ECB. Many studies in the field confirm that leadership support is necessary to promote the ongoing learning as well as to commit to using evaluation information for organizational improvement (Hoole & Patterson, 2008; Labin et al., 2012; Milstein, Chapel, & Wetterhall, 2002). Moreover, the literature suggests that an organization needs an “evaluation champion”, an enthusiast who is determined and genuinely interested in seeing that evaluation practices are integrated into the organization (King & Volkov, 2005; Smith & Hope, 2015; Taylor-Powell & Boyd, 2008). Strong leadership is necessary for overcoming staff resistance to evaluation as well as to engage staff participation in ECB activities.

Organizational support structures are also necessary to foster an evaluative culture including practices that affect staff interaction and communication. There is evidence that suggests that communication needs to flow both vertically and horizontally within an organization to encourage the sharing of knowledge and information (Bourgeois & Cousins, 2013; Cousins et al., 2014; Preskill & Boyle, 2008a). Taylor-Powell and Boyd (2008) add that organizational structures need to also facilitate collective problem-solving and collaborative inquiry rather than reinforce silos of decision-making. Finally, several scholars assert that integrated information systems that enable the creation, management and sharing of data are vital for the sustainable evaluation capacity in organizations (King & Volkov, 2005; Preskill & Boyle; Taylor-Powell & Boyd).

Many scholars examining the sustainability of evaluation practices in organizations stress the importance of a culture that promotes questioning, experimentation and regularly engages in self-reflection (Bourgeois et al., 2008; Mayne, 2008a; Preskill & Torres, 1999a; Taut, 2007). Consequently, evaluation is seen as an opportunity for learning rather than a control mechanism; organizations with evaluative cultures can be seen as learning organizations (McDavid et al., 2013). Staff is more engaged to invest their time so that evaluation can be internalized into their daily work (Bourgeois et al.; Volkov, 2008). Clinton’s study (2014) demonstrates that a willingness to use evaluation information increases the likelihood that an ECB initiative will achieve its objectives and become sustainable.

In sum, while there appears to be no definitive ‘recipe’ for building an evaluative culture in an organization, there are dynamic internal and external factors at play that makes each organization’s situation unique and highly localized. In order to

build an evaluative culture within a community coalition, one must recognize that members represent organizations that hold diverse perspectives and experiences regarding evaluation. However, it appears that staff in organizations that see themselves as part of an open and changing learning systems have a much stronger possibility of embedding evaluation practices into their everyday work. Perhaps this may be true of community coalitions as well.

### **3.7. Evaluator Roles**

The role that evaluators play during evaluations has been an area of debate within the field and there are several perspectives regarding role orientations that commonly appear in the evaluation literature. Within these role orientations, scholars have placed the different roles of evaluators on a continuum. At one end, there are those that subscribe to a more prescribed definition of evaluation, and at the other end, are those that believe in a flexible practice that promotes a learning culture within organizations (Cabaj, 2011).

Evaluators' affinity toward particular methodologies of social inquiry can affect what role they might assume during an evaluation. Noblit and Eaker (1987, as cited by Skolits, Morrow, & Burr, 2009, p. 277) suggest that several evaluation methodologies actually lead to specific evaluator role orientations, including positivist (credible expert role), interpretivist (social network broker role), critical theory (emancipator role), and action research (identification with practitioner role) paradigms.

Skolits et al. (2009) suggest that evaluation models help evaluators with focus and purpose, of which there are many from which to choose. Traditional models of evaluation tend to recommend a more prescribed role of the professional evaluator; for example, Alkin (2013) holds the view that evaluation is applied social research designed to help stakeholders with decision-making and involves making judgements. In contrast, other scholars support an increased consultative and collaborative role for evaluators that promotes organization learning through evaluative inquiry (Cousins et al., 2004; Hoole & Patterson, 2008; Levin-Rozalis & Rosenstein, 2005; Mayne, 2008a; Owen & Lambert, 1995; Preskill & Torres, 1999b). Additionally there also other evaluation models that describe the role of evaluators as change agents (Skolits et al., 2009).

Assisting organizations with performance measurement is another role highlighted for evaluators in the literature (McDavid et al., 2013; McDavid & Huse, 2006). They argue that there is a need for evaluators to help organizations develop monitoring and evaluation systems, analyze data and report on the results. Moreover many of the tools available to evaluators have applicability in performance measurement (Mayne & Rist, 2006; McDavid et al., 2013; Scheirer & Newcomer, 2001).

Donnelly (2013) adds another layer to the discussion with her dissertation about the possibility to use evaluation to facilitate integrated knowledge translation. She argues that evaluators not only need extensive knowledge about the program in question, but must also be deeply embedded in the process and adopt a knowledge-brokering role. This position is in stark contrast to those that contend that evaluators must uphold a neutral orientation with their stakeholders.

The evaluation community appears divided on the expanded role of evaluators. Some argue that additional roles such as being a trainer and facilitator must be not confused with the evaluator's overall duty to assess merit and worth. Furthermore, they contend, roles that are beyond the scope of the profession must be identified as such (Scriven, 1997; Stufflebeam, 1994, p. 324). Likewise, Scriven (2009) also objects to the collaborative and amiable nature of the relationship between evaluator and stakeholders as he maintains that the impartiality of the evaluator becomes compromised.

As established earlier in this literature review, traditional approaches to evaluation tend to be a poor fit with the dynamic and uncertain work of community coalitions. Porter's (2011) application of Edgar Schein's (2009) theory of helping in evaluation capacity development appears particularly useful in thinking about evaluator roles with community coalitions. Schein outlines three helping roles: 1.) the expert resource role that provides information or service; 2.) the doctor role that diagnoses and prescribes; and 3.) the process consultant role that seeks to equal the relationship between evaluator/stakeholder in order to build trust. Based on the research conducted in the project, it is argued that when working with smaller community coalitions that are unfamiliar with evaluation, the evaluator must always begin by assuming the role of process consultant. Then depending on the coalition's stage of development, the role of the evaluator may evolve into fulfilling the other two roles. Evaluator roles that reflect values of collaboration, partnership and community ownership will go a long ways to prepare members in using a variety of evaluation practices that strengthen evidence-based decision-making within their collective.

### **3.8. Gaps in the Literature**

Several areas have been identified as gaps in the research about community coalitions and evaluation, namely:

- a.) *There are few overarching theories about community coalitions:* There are those that contend that the literature about community coalitions in general is fragmented and scholars from various field that publish about community coalitions (organizational development, public health, public administration, political science, community development, sociology, business/economics) need to incorporate one another's work (Lasker & Weiss, 2003; Zakocs &

Edwards, 2006). Some scholars have critiqued community coalition research as lacking a theoretical basis to explain coalition effectiveness that could be empirically tested (Zakocs & Edwards, 2006). This literature review found only two theories specifically about community coalitions: 1.) Community Coalition Action Theory (Butterfoss & Kegler, 2009); 2.) Community Health Governance Model (Lasker & Weiss, 2003).

The Community Health Governance (CHG) theory posits that in order to address community health and wellness issues, communities must create collaborative processes that result in the following three outcomes: individual empowerment, bridging social ties, and synergy (Lasker & Weiss, 2003)(see Figure 2). This model suggests when these three outcomes are achieved, community problem-solving is strengthened which directly improves community health. In order to achieve these three outcomes, the CHG theory hypothesizes that the collaborations need strong facilitative leadership to promote inclusive participation, as well as ensure broad-based influence and control over the community problem-solving process (Lasker & Weiss, 2003).

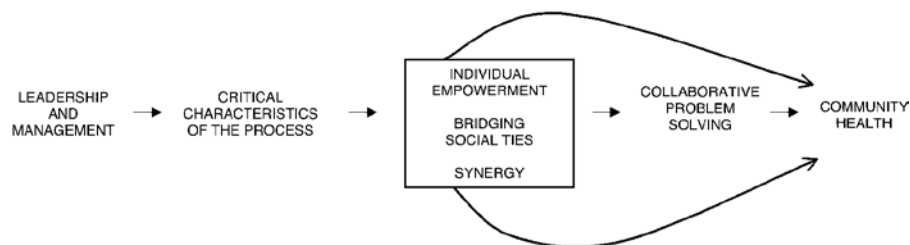


Figure 2: Community Health Governance Theory (Lasker & Weiss, 2003)

The Community Coalition Action Theory (CCAT) provides a comprehensive framework of successful community coalitions. Grounded in practices learned from the field, the theory presents twenty-one propositions about the development and maintenance of coalitions, as well as how they result in successful actions and outcomes (Butterfoss & Kegler, 2009) (see Figure 3). In addition, the authors list available empirical evidence to support their propositions. The constructs and propositions outlined by Butterfoss and Kegler (2009) provide a broad model of successful coalition functioning that can lead to community change.

Both theories provide an explanation of how collaborative processes can lead to improved community-level outcomes however, Butterfoss and Kegler (2009) go further to integrate many of the different success factors discussed in the literature into a developmental and inclusive model. Nevertheless the CCAT does not identify the level of resources or involvement needed, nor does it differentiate between coalitions in a rural or urban location (p. 268).

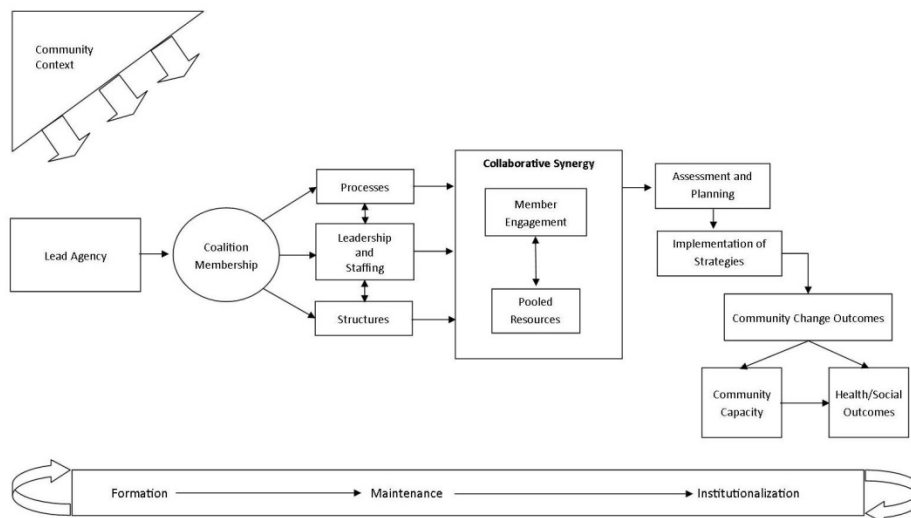


Figure 3: The Community Coalition Action Theory (Butterfoss & Kegler, 2009)

- b.) *There is a lack of systematic empirical evidence evaluating the processes and outcomes of community coalitions:* There is limited systematic evidence-based research about the effective functioning and community-level results of community coalitions; a lack of community-level indicators that reliably and sensitively assess the effectiveness of local partnerships; and few assessment tools that measure a community coalition’s effectiveness (Granner & Sharpe, 2004; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000; Zakocs & Edwards, 2006).
- c.) *There seems to be few integrative evaluation approaches discussed in the literature, other than DE that appears to combine evaluative inquiry, performance measurement, evaluation and building evaluation capacity that could be specifically applied to community coalitions.* Rather, it appears that the grey literature emerging from organizations such as FSG, Tamarack Institute and the Aspen Institute that links evaluation to strategic learning, complexity and community change is at the forefront of new thinking about how community coalitions can use evaluation as both a learning and accountability framework (Auspos & Cabaj, 2014; Cabaj, 2014).
- d.) *There are few similar cases from which to build for this project.* There seems to be a dearth of literature about evaluation capacity building with community coalitions except Scrafford’s (2012) study of United Way organizations in Denver, Colorado. The review was unable to locate any studies that described evaluation capacity building activities with community coalitions.

Furthermore, many evaluation studies tend to be with large non-profit organizations and conducted by universities; both of which have large budgets and resources. While the lack of resources has been identified as a barrier

toward building and sustaining evaluation capacity, there are few suggestions in the literature about how best to address this issue. Where do organizations or community coalitions with limited resources start when wanting to improve their use of evaluation in their work?

This literature review found no studies regarding the evaluation of community coalitions, as well as organization evaluation capacity building that was written from the perspective of the practitioner (or client), in which beneficial evaluator roles are discussed and practical strategies shared.

### **3.9. Implications for the Project**

When I undertook this literature review, I cut a wide swath to better understand the state of community coalition evaluation, the recommended approaches, how performance measurement and evaluation work together, and how to build evaluation capacity/culture of an organization. The literature review for this project was ambitious and it appears that although the literature indicates that evaluation plays a significant role in developing and sustaining a community coalition, there are no standard benchmarks by which to evaluate effectiveness, nor one proven way to build evaluation capacity and ultimately an evaluative culture (Lasker & Weiss, 2003; Pejsa, 2011; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000). However, there have been some key points that I have learned from the research that helped to shape this project including:

1. Certain factors have been shown to enhance the practice of community coalitions (Roussos & Fawcett, 2000; Zakocs & Edwards, 2006) such as:
  - Clear vision & mission
  - Ongoing action planning
  - Strong leadership
  - Formal governance procedures
  - Diverse membership
  - Collaboration between member agencies
  - Facilitation of group cohesion
2. There appear to be two overarching indicators to assess coalition effectiveness: internal coalition functioning and external community changes (Zakocs & Edwards, 2006).

3. Coalition evaluation is best approached at three levels: coalition infrastructure, programs and interventions and community change outcomes (Butterfoss & Francisco, 2004; Fawcett, 1995).
4. As population-level or community change outcomes are very difficult to measure, intermediate markers or proximal outcomes of community change can be used (Allen, Watt, & Hess, 2008; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000).
5. Stakeholder involvement approaches to evaluation in which community coalition members are engaged in some or all of the evaluation processes promote evaluation ownership, and hence evaluation use (Cullen & Coryn, 2011; Patton, 2008).
6. Certain evaluation options appear to be better suited for community coalitions depending on the stage of their initiatives as well as their stage of development as a coalition (Butterfoss, 2007; Preskill, 2014).
7. The evaluator is an integral part of evaluation for organizational learning and not detached from the process (Fetterman & Wandersman, 2005; Gabriel, 2000; King & Stevahn, 2013; Levin-Rozalis & Rosenstein, 2005).
8. The logic model/theory of change is used as a framework for evaluation to plan, develop a common purpose and learn about evaluation (Arnold, 2006; Butterfoss & Francisco, 2004; Funnell & Rogers, 2011).
9. Some scholars contend that performance measurement and evaluation are complementary evaluation activities; in reality, practitioners rely heavily on their performance measures as a means of evaluating their programs (Scheirer & Newcomer, 2001). Ignoring the role of performance measurement in the building of an evaluative culture, therefore, looks likely to risk practical failure.
10. An evaluative culture is one that embraces continuous evidence-based learning in the daily work of the organization through ongoing dialogue, reflection and questioning to help guide decision-making (Mayne, 2009; Preskill & Torres, 1999b). Strong leadership, established organizational structures and an emphasis on learning are factors that foster an evaluative culture (Mayne).
11. It is a challenge to develop an evaluation framework that incorporates multiple systems at multiple levels, over a long period of time, using outcomes that are hard to capture with user-friendly tools that make sense to community coalitions and their stakeholders (Fiester, 1998, p. 10).

From the literature review, I have come to view evaluation and building an evaluative culture as somewhat similar to parenting. There are many handbooks,

models, advice and quick fixes, but like parenting, evaluation and ECB are complex processes that are highly situational, and that involve strong relationships between a multitude of intersecting players and factors. What works with one organization does not necessarily work with a similar organization across town; each has its own unique culture. The reality is that smaller organizations have very limited access to evaluation training and expertise due to a lack of resources to support evaluation staff or activities (Baron, 2011).

That being said, it is clear from the literature that evaluation can assist community coalitions with accountability requirements, determine whether they have met their goals, develop better interventions, increase community awareness and support, and inform policy decisions (Butterfoss & Francisco, 2004). Frameworks developed in collaboration with participants that are flexible and can provide prompt feedback for community coalitions to respond to an ever-changing environment seem to be a promising practice for the evaluation of community coalitions.

Lastly, in summarizing what the relevant literature has said regarding this project's research question, there is nothing specific that pertains to building the evaluative culture of a community coalition. There is also no single approach in building an evaluative culture, although literature is clear that this is a challenging task indeed. Building an evaluative culture in a community coalition is a long term investment that requires thoughtful leadership, membership stability and a growing group confidence that evaluation is something that they can learn and will provide meaningful feedback about their work.

Figure 4 presents a conceptual framework that synthesizes the literature relevant to the research question in a visual way that the PIA can understand; however, I believe that there is applicability not only for this project, but also as a contribution to the literature surrounding community coalitions and evaluation. The next section describes the process on how an evaluative culture has been nurtured within the PIA Committee and the ensuing lessons learned.

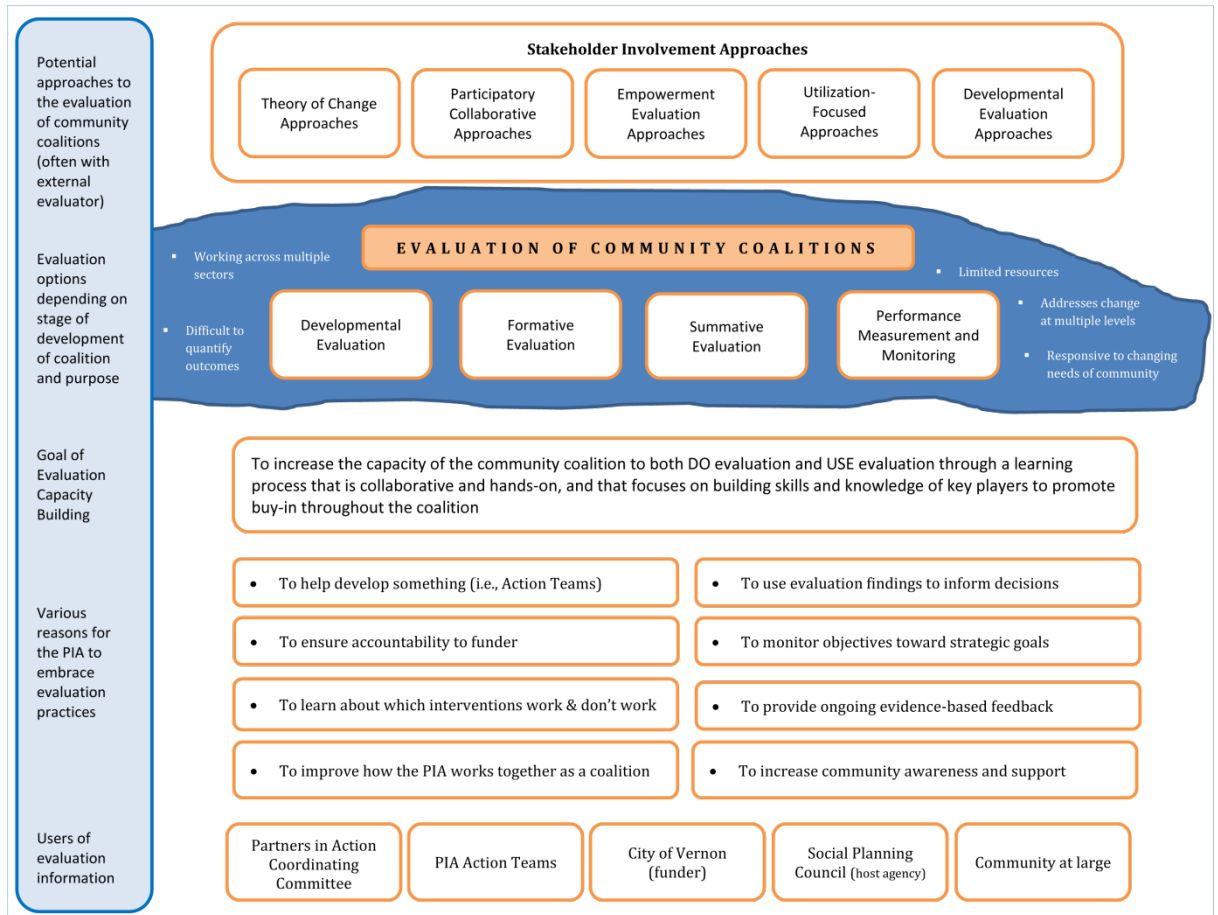


Figure 4: Conceptual framework of relevant literature

## 4. METHODOLOGY

Overall the project can best be described as emergent research in that it was not fully formed or comprehensive from the start, but developed over time as the Coordinator and I worked together. While a broad area of evaluation improvement was identified as a topic of interest by the Committee, I worked closely with the Coordinator and the PIA in order to slowly identify the exact problem and research questions to inform the study. It is for this overarching reason that I now detail the use of the following research design, methodological framework and specific research methods and activities for the project.

### 4.1. Research Design

Yin (2014) claims a case study should be considered when the research question to be answered involves a “how” or a “why” about a contemporary set of events over which the researcher has little control (p. 14). Baxter and Jack (2008) describe the case study as a research design that explores a phenomenon within its natural environment by using multiple sources of evidence. They argue that as the phenomenon is studied from a variety of perspectives, this provides a more inclusive picture of the issue being investigated (p. 544). A single case study for this project was appropriate because of the depth of analysis that could be achieved and because the focus was on the PIA’s activities within the community of Vernon on its own merits rather than in comparison with other similar community coalitions at this point.

#### **Project Research Question:**

**How do you build an evaluative culture within a municipal cross-sectoral community coalition in a mid-sized community?**

This project used a hybrid exploratory-explanatory case study design to answer the above question. Since the Coordinator and I wanted to better understand how to build an evaluative culture within the PIA Committee, there was an exploratory component to this study. New questions have emerged as a result of the study about how to build an evaluative culture within a community coalition that has few resources with which to devote to evaluation. At the same time, I also was interested to know which activities were particularly helpful for the Coordinator and Committee in meeting the short term outcomes of this project and linking the project’s activities with the project effects (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006).

From an academic perspective, the research question required more refinement; however the client requested the wording so the question in its original form remained. Within this research question there are assumed parameters that the

municipal cross-sectoral community coalition is *within North America* and has *constrained resources*.

## 4.2. Methodological Framework

As outlined in the introduction to this report, this project adopted a community-based participatory research approach. Since one of the priorities identified by the Coordinator was to promote and nurture an evaluative Committee culture, it was important to have members actively involved in the project, not only for buy-in, but also to keep them informed and to provide opportunities for them to learn together about evaluation. Additionally, in order for the PIA Committee to feel confident in continuing to evaluate their work after this project had been completed, the exchange of knowledge and ultimately empowerment had to be core goals (Access Alliance, 2012).

The Coordinator and I selected mostly qualitative research methods and activities to elicit participation, and open-ended discussion, not to only understand how PIA members viewed evaluation, but also to lay the groundwork for an evaluation framework (McDavid et al., 2013). The research design included methods (such as the questionnaire and the interviews) that were developed in advance while activities such as discussions during PIA meetings were less structured to allow Committee members to shape the conversation. Throughout the project, the Coordinator and I met regularly to debrief about our progress, exchange ideas and identify emerging themes.

In many ways this project reflected an exercise in building evaluation capacity for both the Coordinator and me. Through mutual learning by mentoring, doing and sharing, the Coordinator and I increased our knowledge, developed new skills and changed previous assumptions we had had about doing evaluation. While the Committee played a smaller role during the project, in turn, the Coordinator was able to share her experiences her own learning journey every step of the way (Preskill & Boyle, 2008b).

Alternatively, this project could also be seen as intersecting with Developmental Evaluation. Patton (2011) concedes that participatory action research and DE have similarities, particularly if the focus of the research is about developing something. He suggests that this kind of research is an emergent, iterative process that grows with increased understanding (p. 280). This project explored and helped to conceptualize evaluation for the Coordinator and the PIA. Supporting the PIA Committee to create an evaluative culture has naturally been developmental, with ongoing feedback and dialogue steering the direction as the project unfolded.

Finally, this project had many similar elements of an empowerment evaluation; importance was placed on community ownership and built on the PIA's existing strengths. The methodology emphasized community participation, knowledge,

capacity building and organizational learning (Fetterman & Wandersman, 2005). Throughout this process, I saw my role as a facilitator, and at times what Fetterman refers to as a “critical friend” (p. 12). As someone who shares the same community as the PIA members; not only geographically, but also as a service provider, I was not an objective observer. Rather I was a participant on a shared learning journey and the synergy produced from our knowledge exchange is reflected in this report.

#### **4.3. Overview of the methods and activities used**

In order to answer the research question and to achieve project’s objectives, the Coordinator and I focused on the following research methods and activities to first, help us learn about common practices in evaluating community coalitions; second, to provide us with opportunities to gather and reflect upon information from a variety of sources; and third, share our learning with the entire PIA Committee.

- a. Web-based questionnaire of PIA members
- b. In-person interviews of key stakeholders
- c. PIA Committee meeting discussions
- d. Review of PIA documents
- e. Regular meetings with Coordinator
- f. Journaling
- g. Review of relevant literature with the Coordinator
- h. Interview with Coordinator

The project and its methods were submitted to the University of Victoria Research in Human Ethics Committee and received initial approval on September 9, 2013. An ethics application variation received approval on September 22, 2014 when the use of an interview with the Coordinator was identified as an important component of attending to the research question and project objectives.

The logic model outlined in Figure 5 below summarises the various research methods that were chosen and the rationale for the selection and use of each. Assumptions, study outcomes and outputs are also included.

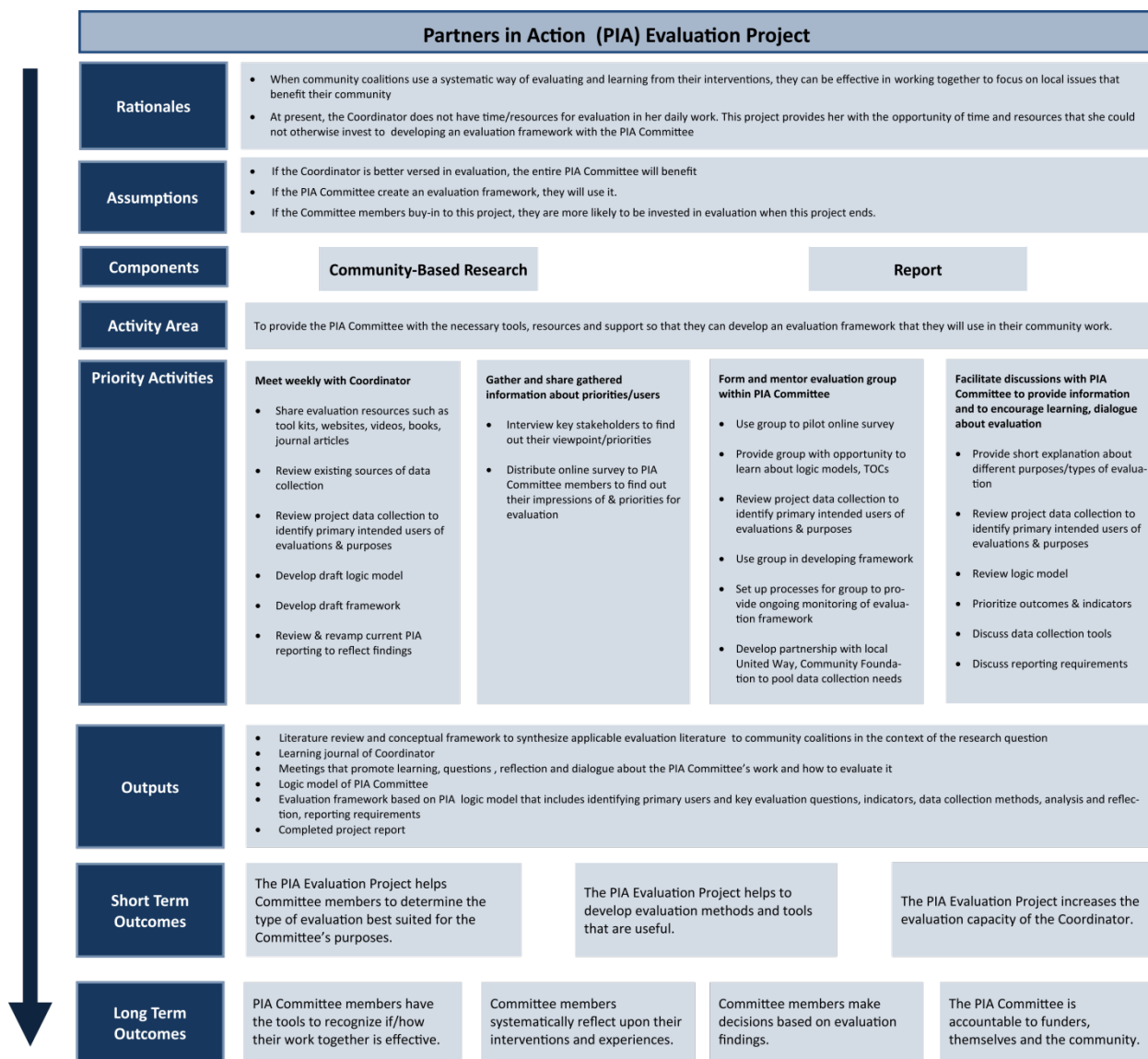


Figure 5: Logic model of project

### Web based Questionnaire

The goal of the questionnaire was to gauge PIA members about their own comfort level with evaluation, as well as to gather some baseline information about members' priorities regarding the purpose of evaluation, identification of key stakeholders who might be interested in evaluation results and any areas of learning for this project (see [Appendix A](#)).

The eight question electronic questionnaire was developed in conjunction with several members of the PIA Committee who volunteered to play a more active role in this project (see [Appendix B](#)); questions were vetted via email and the

suggestions provided helped me revise some of the questions posed. It should be acknowledged that these are some of the same people who also answered the questionnaire, but I felt was important to get input about what questions they deemed important.

Committee members were assured of their anonymity and that the responses would be shared at a later PIA meeting in aggregate form. Approximately one week later the Coordinator sent out a reminder email. A total of 12 respondents completed the questionnaire for a response rate of 80%.

The responses were exported from FluidSurveys into a Word document. Results were first shared with the Coordinator and then discussed with the entire Committee at the first PIA meeting in November 2013.

#### *In-person interviews*

During the ethics application for this project the Coordinator and I identified several key stakeholders that I would interview to gather information about their view of the Committee's work. Together we developed seven interview questions (see [Appendix C](#)). We wanted to collect data about what the funder thought about the PIA Committee's performance, as well as priorities for evaluation and reporting. The Committee also had the opportunity to identify additional significant stakeholders in the online questionnaire whose input would be valuable for the purpose of this project.

Prior to the interviews, participants were emailed a personalized copy of the introductory letter (see [Appendix D](#)) and a copy of the interview questions. Before the interviews began, participants were asked to provide their informed consent. Three individual in-person interviews and one focus group interview (consisting of six individuals) were conducted, lasting between 20-45 minutes each.

Following the group interview, and in collaboration with the Coordinator, I acted upon a recommendation from the group, and sent out an email to the Vernon City Council clerk to invite all other City Councillors to participate in the project if they were interested; however, I received no responses. Accordingly, no further participation from Councillors occurred.

Responses for each interview participant were recorded by hand by myself and then typed up to provide an overall picture from the respondents. The Coordinator and I then compared the interview responses with the results from the questionnaire.

In the proposal, I had originally intended to interview several participants of active PIA action teams; however, once the project was underway, the Coordinator and I agreed that was beyond the scope of this project and the Coordinator felt that the action teams were easier to evaluate on their own merits.

Commitments were given to participants as part of the interview process to protect their privacy and the confidentiality of their information. Apart from the Coordinator, any quotes used in this report are provided anonymously rather than attributed.

#### *PIA meeting discussions*

As the implementation of this project began, upon the suggestion of the Coordinator, the PIA decided to extend their monthly meetings by thirty minutes to provide some extra time for discussion about the learning and insights from undertaking this project. I attended four meetings between November 2013 and April 2014, as well as a final meeting in September 2014 to provide a synopsis of the project. Attendance ranged from 33-73% of the Committee: 11 members were present in November; 5 members in December; 11 members in February; and 9 members in March.

In the project proposal, potential topics were sketched out for these meetings, but the focus shifted somewhat as the project unfolded. As the Coordinator and I generally met on a weekly basis, we were able to loosely plan the Committee meeting discussions beforehand, as well as debrief afterwards.

During the four Committee meetings, the Coordinator and I jointly facilitated and participated in the evaluation discussions which lasted approximately 45 minutes.

Following the first and second meeting, I sent out an email asking for feedback regarding the session from members who offered to be more involved in the project.

The evaluation focus of the meetings consisted of the following activities:

- Reviewed the results from the questionnaire;
- Introduced the Committee to the Adaptive Cycle and its applicability to evaluation (Patton, 2011);
- Presented and discussed a proposed a Theory of Change for the PIA;
- Explored how to operationalize their Theory of Change;
- Discussed measuring the success of community coalitions at three levels: process evaluation, outcome evaluation and impact evaluation (Butterfoss & Francisco, 2004; Butterfoss, 2007, 2013; Fawcett et al., 2002; Fawcett, 1995);
- Shared a draft evaluation framework;
- Presented overview of project with recommendations.

At the first meeting together, I distributed consent forms outlining the voluntary nature of the research, the research plan and the risks/benefits; members indicated their informed consent about their participation by signing the form.

#### *Document Review*

The overall purpose of the document review was to gather information about how the PIA historically collected and analyzed their data and reported on their work. The Coordinator and I reviewed the annual reports and other PIA documentation at various stages of this project (see [Appendix E](#)). At the start, the Coordinator and I discussed their annual reports to better understand how the PIA Committee gathered data, tracked their progress and reported their findings. We examined what indicators the PIA were currently tracking, when and how often, and how the Coordinator was collecting and storing the information.

At the midpoint, the Coordinator and I examined various reporting templates with reference to the research problem. The Coordinator also individually analysed the PIA documentation to compile a list of completed actions by the PIA, and shared this information with the group during the second meeting. Throughout the project, the Coordinator discussed how the PIA reviewed their data, as well as ways in which data was being used.

Toward the end of the project, I returned to the PIA annual reports and meeting minutes to explore the application of components of several evaluation frameworks and shared my insights with the Coordinator.

#### *Regular meetings with Coordinator*

The Coordinator and I met 28 times throughout the duration of this project. Meetings were usually between 45 minutes to 1½ hours in length, although we set up one longer meeting to work on the reporting templates together. Agendas for these meetings were generally set jointly the week before and remained flexible. Meetings tended to focus on discussion of reading material, analysis of committee data and/or preparation and debrief for surveys, interviews and presentations to the PIA Committee.

#### *Journaling*

Ortlipp (2008) contends that reflexive journaling creates transparency and documents the research trail of influences and experiences that shape the research process (p. 696). From June 2013 to April 2014, I attempted to record my emerging understanding about various evaluation frameworks and reflected on how the new viewpoints influenced my approach to this project. I tried to do this weekly. The Coordinator was encouraged to record her learning; however, she preferred to share it verbally during our weekly meetings. With her knowledge,

some of the insights that the Coordinator shared were reflected in my own journaling.

### *Literature Review*

The purpose for the literature review was to provide an overview for the Coordinator during our weekly meetings about what I was learning from the literature about various evaluation approaches as well, and specifically what was written about the evaluation of community coalitions. How have other initiatives measured their effectiveness? What tools and frameworks could be useful for the PIA? What type of evaluation might be best suited for the PIA?

I used Google Scholar as well as a general internet search to explore evaluation and the following different keywords: “community collaborations”; “community collaboratives”; “community initiatives”; “community coalitions”; “comprehensive community initiatives”, “community partnerships”; and “place-based initiatives”. I found sources in several disciplines, but restricted my search mainly to health promotion/prevention, community psychology and evaluation journals that focused on the evaluation of community coalition functioning and/or their outcomes, and the use of alternative evaluation approaches. Additionally, I searched the bibliographies and reference list of any articles found (see [Appendix E](#)).

For academic purposes, I also conducted searches using the above keywords as well as the terms “evaluation capacity building” and “evaluative culture” in a variety of databases including, *Health Source Nursing/Academic Edition*, *MEDLINE with full text*, *PsycINFO*, *Social Sciences Full Text (H.W. Wilson)*, *Social Work Abstracts*, and *Urban Studies Abstracts*.

Following discussions with the Coordinator, I particularly paid attention to what Fetterman et al. (2014) have referred to as “stakeholder involvement approaches” (p. 146). As some philanthropic foundations have demanded formalized collaborations as a requirement for funding, I also explored the rich array of grey literature regarding the evaluation of community coalitions. Some of my sources were discovered via a Twitter account; I began following Twitter accounts of foundations and non-profit organizations using the hashtags #eval and #evaluation.

Due to the scope of this project, and the vastness of the topic of evaluation, the literature review was not exhaustive. Some evaluation approaches have strong roots in other fields such as organizational development, education, and anthropology which may have provided a greater breadth to the understanding of community coalition evaluation (Butterfoss & Kegler, 2009). Additionally, while I recognize community coalitions play a large role in international community

development, due to the limited scope of my project, my efforts were focused mostly on sources from North America.

Each week that I met with the Coordinator, I brought forth various perspectives that I felt might be useful to our discussion and capacity building efforts. In the beginning there was no order; I was simply sharing what I was reading from week to week. In retrospect, I believe the topics shifted from practical to more theoretical as I became more familiar with the overabundance of new terms and concepts presented in the material. I shared information about effective coalition functioning, key steps in a participatory evaluation as outlined by Patton (2012), Taylor-Powell et al. (1998) and the Better Evaluation Rainbow Framework (BetterEvaluation, 2013) and introduced the Community Coalition Action Theory (Butterfoss, 2007), which was one of the only theoretical frameworks that I could find specifically about community coalitions.

I presented various evaluation frameworks: a.) *The Workgroup System for Evaluation Community Initiatives for Health and Development* (Fawcett, 1995); b.) *Framework for the Process of Participatory Evaluation in Community Initiatives* (Fawcett et al., 2003); c.) *The Center for Disease Control Program Evaluation Framework* (Milstein & Wetterhall, 2000), d.) *Evaluating Collaboratives: Reaching the Potential* (Taylor-Powell et al., 1998) and e.) *Outcome Mapping* (Earl et al., 2001). I also shared the *Guide to Evaluating Collective Impact* when it became available (Preskill, 2014).

Additionally I provided examples and handbooks regarding theories of change and logic models (Anderson, 2005; Funnell & Rogers, 2011; Keystone Accountability, 2009; W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 2004). We discussed the approaches of Developmental Evaluation, theory-based evaluation, and Empowerment Evaluation. In many ways, the literature review was a joint developmental process. In the beginning, I overwhelmed her with the many different evaluation options about which I was learning, but as the project unfolded, I became better versed in the literature and was able to select topics that resonated better with her needs for evaluation. In turn, as she began developing the PIA evaluation framework, she became more engaged in a greater breadth of evaluation topics as she created her own understanding and expanded her growing interest.

#### *Interview with the Coordinator*

In the original methodology, I did not anticipate interviewing the Coordinator with prepared questions. However, I realized toward the end of the project that it would be valuable to get the Coordinator's perspective about the project as an evaluation capacity building experience. Consequently I applied for a modification to my ethics application and added two interview sessions with the Coordinator. There were open ended questions to discuss the success of the project as well as a retrospective post-then-pre designed questionnaire based on Preskill and Boyle's

(2008b) 36 potential ECB knowledge, skills and affective objectives (p. 8) (see [Appendix G](#)).

#### 4.4. Strengths and Limitations of the Methods

Creswell and Miller's (2000) framework suggests that qualitative researchers address validity issues through the viewpoint of the researcher, participants and external reviewers. In order to demonstrate the credibility of this research project, I used six techniques that bridge postpositivist, constructivist and critical paradigms of inquiry as outlined by Creswell and Miller (pp. 126-129):

- a) *Triangulation*: I attempted to triangulate multiple sources of evidence rather than a single basis of data in order to find common themes in the research. This is especially important given the limited number of participants who could participate in various interviews;
- b) *Researcher reflexivity*: I have self-disclosed my own position as interested learner early on in this report, in order to acknowledge my own beliefs and biases. This reflexivity is seen as a distinct benefit in providing applied information and emergent learning that otherwise might not have been achieved;
- c) *Member checking*: I regularly checked with the Coordinator about my interpretation of the data, and had the Committee review the findings several times during the process;
- d) *Prolonged engagement in the field*: I was involved with the PIA for almost a year which promoted trust and provided a deeper understanding of the context of participant views;
- e) *Collaboration*: The PIA was actively involved in forming the research question, assisting with data analysis and formulating conclusions; their view has been built into the study;
- f) *Peer debriefing*: My supervisor has acted as peer reviewer throughout the duration of this project.

However, I recognize there were limitations to the methods of this study. First, because this project was developmental in nature, as the project took shape as an evaluation capacity building initiative, I found myself wanting to go back in time and modify the original interview and survey questions as they did not adequately reflect the capacity building focus of the project. Second, as the research design was heavily dependent on my skills as a facilitator and researcher, I feel that information that I deemed less important could have been omitted based on my personal biases. Third, because I was also a participant in the process and not an outside observer, my active facilitation affected the thoroughness of my note

taking and data may not have been sufficiently captured during meetings. Fourth, the time actually spent with the Committee members was quite limited which meant that I was unable to explore how they might have used this project in their own organizations. Finally, local factors limit the extent to which the results can be generalized to other coalitions in other communities (McDavid et al., 2013).

Overall, the use of a case study approach with the above methods provided the opportunity to examine the research question in greater detail and depth by incorporating different data sources. The Coordinator and I were able to chart new territory together as the project developed and understanding emerged. The methods chosen helped to facilitate a dynamic process that changed in real time as the Coordinator and I worked collectively. Taken together, the advantages of the chosen methodology provide a defensible and rigorous analysis to meet the research question that outweighed the stated challenges.

## 5. FINDINGS AND RESULTS OF THE PROJECT

Drawing on the PIA documents, as well as the interviews and discussion with the Coordinator and PIA Committee, this chapter describes the findings from the methods and activities of this project.

### 5.1. Web-based questionnaire of PIA members and interviews of stakeholders

The results from the membership survey revealed a group that generally feels comfortable with evaluation. The members were asked to rate their comfort level with evaluation from 1-100; the average rating was 83. This was confirmed during the first PIA meeting that I attended, during which there was consensus that the group not only had a good handle on evaluation, but also felt they were doing a fair amount already. The survey confirmed that the majority of the Committee reported several ways in which they already evaluated their work: through two evaluation teams that had been previously been established, through the meeting of action team goals, and through informal discussions during Committee meetings about the activities and progress of action teams. However, one member questioned whether the comfort level of the group was with evaluation and the PIA or evaluation in general. The Coordinator expressed her surprise that the Committee’s confidence was higher than her own: “The PIA was already on board and didn’t need convincing.”

When the priorities for evaluation were discussed with the PIA, the Coordinator noted that the PIA members were not as interested in evaluating their profile in the community (see Figure 6). One member responded that the group was “action based, not accolades based”.



Figure 6: PIA members’ priorities for evaluation

On the survey, PIA members reported that the purpose of evaluation was for the PIA Committee to stay on track, to provide information, to find out what worked/didn't work, to improve and to provide direction. According to the stakeholders interviewed, the purpose of PIA evaluation was to prove PIA's worth to future City Councils, to improve Committee functioning, to communicate with the public, and to promote themselves as a model for other jurisdictions.

On the other hand, while there were only three individual stakeholders interviewed, they listed different priorities for evaluation than the PIA Committee which prompted some discussion at the first meeting (see Figure 7). Based on the discussion, the Coordinator examined the business sector more closely when she analyzed the representation on previous action teams.

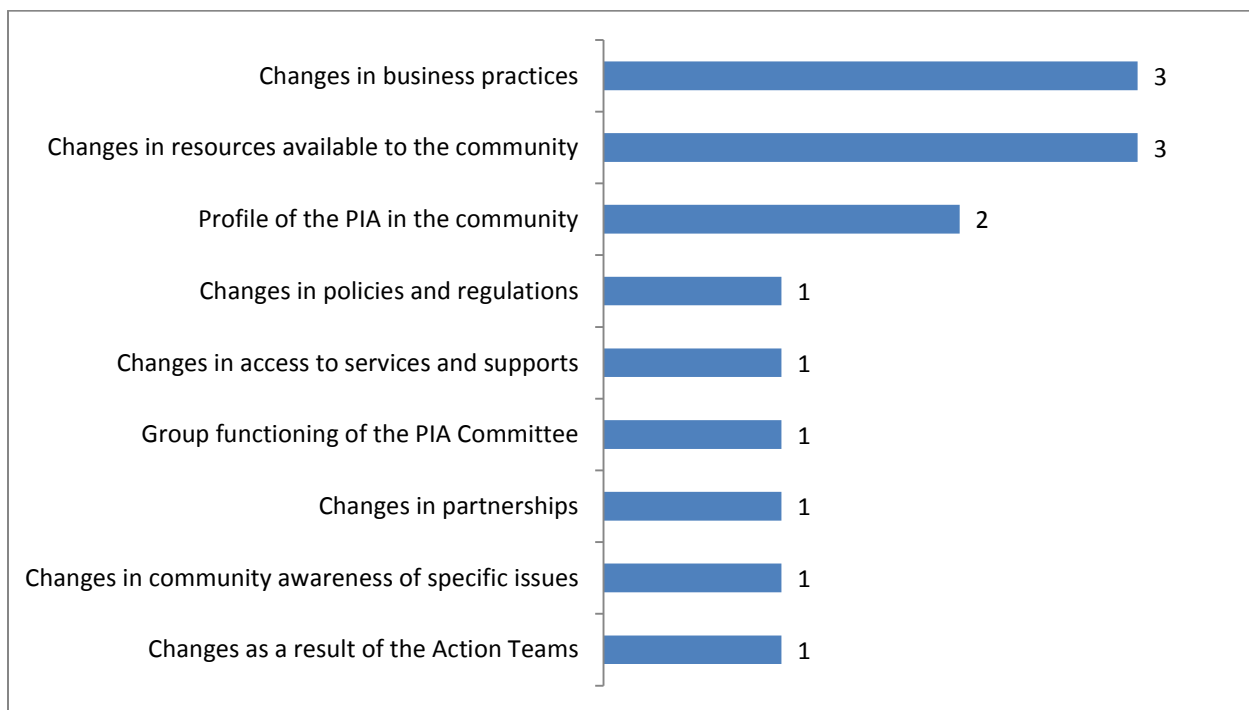


Figure 7: Other stakeholders' priorities for PIA evaluation

## 5.2. PIA Committee meeting discussions

Meeting #1: The results from the questionnaire were reviewed and the Coordinator and I introduced Patton's (2011) version of Gunderson and Holling's Adaptive Cycle for evaluation. The Coordinator also presented her metaphor of the PIA's role in the community as being "midwives" that helped to "birth" solutions to community issues through the use of action teams. She queried whether the PIA should check on their "babies" to see how they were doing. In other words, the Coordinator suggested that the PIA had been focusing exclusively on gathering data and monitoring progress when action teams were first created, but once the

action teams were completed, there had been little follow up to what happened afterwards.

She proposed that the Committee evaluate closed action teams to better understand the ongoing successes and/or challenges moving forward. Some members felt that the PIA was already aware of the status of past Action Teams but it was not formally documented. Other comments that emerged from the presentation of the Adaptive Cycle included, “The PIA is like an incubator-actions create something new and then have a life of their own”; “It would be interesting to look back and see how the original action team idea morphs over time”; “It would be great to evaluate the PIA itself-it has gone through the entire Adaptive Cycle itself”.

During this meeting, evaluation options were discussed with reference to the Adaptive Cycle, and what kind of evaluation would best provide the PIA with the information it requires. The group discovered that much of their work is in the exploration and development phases of the adaptive cycle, in which Patton (2011) recommends DE and formative evaluation. I also shared my insight from scholars in the community health field who recommended that different levels of community coalition be evaluated (Butterfoss, 2007; Fawcett, 1995; Francisco, Paine, & Fawcett, 1993) (see [Appendix H](#)).

Email feedback about the meeting from the “evaluation team” (a group of four PIA members that was created at the beginning of the project to act as ongoing support for the Coordinator) provided the following insight:

- 
- 1      *“What connected with me:*
- *The model of thinking of the various stages of group development and the analogy of the seasons.*
  - *The idea that the different stages of development need to be evaluated differently – processes and outcomes will be different at different stages of the cycle so one-size does not fit all.*
  - *Don’t evaluate if it does not serve a useful purpose – make evaluation really work for you in implementation of your actions/goals*
  - *Important to have group buy-in about the process of evaluation – a little education goes a long way.”*

2      *“I found our meeting yesterday absolutely fabulous. It is such a gift to be part of a team that is mindful and purposeful with every step. I am now officially obsessed with the process of evaluation. The four quadrants that we discussed are so relevant to not only organizations, but to businesses, committees, and individuals. It left me curious how, on an individual basis, could one measure their own output”.*

3      *“I enjoyed your presentation and approach to who/how we are and I loved the quadrants the minute I saw it. I too think it is important to get together to have a more in-depth conversation and was very happy to see the results of the on-line survey...”*

4      *“Interestingly this week there were two really good examples of the Adaptive Cycle – the Food Action Society AGM and the Armstrong Food Initiative Society monthly meeting. Both*

*of these organizations are experiencing a rebirth/re-energize phase and the longtime stalwarts of the groups are so excited about the prospects of exploiting the added interest, participation, ideas, and energy that they are experiencing. When describing what they are going through, they are describing the “adaptive cycle” perfectly, without naming it. I look forward to learning more about the different evaluation approaches and techniques so I can gently introduce them at the right time and in an appropriate way to these other groups.”*

The Coordinator also emailed that she had a few people chat with her after the meeting and also found the discussion really useful.

**Meeting #2:** At the second meeting I attended, the Coordinator and I presented the PIA Theory of Change we had drafted for feedback and discussion (see Figure 8). It was at this meeting that the Coordinator shared that since their inception in 2007, the PIA Committee was responsible for facilitating 85 action teams. Although there was a smaller turnout due to the weather at the PIA Committee meeting, the attending members felt that the draft TOC properly reflected the vision and mission of the Committee.

One member recommended that the PIA membership be reflected in the model. The Coordinator suggested that evaluation be added as a standing item to every meeting agenda.

**Meeting #3:** At the third meeting I attended, the TOC was presented again and the group discussed the term “community” and looked at defining terms more explicitly in the model. One of the outcomes listed in the TOC was that the Committee reflects the community. After some discussion, the group decided that the term “community” included members of the business, non-profit and government sectors, although there were conversations about ways in which the Committee reflects the voices of clients, residents and

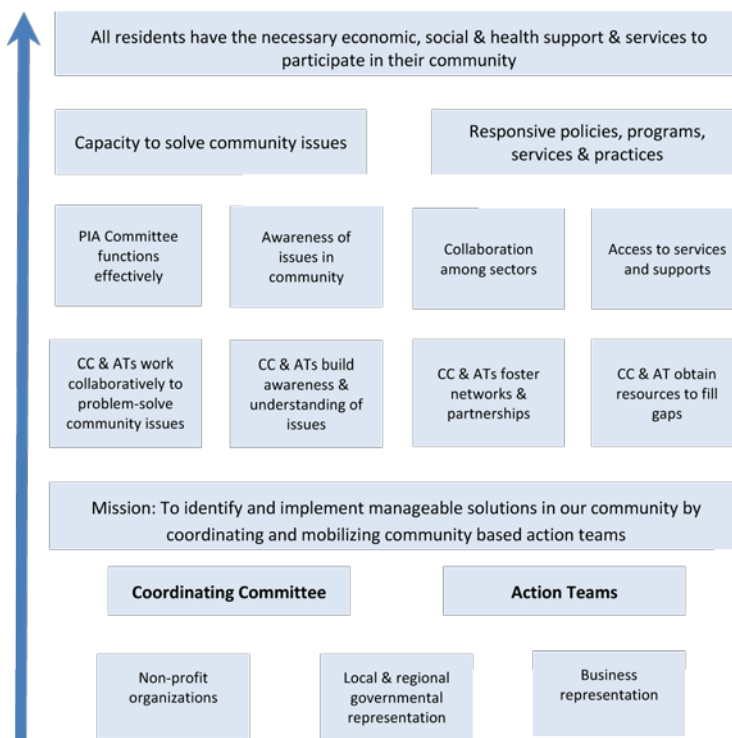


Figure 8: PIA's theory of change

neighbourhoods. The group agreed that it was more appropriate and effective to

include clients, residents and neighbourhoods in specific action teams that affected them personally. The Coordinator added that the Committee had done that in the past, but had not tracked that type of participation and felt it was something that could be measured in the future. Membership was raised by several members who noted that the Committee needed more diversity represented at the table to ensure that there were different perspectives being voiced. The Coordinator agreed to contact identified organizations about joining the PIA.

Another outcome listed on the model was that the PIA “functions effectively”, and I asked how the group would define “effectively” and how might it be measured. Feedback included ongoing commitment and participation of the PIA members, number of action teams, proof of real change, sense of humour and camaraderie. An exit survey was suggested for members leaving the group.

Toward the end of the meeting, I presented my version of a PIA Evaluation Framework (see [Appendix I](#)). This was my effort to consolidate the various streams of evaluation information I had been learning into a visual representation for the Committee. It was not adopted by the PIA, and the Coordinator did not use it. In retrospect, the Coordinator reported that my visual representation did not interest her as we did not work on it together, it was not linear and she did not request it.

Meeting #4: Presentation of findings: When I presented my findings and recommendations of this project to the group several months later, several members informed me that they had taken what they had learned from the Coordinator and the project and were thinking more about evaluation in their organizations’ work. Some reported that thinking about measuring outcomes at different levels was helpful to them. Two members shared that they were really happy that the Committee had undertaken the project as they were interested in evaluation as well. There was a general teasing by the group of the Coordinator for her new found enthusiasm for evaluation. However, there were a couple of members who expressed concerns that the PIA would lose its “organic-ness”, become bogged down and spend too much time on evaluation. One member felt obligated to express her concerns that the PIA might lose the very essence of what made it work by becoming too focused on measurement, and less on the informal, but important sharing of information.

### **5.3. Review of PIA documents**

In reviewing the PIA Committee reports from 2007-2013, I found that the Coordinator maintained a well-established monitoring system that outlined the progress of the action teams, their objectives, membership, with actions and timelines, as well as measurable results. The reports provided evidence that objectives were/were not met with a short narrative explanation. Examples of

indicators that were tracked included outputs such as the number of permits for affordable housing, # of attendees at meetings, # of homeless camps in community as well as whether an action had been completed.

The Coordinator updates the reports and presents them to City Council on a quarterly basis. The stakeholders interviewed indicated that the information they received through PIA reports was all they needed, and no changes were necessary. In response to how the reporting provides useful information for those interviewed, stakeholders explained:

*“Helps with the daily operation-I know what is going on, and what the solutions are too. The reporting provides signs of the big picture happening too”.*

*“The PIA Committee coordinator reports to City Council on a quarterly basis. All councillors get a copy of the report that lists the progress of the action teams, as well as completed items. Seeing actions completed is encouraging”.*

*“There are quarterly updates on the action teams and the coordinator is always readily available for discussion. She attends the city staff meetings. The report itself is very accessible and in a nice easy format. It’s straightforward and uncomplicated”.*

The same document is used for reporting progress to City Council as well as to the Committee, although the Coordinator provides the report as a monthly update at PIA meetings and highlights the changes from the previous month. This monitoring system helps the Committee to adjust the activities of the action teams if they feel the interventions are not meeting objectives.

In looking at whether the PIA focused on the three levels of coalition evaluation (measures of community coalition processes and functioning, measures of changes in programs, practices and policies and measures of community change), it appears that the Committee describes progress on its interventions and activities, but there is no ongoing assessment of their processes and functioning at either the Coordinating Committee or action team level. There are also no measures of community change. In discussions, the PIA member who was the representative from the Interior Health Authority expressed that it was difficult to find community indicators that could be measured as well as finding consistent indicators that could be applicable to all action teams.

Some of the data in the reports is provided by members of the PIA such as community policing (annual number of complaints). These reports are organized according to ongoing areas of focus such as homelessness/poverty, harm reduction, housing, child care, community capacity, and downtown safety. There was also reporting about the community’s awareness of PIA initiatives.

At the PIA meeting in which this project’s findings were shared, the Coordinator reported that in analyzing the reports from 2007-2013, she discovered the following results:

- PIA has facilitated 85 action teams;
- Membership has overall been stable; representation from non-profits high (see Figure 9);
- The coordination provided by the PIA has had a big financial impact on the community;
- There have been just as many action team “failures” as successes in creating new services and supports in the community;
- 1100 people had participated in consultations/workshops facilitated by the PIA;
- The business sector is better represented on action teams that directly affected them (rather than on the Coordinating Committee);
- 29 distinct departments within governmental bodies (municipal, regional and health authority) have been involved on PIA action teams.



Figure 9: Member representation at the PIA Committee

The Coordinator reports that by examining the PIA’s data collection and reporting through an evaluation lens, she discovered that it “wasn’t so bad”; the information was there, but she realized that she lacked confidence in how it was being used. Furthermore, the Coordinator also came to the realization that the Committee did not do any formal follow-up of closed action teams to evaluate the longer term impact, and thus, were lacking potentially useful information for decision-making. Adding this component to their framework would meld performance measurement and evaluation into a useful and practical framework.

As a result of this project, the Coordinator has been able to incorporate her current reporting structure into a more comprehensive evaluation framework that will help the PIA evaluate its short and intermediate outcomes as well as act as a catalyst for discussion among the members of the Committee (Partners in Action Committee, 2014).

#### 5.4. Meetings with the Coordinator

The purpose of the weekly meetings was to increase the evaluation capacity of the Coordinator through hands-on learning that would be of use to the PIA. While we planned to focus on two main products for the project: 1.) logic model; and 2.) an evaluation framework, there were no course curriculum from which to follow and our meetings generally consisted of checking in and with me sharing about the literature that I was reading (see Figure 9). Over the course of a year, these regular meetings became instrumental in the success of this project for several reasons:

1. The meetings provided the Coordinator with dedicated time/space with which to think evaluatively about the Committee.

The Coordinator reported that although she wanted to increase evaluation practices with the Committee, her busy schedule and lack of knowledge prevented her from doing so. She felt that the meetings with me were like *“training and professional development”* and a time to *“discuss ideas and figure out the process”*.

2. The meetings provided the Coordinator with access to evaluation information into digestible bite-sized chunks that were applicable to the PIA’s situation.

At the beginning of the project, I provided the Coordinator with handouts, articles and other documents organized in a binder for later reference. This learning method failed and the Coordinator never opened the binder. The Coordinator remarked that her time was so limited that she needed me to bring forward evaluation theories and practices “buffet-style” that I thought might resonate with her. I found that when I shared what I was excited to be learning about, there was a strong likelihood she would be interested too. The meetings provided the forum to do this and were significant in facilitating the sharing of pertinent and timely information.

3. The meetings provided an opportunity for ongoing feedback to promote the ongoing development of the project.

Although we had an overall plan with objectives, as well as methods to achieve those objectives, the structure of both these weekly meetings and the meetings with the PIA Committee were based on the dynamic learning process of the Coordinator and me. This meant that we reconceptualised the project several times over the course of the research as we made sense of new information provided through our methods.

### 5.5. Review of relevant literature with the Coordinator

The sharing of relevant evaluation literature with the Coordinator helped to meet several of the project’s objectives, namely understanding the reasons to undertake evaluation, building an evaluation framework based on the PIA’s Theory of Change/logic model and increasing the evaluation capacity of the Coordinator (see Figure 9).

During the beginning or “naïve and fresh” phase, I shared literature that discussed the methodological challenges of evaluating community coalitions, resources on how to do evaluation such as typical steps in a program evaluation, as well as what I was learning about what constituted effective coalitions. During this phase, I was more focused on sharing literature about how *to do* evaluation.

The next phase, the Coordinator and I entitled, “becoming clear”, as the literature shifted from a more technical focus to that of a reflective nature. As I delved into theory-based evaluation, this motivated the Coordinator and me to revisit the PIA logic model that we developed before the project had begun and to apply what we had learned from the theory of change literature. The result was a more comprehensive depiction of how the PIA believed change to work, as well as indicators of progress (see Figure 10).

	METHOD/ACTIVITY	LITERATURE SHARED WITH COORDINATOR	TURNING POINTS
“Naïve and fresh” SEP-NOV 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribute survey to PIA members</li> <li>Interview stakeholders</li> <li>Dabble with data collection tools</li> <li>Review PIA documents</li> <li>Attempt “binder full of tricks”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Difficulties of evaluating community coalitions-doesn't fit well with traditional methods</li> <li>Steps in a program evaluation</li> <li>Coalition effectiveness indicators (group functioning and community change)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Realization that PIA is happy, funder is happy</li> <li>Traditional tools don't work</li> <li>Limited resources-fit framework within existing monitoring system</li> <li>Discovery that project a shared journey between Coordinator and myself with PIA</li> <li>Joint work on logic model</li> </ul>
“Becoming Clear” NOV-DEC 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop logic model/TOC with Coordinator</li> <li>Introduce adaptive cycle to Coordinator and PIA</li> <li>Share logic model/TOC with PIA</li> <li>Reflect/look back-analyze data on closed action teams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Theory of change</li> <li>Developmental evaluation</li> <li>Utilization-focused evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on evaluative culture-no quick fix</li> <li>Capacity building key</li> <li>Learning about the Adaptive Cycle</li> <li>Realization that PIA need to go back and check in about the longer term effects of the action teams-what is still working? What are the challenges? What are the spin-offs?</li> </ul>
“Implementation” JAN-APR 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinator facilitates strategic planning with PIA</li> <li>Define terminology of logic model</li> <li>Coordinator changes facilitation of action teams</li> <li>PIA extends committee meeting time</li> <li>Coordinator changes reporting tool to link with logic model</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empowerment evaluation</li> <li>Evaluation capacity building (ECB)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritization of closed action teams to examine</li> <li>Coordinator reports “beginning” to get it!</li> </ul>
“Loose threads” MAY-SEP 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinator integrating logic model into reporting tool</li> <li>Coordinator develops PIA Evaluation Framework</li> <li>Share findings of project with PIA</li> <li>Coordinator shares new reporting tool with PIA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When to use different types of evaluations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations of an evaluation advisory team</li> </ul>

Figure 10: Explanation of evaluation literature used within activities of the project

When the Coordinator and the PIA applied Patton’s (2011) variation of Gunderson and Holling’s Adaptive Cycle for evaluation to themselves, they found it very helpful in understanding the purpose of evaluation and its uses. Furthermore the Coordinator felt that aspects of Developmental Evaluation could be integrated into the process of creating and facilitating action teams. The introduction of Utilization-Focused Evaluation (Patton, 2008) promoted a discussion with the Coordinator about how the PIA had used evaluation findings in the past.

Similarly, when I shared with the Coordinator that the literature about coalition outcomes is often categorized into measures of coalition infrastructure, function and processes (short-term); measures of coalition programs and interventions (intermediate) and measures of community change (long-term), this helped to operationalize the PIA’s theory of change (Butterfoss, 2007; Francisco et al., 1993; Wallerstein et al., 2002) (See Figure 11).

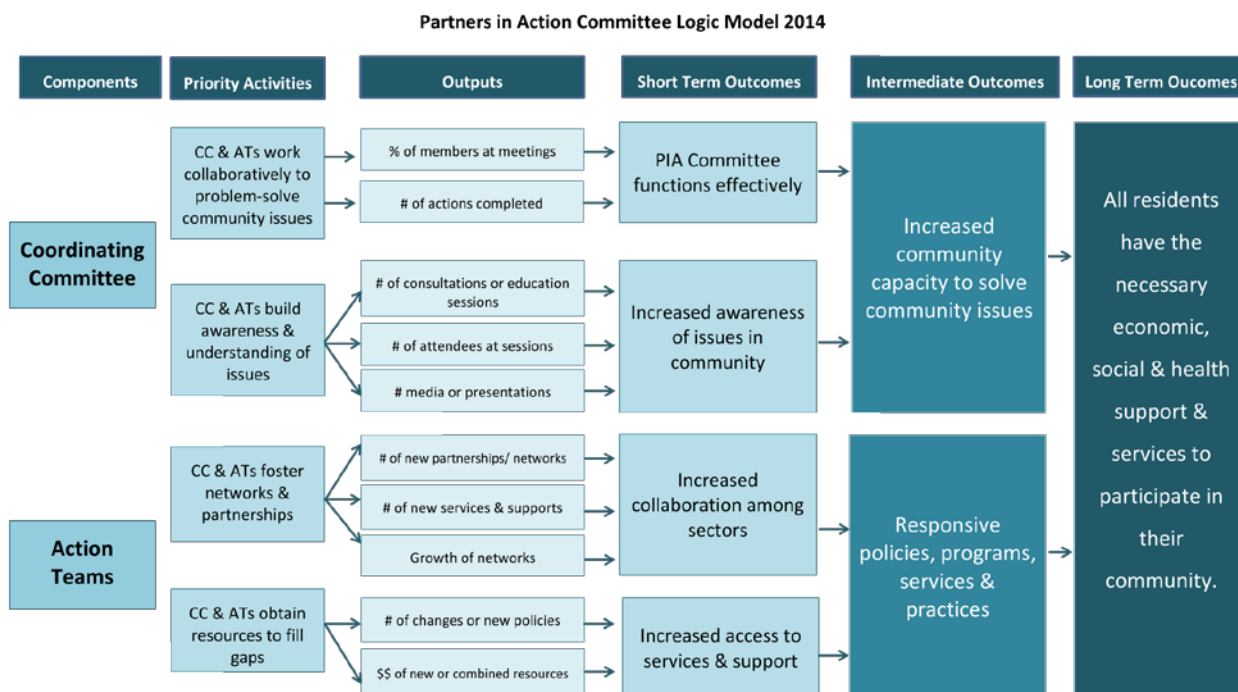


Figure 11: PIA Committee logic model

During the “implementation” phase, I shared Empowerment Evaluation with the Coordinator and brought forth the ten guiding principles for the Coordinator to think about, as well as the connection between evaluation and organizational learning (Fetterman & Wandersman, 2005). We agreed that many of the tenets seem to fit the beliefs of the PIA Committee. In sharing some of the highlights of the evaluation capacity building literature, the Coordinator and I could understand more fully what factors helped to make this project a success, where there will be challenges in the future, as well as what is needed to build an evaluative culture.

## 5.6. Interview with Coordinator

Results from the interview of the Coordinator and her responses from the questionnaire indicate that her knowledge and skills increased substantially from before the project began. Specifically, she indicated increases in her knowledge about evaluation terms and concepts, as well as developing a logic model, developing key evaluation questions and collecting and interpreting results. She reported that her assumptions about evaluation, while strengthened as a result of this project, were already quite positive.

The interview also revealed that the Coordinator felt that the timing for this project was right for the PIA. The project was at a favourable time in the group's development; they had completed many action teams, had stable membership and the funding contract for the Coordinator position was up for renewal with the City of Vernon. In addition, there was evidence of strong trusting relationships among the group who have had a long proud history of working together. She contends that the PIA saw the project as an opportunity as they did not have the resources to hire an outside consultant.

During the interview, the Coordinator was asked to look back and discuss the methods that she felt helped to build an evaluative culture. She reported that results of the PIA member survey and interviews of the stakeholders were reaffirming that there was a solid foundation for evaluation. The weekly meetings provided the necessary time and support she needed to focus her attention on evaluation. She suggested that although the time spent with the PIA was brief, it was critical to get the members' feedback about what we were learning. Likewise, she felt that presenting the logic model/theory of change helped to solidify the bigger picture for the Committee and a joint understanding of their work together.

She also commented on methods that did not promote learning for her. As mentioned, the binder of resources was not helpful, and my request for her to document her learning was not fulfilled due to time constraints. I created several data collection tools, one of which she attempted to use, but discovered that she needed to integrate her new learning into what she was already doing. It was at that time that the Coordinator recalls that she realized that the creation of the PIA evaluation framework was *her* job, not mine.

When asked about the commitment of the PIA to promote evaluative inquiry in their work after the project ends, the Coordinator listed several examples of support for evaluation within the Committee. First, the PIA had agreed to lengthen their meetings by ½ an hour and to add evaluation as an ongoing agenda item. Second, the Coordinator reported that as she changed the facilitation of the action team meetings to reflect a more evaluative focus, she has been experiencing support and buy-in from the members. Third, the PIA has created an ongoing

“evaluation team” that consists of several PIA members, a Social Planning Council board member and myself.

The Coordinator reported that the project process has “transformed her” and she now considers herself an “evaluation geek”. At action team meetings, she now invites participants to express their theory of change at the first meeting, and asks how they are going to evaluate their success. She has completed the PIA Evaluation Framework and introduced it to the PIA Committee for feedback. She reports that she was able to introduce the new Vernon City Council councillors to the PIA Committee and was able to speak more easily to the work that they were doing. She also included a budget for evaluation activities in a recent grant application with several non-profit organizations. Most importantly however, the Coordinator describes a finding a greater balance in her role as Coordinator between action and reflection.

### **5.7. Summary of the key findings and results of the project**

The purpose of this project was to build the evaluation capacity within the PIA Committee to assist them with future evaluation activities as well as to answer the larger question, *“How do you build an evaluative culture within a municipal cross-sectoral community coalition in a mid-sized community?”*

From September 2013 to September 2014 the Coordinator and I implemented various methods and activities as part of this community-based participatory research design to gather information and to promote opportunities for reflection and learning.

Findings indicated that both the Coordinator and the PIA members saw the project as an opportunity and were motivated to participate. At the start of the project, the survey results indicated that PIA members reported a higher level of comfort with evaluation than anticipated (by the Coordinator) and interviews with stakeholders revealed high satisfaction with the results of the Committee’s work together. The Coordinator, on the other hand, indicated she was less self-assured about her own evaluation knowledge and skills, however, findings from the interview at the end of the project demonstrated that she increased her knowledge, skills and ultimately, her confidence about evaluation.

The PIA meeting discussions provided opportunities for the PIA to learn more about different types of evaluation, articulate their theory of change and encouraged those interested to form an ongoing Committee evaluation advisory group. In particular, the introduction of Patton’s (2011) adaptation of the Adaptive Cycle by Gunderson and Holling provided the members with a model with which to explore evaluation options during various phases of their work. Similarly, the PIA members adopted a shared theory of change that developed into a traditional logic model that concisely conveyed their work. The meetings also provided an initial

forum to discuss how to operationalize their logic model and collaboratively decide what community indicators to track.

The document review revealed that the PIA had a solid, stable monitoring system in place. As the Coordinator analyzed data collected, she surprised the PIA members with previously unknown results such as the number of action teams formed over the years. She also determined that the Committee needed a more formal way to evaluate the effects from closed action teams in order to learn from past interventions.

The findings from weekly meetings with the Coordinator seemed to suggest that consistent time and space with an 'evaluation guide' facilitated the Coordinator's ability to integrate her learning about evaluation into a useable framework. The Coordinator indicated that the reciprocal nature of actively learning together rather than receiving evaluation advice increased her sense of ownership and responsibility for the process.

The literature review covered a wide variety of evaluation topics to address both the project objectives as well as the larger research question. Findings indicated that the approaches that seemed to resonate most strongly with the Coordinator considered evaluation as an integral part of organizational learning.

In my own experience as the researcher, I found that when I directed the process less and facilitated more open discussions, there was a synergy and excitement from the ensuing joint learning that resulted in "a-ha" moments about evaluation for both the PIA members and the Coordinator.

The findings and results based on this single case experience provide new research on how to build the evaluative culture of a community coalition with constrained resources. The following section is a list of recommendations that I made at the end of the project when I met with the PIA Committee and shared the findings. The PIA requested that the term 'recommendations' be changed to 'suggestions'. In the writing of this report, the suggestions have been listed in order of likelihood of follow through based on the priorities and resources of the PIA.

## **5.8. Suggestions moving forward**

*a.) To continue the work that has already been done so that the evaluation capacity that has been built becomes embedded in the structures and processes of the PIA Committee.*

While much had been accomplished during this project, I suggested that in order for the momentum to continue and for evaluation to find a home with the PIA, both the Coordinator and the PIA members must acknowledge that systematically taking time for reflection and interpreting results of data and

other evidence-based materials will not hamper the action orientation of the Committee (Westley et al., 2007).

I suggested formalizing an evaluation advisory group that would help the Committee with its evaluation activities and act as ongoing support for the Coordinator. Membership could include both Committee members as well as external members based on interest, skill and diversity of opinion (King, 2007).

*b.) Develop meaningful indicators that will measure progress toward PIA outcomes.*

In the PIA's theory of change, they identify that functioning effectively together is key to their success. I encouraged the PIA to flush out meaningful group process indicators so that they can get information about the level of its functioning and pinpoint where they are successful and areas that may be neglected. Additionally, the PIA could report information about their coordination efforts to funders. I provided some resources available to measure the processes of community coalitions, but suggested that the PIA collaboratively prioritize what is important for them to measure. A potential partnership might include increased collaboration with *Vital Signs*, an annual community check-up conducted by the North Okanagan Community Foundation to jointly decide key quality-of-life areas to measure (Community Foundations of Canada, 2015).

*c.) Moved toward shared measurement through a collective impact approach of evaluation*

There is an opportunity for the PIA Committee to help community agencies understand the difference between individual program outcomes and community level outcomes and measure and share each collaboratively (Kelly, 2010). The PIA Committee has the elements of a collective impact initiative, and appears to have a high level of trust and engagement between members. I encouraged the PIA to investigate more information about collective impact initiatives as a potential framework upon which to build their future.

*d.) Develop a budget for evaluation*

I urged the PIA to reconsider resources that are currently dedicated to evaluation. According to the literature, quality evaluation activities require a variety of financial, staffing and material resources (Arnold, 2006; Preskill & Boyle, 2008a). I proposed that the PIA's funding from the City of Vernon include a line item for evaluation; the funders and PIA would then decide together what actions/initiatives of the Committee should be evaluated by an outside evaluator. I also recommended that as part of an overall budget for any new project monies, there should approximately 10% of funding allocated for evaluation activities.

*e.) Investigate access to current evidence-based literature about the evaluation of community coalitions, as well as topics that are difficult to conceptualize such as homelessness, poverty, community capacity, engagement and empowerment.*

*f.) Other options for consideration*

I suggested that the Coordinator seek opportunities with local post-secondary institutions to provide access to students with interests in research methods and data analysis (Arnold, 2006).

The PIA could initiate an evaluation learning circle to support the development of community organizations' evaluation capacity. Topics selected could be based on their relevance to needs and interests (Cohen, 2006).

## 6. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Overall, this project achieved its three main objectives: 1.) to determine the type of evaluation(s) best suited for the Committee's purposes; 2.) to develop an approach that would be useful; 3.) to increase the evaluation capacity of the Coordinator. It facilitated the means by which the Coordinator and PIA could examine the role of evaluation within their committee and provided a chance for them to renew their sense of purpose (through the development of a TOC), reflect on their past (through a review of documents), and think about their future (through Coordinator and PIA meetings).

However, the larger question remains-*how do you build an evaluative culture within a municipal cross-sectoral community coalition in a mid-sized community?*

This case study describes a project designed to increase the evaluative culture of a community coalition through a community-based participatory immersion process. It shares similarities with other studies highlighted in the literature review that promote hands-on learning as a way to promote evaluation capacity among practitioners (Arnold, 2006; Huffman et al., 2008; Taut, 2007). While the PIA did not conduct an evaluation as did the participants in the study by Huffman, Thomas and Lawrenz (2008) the Coordinator increased her evaluation capacity through the *process* of applying new knowledge and skills as she developed the PIA evaluation framework. Her evaluation capacity grew as she had the opportunity and support to try out new conceptualizations of evaluation and the time to discuss how these might or might not fit within the reality of her work (Huffman et al., 2008, p. 360).

Likewise, this case adopted aspects of a catalyst-as-change approach as described by Garcia-Iriarte et al. (2011). The project was able to provide the Coordinator with the opportunity to explore different evaluation practices and share her learning with the PIA Committee as the process unfolded. She has reported that her increased knowledge and skills have permeated all aspects of her work with the Committee, thus becoming a catalyst in diffusing and promoting evaluation practices within the coalition (Garcia-Iriarte et al., 2011, p. 168). Furthermore, this project's emphasis on an openness to learning, flexibility, ongoing communication with the PIA, as well as the commitment of the Coordinator and the ability of the Coordinator and myself to connect with one another throughout this process reflects what Danseco (2013) refers to as the five C's of innovation in evaluation capacity building (pp. 109-114).

Finally, like Arnold (2006), this project made use of logic models as a tool for building evaluation capacity and provided one-to-one help for the Coordinator. By developing a logic model with the PIA Committee, the members were able to articulate their theory of change as a shared vision that could help the group prioritize what and when to evaluate.

The revised conceptual framework (see Figure 12) helps to link the various niches of evaluation research presented in the literature review to the findings and suggests an approach to build the evaluative culture of smaller community coalitions.

First, by thinking about the potential users of evaluation information, assisting to design questions to elicit users' perspectives about evaluation and then analyzing the responses, the Coordinator and Committee developed a broader view of the various purposes of gathering evaluation information. This finding supports Patton's assertion that focusing the purpose of an evaluation helps users to prioritize which evaluation option to implement (Patton, 2012).

Second, using Patton's version (2011, p. 207) of the Gunderson and Holling's (2002) Adaptive Cycle facilitated the Coordinator's and the Committee members' understanding of the various evaluation options that might be useful at different developmental stages of a coalition (Preskill, Parkhurst, et al., 2014). This process helped the Committee members learn that they could apply various evaluation options at different times regarding the different components of their work together.

Third, as the Coordinator and PIA better understood the many methodological challenges documented in the literature about the evaluation of community coalitions, the Committee's struggles to move forward in this area were validated. The Coordinator eventually realized that she was on the right track, and that she "had to integrate what she was already doing"; there was no quick fix. Through this project, the Coordinator created the PIA Evaluation Framework and connected the existing monitoring system to the Committee's new theory of change. The Coordinator now documents the Committee's progress toward their long term goal through the measurement of self-identified short term and intermediate outcomes (Anderson, 2005).

Fourth, the engagement of and collaboration with participants are key values of stakeholder involvement approaches to evaluation; these ideals parallel those shared by most community initiatives (Butterfoss, 2007; Wolff, 2010). Many elements of stakeholder involvement were applied during this project and will be important considerations for any outside evaluator working with the PIA. By designing this project side by side with the Coordinator as well as involving the Committee, there was strong buy-in, a sense of ownership and a commitment to seeing that this project be successful (Fetterman, 2001; Patton, 2008; Rodríguez-Campos, 2012b).

By the end of the project the Coordinator reported that she met many of the evaluation capacity building objectives categorized by Preskill and Boyle (2008a). Related to the case study of Garcia-Iriarte et al. (2011), this project also prepared the Coordinator as an effective catalyst-for-change who can diffuse evaluation knowledge and skills to other Committee members as well as promote mainstreaming and use of evaluation results among the PIA; for example, the Coordinator reports that "some members are taking the PIA Evaluation Framework to their own agency and using it." One PIA member coordinates another committee in the community and has begun raising the

topic of evaluation during meetings. In addition, during the PIA’s latest strategic planning session, the Committee referred to their TOC to ensure goal alignment. She reports that meetings of the PIA have a “decidedly more evaluative focus”; in essence, the Coordinator’s enthusiasm has promoted evaluation as a topic worthy of discussion by the group.

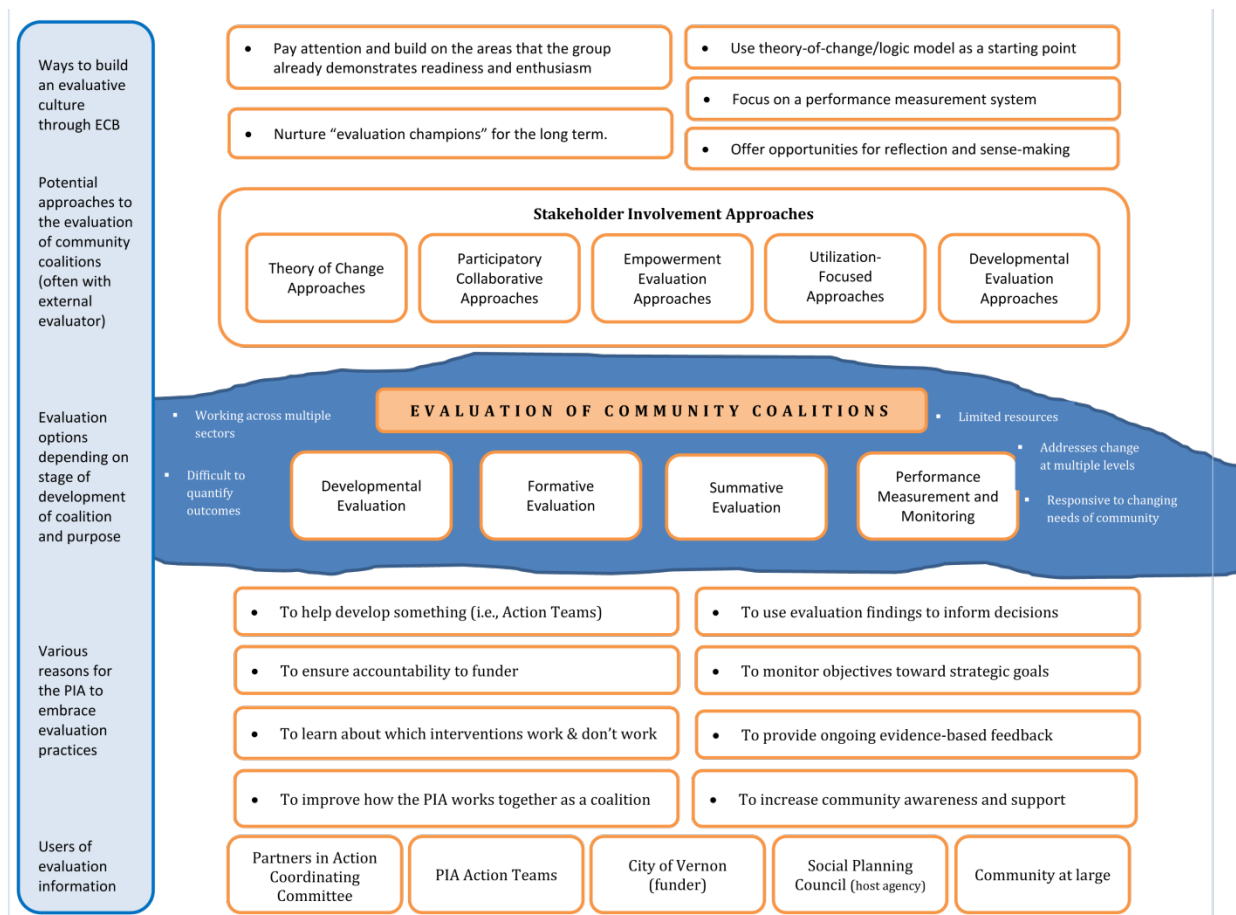


Figure 12: Conceptual framework of building the evaluative culture of a community coalition with few resources

The findings of this project appear to correspond with what Mayne (Mayne, 2008a) suggests is needed to build and support an evaluative culture: 1.) *Leadership*: As a result of this process, the Coordinator’s evaluation capacity has increased; her leadership now includes a knowledge base that will prioritize evidence-based information in decision-making. 2.) *Supportive organizational systems, practices and procedures*: Her work developing a performance measurement and evaluation framework suggests that the Committee has a new system that is meaningful to them in order to gather, analyze and use evidence-based information. Regular Committee meeting agendas now list evaluation has a standing item. The Coordinator reports that she has changed her facilitation of action team meetings to incorporate a greater evaluation focus. 3.) A

*learning focus:* The Coordinator has indicated that participation in this project has been transformational in the way in which she approaches her work. She now ensures that she and the Committee have a better balance between time spent on action and reflection. By building in formalized time to learn from their interventions and systematically discussing what works, what did not, and what might be new approaches, the Committee engages in *evidenced-based learning* (Mayne, 2008a). Evaluation activities in community change work are increasingly seen as an opportunity to enhance real-time feedback and decision-making, assess and alter strategy (Brown, 2010, p. 97).

### **6.1. Lessons Learned from the Project**

Analysis of this case study reveals several practical themes that have emerged from this project and that may be applicable to other community coalitions and/or evaluators hoping to extend their evaluation practices; they are discussed below.

1. *Pay attention and build on the areas for which the group already demonstrates readiness and enthusiasm.*

Overall the PIA was motivated to participate in this project and viewed it as an opportunity to bring in an outside resource to assist them with evaluation activities. Within the PIA, the Coordinator not only saw this project as benefitting the Committee, but also as a chance to increase her own evaluation skills. While the PIA as a whole could not commit much time to the process, they were interested to hear about the Coordinator's progress and contributed to the discussion at meetings. Preskill and Boyle (2008b) recommend that facilitators understand the participants' level of readiness, build on internal assets and "meet them where they're at" (p. 164).

2. *Nurture "evaluation champions" for the long term.*

King (2007) suggests that it is important to identify and support evaluation champions who will nurture evaluative thinking in themselves and others. However, as Brown (2010) points out, time is the often biggest obstacle to learning. The regular meetings with the Coordinator were instrumental in providing her with the time to incrementally build upon her evaluation skills and knowledge and practice them over the course of a year. The Coordinator asserts, "The meetings were training and professional development, time to discuss ideas and an opportunity for me to wrap my head around what evaluation could look like for the PIA." This study appears to support Huffman et al.'s (2008) claim that collaborative hands-on learning about evaluation through real-world experiences is an effective way to build capacity of organizations and individuals.

An outcome of the project has been the creation of an evaluation advisory team that will not only support the Coordinator by providing input and feedback about action team outcomes, but will continue to ensure that the momentum from the project moves forward.

3. *Use theory of change/logic model frameworks with coalitions to build common purpose and understand the bigger picture.*

Nowadays, a theory of change is a cornerstone of many if not most systems initiatives evaluations (Coffman, 2007) and using logic models is well referenced in the literature (Arnold, 2006; Butterfoss, 2007; Kaplan & Garrett, 2005; Weiss, 1995). Creating a logic model and helping the PIA to describe their own theory of change raised discussion about how they believed change to work. Similar to Kaplan and Garrett (2005), I found that the process of developing a theory of change forced the Coordinator and the Committee members to clarify and articulate their goals. The Committee was also excited at the prospect of using it with stakeholders to simply explain their activities and expected results (Kaplan & Garrett). With the work done to develop the models, the Coordinator was able to create an evaluation framework that outlines the group's goals and strategies with specific interim and long term outcomes (Brown, 2010).

4. *Focus on a performance measurement system for community coalitions who lack the resources for evaluation.*

Performance measurement fits the concept of evaluation for organizational learning (Lynch-Cerullo & Cooney, 2011). In the case of the PIA, building a performance measurement framework was an accessible, affordable and meaningful way to foster evaluation capacity. Evaluating the work of community coalitions has proved complex with many variables that account for the success or failure of an intervention; it can be very difficult to isolate what changes were caused by the work of the coalition itself, as well as costly and time consuming. Depending on a coalition's priorities, supporting a community coalition to collaboratively create a performance measurement system can assist them with evidence-based decision-making and ongoing tracking of goals.

As suggested by Hunter and Nielsen (2013), performance measurement looks forward and evaluation looks backward. The performance measurement framework that the Coordinator developed combined a focus on measuring ongoing effectiveness with continuous improvement (Sridharan & Nakaima, 2010). In addition, by adding a component of reviewing closed action teams, the PIA now has the ability to evaluate and learn from past action teams.

5. *Offer opportunities for reflection and sense-making.*

Some suggest that the time to reflect is often overshadowed by the need to act and coalitions tend to be so busy engaging that they fail to step back and systematically track what is developing and document the reasons they chose one path over another (Brown, 2010; Patton, 2011). The Coordinator confirms this assertion: “This project forced us to set aside time to analyze, reflect and discuss our results”. The findings indicated that an indirect approach to ECB helped the PIA learn new ways of conceptualizing and learning to think evaluatively (Cousins et al., 2014). The PIA was curious and open to following up from past action teams, however, they had not previously set aside time for reflection in any formalized way.

The Coordinator reported that our weekly discussions were pivotal in helping her to build her confidence about evaluation activities. She claimed that her need to “cross things off her list” and “get things done” had shaped the PIA Committee to focus on completing tasks, but not leave much time for questioning and reflection. The weekly meetings for this project provided her with the breathing space to think evaluatively about the work of the Committee over the past seven years.

Together, these themes and insights provide a helpful starting point for the academy to begin to apply evaluation-based analysis of community coalitions. The conceptual framework provided in this report provides not only a helpful synthesis of the state of play of current literature that is relevant to the questions posed in this study but also a way forward for considering the development of future research and literature in this important area.

## **6.2. My evolving role**

As this was a community-based participatory research project, I feel that some reflection upon my own role in the project is warranted. I began the project as a practitioner and student, but have come to realize that I adopted several other role orientations throughout its implementation. While the scope of the project did not include an evaluation of the PIA, I assisted the Committee with evaluation activities, and assumed several role orientations familiar in the evaluation field. I believe that the shift in my approach from teacher/expert to facilitator/knowledge broker contributed to the positive outcomes of the project.

As mentioned in the literature review, the role of the evaluator is influenced by many variables such as the purpose of the evaluation activity and the evaluator’s familiarity and comfort with certain models. With limited experience in evaluation, I first focused my own learning on evaluation methods and my orientation toward the project was more technical in nature. During meetings with the Coordinator, I attempted to share my learning by suggesting resources about how to conduct evaluation and left resources to “educate” the Coordinator about evaluation

methods. She did not use these resources. I also designed different data collection templates for the Coordinator which she also did not find helpful. At the time, I felt that my role was to develop an evaluation framework *for* the PIA; learning objectives were channelled from me to the Coordinator to the PIA members (see Figure 13). Even though I knew that this was a shared process, the first roles I tried to assume were what Schein (2009) describes as the expert and doctor roles, when in retrospect, the role of process consultant would have been more suitable.



Figure 13: My original assumptions of learning transmission as unidirectional

According to Schein (2009), the client and helper are initially ignorant of much of what is going on, and the helper must build trust with the client in order to elicit information and clarify needs (p. 64). Although we had developed an initial plan, it was not until the Coordinator and I had been working together for several months that we began to recognize the importance of evaluation capacity building. The Coordinator acknowledges, “The ECB element seemed to unfold during the project. Once we realized that the project was about capacity building rather than a consultant coming in with a set of tools, we re-worked the project.”

As I became better versed in the literature, particularly on the subject of developmental evaluation and evaluation capacity building, I shifted from trying to provide evaluation know-how to inviting inquiry and brokering knowledge. I facilitated the “creation, sharing and use of knowledge” (Meyer, 2010, p. 119 as cited in Donnelly, 2013, p. 115) through adapting evaluation literature for the specific local context of the PIA (Donnelly, 2013). Taking the time to understand the PIA’s and specifically, the Coordinator’s motivations for evaluation helped to seize an opportunity for learning that was meaningful but not beyond the scope of what they realistically could accomplish.

This shift in my perception about my role became apparent when I was to provide an update to the entire PIA; I originally saw myself doing a PowerPoint presentation to “teach” them about evaluation. However, as the Coordinator and I discussed the presentation, I recognized that I simply needed to share what I had learned so far, as well as acknowledge what questions had emerged for me. This is what Preskill and Torres (1999b) call evaluative inquiry for organizational learning. Taylor (2007) suggests that it is through trustful relationships that allow people to have questioning discussions, share information openly and achieve mutual and consensual understanding (p. 207).

From that moment on, I began to understand that due to the complex nature of the project there was often uncertainty on how to proceed. I could not control what learning about evaluation would happen at an individual or organizational level however, I could pay attention to what emerged from my interactions and discussions with the Coordinator and the PIA and adjust accordingly (Patton, 2011). As I grew more comfortable in a facilitator role, I found out that my own assumptions of what constitutes teaching and learning were challenged (see Figure 14).

Preskill and Torres (1999a) assert that evaluative inquiry is necessary in building an evaluative culture. I surmise that my own modelling of reflecting, asking questions, identifying and clarifying my values, beliefs, assumptions and knowledge regarding evaluation encouraged the PIA to do the same.

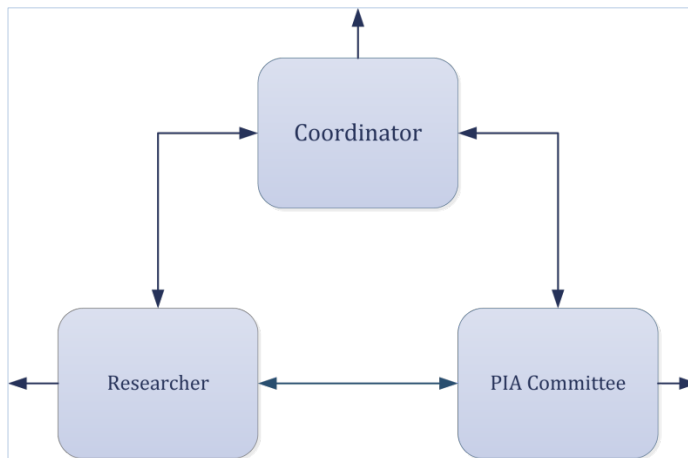


Figure 14: My revised interpretation of learning as multidirectional

### 6.3. Strengths of the Study

This case study has several strengths that are worth noting. First the research question attempts to tackle a “big” question about a type of organization that is very poorly represented in the evaluation literature. To my knowledge there does not appear to be research that explores how to build an evaluative culture of a smaller community coalition. Second, this case study provides a novel approach in the co-production of knowledge between academic and non-academic communities, as I did not identify as an expert in evaluation. In particular, the learning about evaluation was a two-way transfer between me and the Coordinator (Pohl et al., 2010). In my opinion, this approach promoted a greater investment from the Coordinator and resulted in increases in her evaluation capacity than if an evaluation expert had been hired. Finally, this study synthesizes various niches of evaluation research presented in the literature review and applies them to the findings from this case study.

#### **6.4. Limitations of the Study**

This case study also had several limitations. First, due to the time constraints of the PIA Committee, the bulk of this project was focused with the Coordinator; thus it is difficult to know whether the Committee members increased their evaluation capacity, or if the PIA as a whole shifted their evaluative culture. Second, the interview data captured only the views of the Coordinator and not the entire PIA. Interviews with PIA members would have helped to corroborate the Coordinator's responses. Third, because of the scope of this project, there is no way of knowing whether this project will have any long term effects on the evaluative culture of the PIA in the future. Finally, while this case study provided insights into how to integrate aspects of evaluation into the work of the PIA, these localized results cannot be broadly generalized. Nonetheless, the project provides an important exploratory foray into the important field of evaluation culture and capacity building for community coalitions. Given the significance of community collaborations for society into the future (Williams & van't Hof, 2014; Wolff, 2010; Woodland & Hutton, 2012), this area will only increase in importance not only for the coalitions and funders of those coalitions themselves, but also for the communities they serve.

#### **6.5. Future Research**

While this study has helped to identify the significance of building the evaluation capacity and ultimately the evaluative culture of a community coalition, as well as put forth a practical framework for smaller coalitions, there are also questions raised for future research. There is need for long-term analysis of the impact of evaluative culture and capacity building practices with community coalitions as well as need to expand research about building the evaluative culture of coalitions that represent not only municipal but also regional, provincial, national and international interests.

The evaluation field would also benefit from closer examination of the interplay between performance measurement and evaluation in complex place-based initiatives to better understand how coalition members interpret and implement these two different, yet complementary evaluation activities.

Additionally, it would be of value to understand how the evaluative cultures of agencies within community coalitions affect a coalition as a whole, as well as how a coalition's readiness for evaluation might determine specific evaluation capacity building strategies. Other factors to consider include coalition structure and leadership, level of resources, and the role of the facilitator.

## 7. CONCLUSION

In the past two decades, there has been growing interest in community coalitions and their efforts to affect change in their communities (Butterfoss & Kegler, 2009; Feinberg et al., 2004; Foster-Fishman et al., 2001; Wandersman, 2003). Moreover, there has also been greater emphasis on the accountability of coalition to produce results. While some collaborations are well sourced, in my experience, many of these local groups do not have the means by which to evaluate whether their work together is effective. This case study describes a community-based participatory research project that focused on assisting the Partners in Action Committee, a municipal cross-sectoral community coalition, to build its evaluation capacity. The project provided the opportunity for the PIA to: a.) learn about the different purposes for evaluation; b.) develop an evaluation framework that includes both ongoing monitoring as well as more in-depth assessment of past action teams and c.) increase the evaluation skills and knowledge of the Coordinator. The study also explored ways in which the evaluative culture of a community coalition might be fostered. This research attempted to address the lack of literature documenting the evaluation capacity building of community coalitions and more specifically, the development of an evaluative culture within a community coalition. The study sought to answer the following question:

How do you build an evaluative culture within a municipal cross-sectoral community coalition in a mid-sized community so that:

- a.) Members of the Committee/coalition have the tools to recognize if/how their work together is effective;
- b.) Members of the Committee/coalition have a process with which to reflect upon the Committee's interventions and experiences;
- c.) The Committee/coalition has the ability to make decisions based on evaluation findings;
- d.) The Committee/coalition is accountable for its expenditures of monies to funders, themselves and the community.

The conceptual framework presented in this report, suggests that there are various elements within the evaluation literature that must be brought together in order to answer the research question. First, the community coalition must understand that there are different purposes for evaluation, and understanding the differences will help them to prioritize their needs. Second, the difficulty in using traditional evaluation methodologies to evaluate community coalitions must be acknowledged and shared with coalition members. Third, it appears that stakeholder involvement approaches to evaluation meet the values of community coalitions and Development Evaluation may be a particularly suitable approach for groups in which solutions are being created for and adapted to their unique local environment. Finally, there must be a connection between evaluation activities and ongoing learning for organizational development.

In spite of what has been written about the lack of skills and resources in community-based organizations, this study provides evidence that it is possible to build the evaluation capacity of a community coalition. It appears that an approach that emphasizes the co-production of knowledge may be a way to ensure that inquiry-based learning becomes embedded in the structures and processes of the organization. This study suggests that a long term relationship between learning partners may be key to building an evaluative culture.

The PIA Evaluation Project has set up conditions within the PIA that promote a promising future in evaluation; there is growing commitment to evaluative inquiry and increased knowledge and understanding about evaluation practices. As for me, the researcher, this experience has not only exposed me to the many hues of evaluation, but has also provided me with new ways of thinking.

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**9. APPENDICES**

Appendix A: PIA Evaluation Survey

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1. On a scale of 1-100, please rate your comfort level with evaluation: what is your guess of the average score? \_\_\_\_\_ Answer: \_\_\_\_\_
2. What does the PIA Committee currently evaluate?
3. Please prioritize the following for the PIA Committee to evaluate:

	Not a priority	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority
Changes as a result of the Action Teams				
Changes in resources available to the community				
Changes in access to services and supports				
Timeliness/responsiveness of PIA Committee to issues				
Group functioning of PIA Committee				
Changes in community awareness of specific issues				
Changes in policies and regulations				
Cost effectiveness of PIA Committee				
Accessibility of PIA Committee to community				
Changes in partnerships				
Changes in business practices				
Profile of PIA in the community				

4. Please list other areas not specified in #3 above that you think the PIA Committee should evaluate.
5. What stakeholders besides the PIA Committee might be interested in evaluation results?
6. In light of this information, are there stakeholders listed above that Heather should also interview? If so, why?
7. What do you see as the primary purpose of evaluation findings for the Partners in Action Committee?
8. What would you like to learn about evaluation that would be helpful to the work that your organization does?
9. What other comments or questions do you have about evaluation and the Partners in Action Committee?

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Appendix B: Feedback Questions to PIA Evaluation Enthusiasts

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Hi Members,

First of all, let me thank you for your interest in this project. I hope that we can learn together how to make evaluation an integral part of the work of the Committee, as well how to make any evaluation a useful and reflective endeavour.

One of my first tasks is to send out an online survey to Committee members to gather some baseline information about who is important to include in any evaluation discussion, what the group hopes to evaluate, and what the group hopes that evaluation will accomplish.

Please remember that your involvement as an evaluation team is completely voluntary and you are under no obligation to participate.

1. Do you understand the objective of the survey?
2. Do you feel comfortable answering the questions?
3. Is the wording of the survey clear?
4. Are the answer choices compatible with your experience with the issues?
5. Do any of the items require you to think too long or hard before responding? If so, which ones?
6. Do the answers collected reflect what you want in regards to the purpose of evaluation project?
7. Is the survey too long or take too much time?
8. Have any other important issues been overlooked?

If you have any questions, please contact me at [hjtodd@uvic.ca](mailto:hjtodd@uvic.ca).

I look forward to working with you!

Heather Todd  
[hjtodd@uvic.ca](mailto:hjtodd@uvic.ca)

**Response #1:**

I am not sure about the word "aspects" in terms of what you are looking for because there are lots of aspects of the PIA that an individual may or may not be aware of. Having said that I would think the word "actions" may be a better fit unless you specify all the aspects that you are looking at, i.e., action teams, administration, timeliness/responsiveness,

community awareness, accessibility to the PIA. Please let me know your meaning of aspects in this context, thanks...

**Responses #2:**

Hello Heather!

Thank you so much for taking this very interesting and important task on. I love it!

1. Do you understand the objective of the survey? Yes
2. Do you feel comfortable answering the questions? Yes
3. Is the wording of the survey clear? #2 may need to get re-worked - Slightly awkward although I know exactly what you are asking.
4. Are the answer choices compatible with your experience with the issues? Yes
5. Do any of the items require you to think too long or hard before responding? If so, which ones? #3 - I don't know why I have to think about this one for so long -I'll think about it.
6. Do the answers collected reflect what you want in regards to the purpose of evaluation project?

I would like a question added to discuss the definition of a stakeholder. Partners in action is designed to address the perceived social issues in the community however, it seems that for the most part, the members of Partners in action bring the issues to the table and the members address them. I want to be confident that there isn't a disconnect between our members and the general population of Vernon. I want to be really sure that we are not just addressing our own needs.

7. Is the survey too long or take too much time? No
8. Have any other important issues been overlooked? No

### Appendix C: Sample Stakeholder Interview Questions

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1. Does the current reporting by the Partners in Action Committee provide useful information for you in your work?
2. What is missing?
3. What areas of the Partners in Action Committee's work do you feel is important to evaluate? Why?
4. How would you use that information?
5. What is the best format to communicate evaluative information about the work of the Partners in Action Committee that would assist you in decision-making and work processes?
6. What do you see as the primary purpose of evaluation findings for the Partners in Action Committee?
7. Any other observations that you would like to share?

## Appendix D: Introductory Letter to Stakeholders

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### Partners in Action Committee Evaluation Project

As you may be aware, I am a graduate student in the Community Development program at the University of Victoria's School of Public Administration. I will be working with the Partners in Action Committee to complete my Master's Project.

You are being asked to participate in an (group) in-person interview as you are.....

### Background About the Project:

In June 2012, I attended a meeting of the Partners in Action Committee to talk with them about potential topics that might be of interest to the group. The general consensus at that meeting was that my project could assist them in developing an evaluation framework that would help the Committee to monitor the progress of its action teams. In further discussions with Annette Sharkey, Coordinator, she and I feel that the overall scope of my project is to help this group develop a process and tools so that they can begin to systematically monitor and evaluate both their work in the community as well as how they function as a group.

### Plan

I will be adopting a "community-based research" approach for this project. This means that any research done for the purposes of this project will be done collaboratively with the active participation of Committee members; thus the project may shift slightly according to the needs of the Committee. In preliminary discussions with Annette, we have drafted the following outline to help everyone to understand what is involved:

Activity	Tentative Date
October 2013	PIA Committee members to complete an online survey to establish baseline knowledge and expectations as well as to understand what members feel is important to measure. The survey should take 15-20 minutes maximum to complete.
	Review of existing data collection methods used by Committee and reporting requirements.
October	City of Vernon representatives are interviewed about Partners in Action to get their perspective as a funder.
November	Social Planning Council of the North Okanagan Board Member are interviewed to get their perspective as a contract holder.
November	Consultations/discussions with Coordinating Committee during regular meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is evaluation (results from survey shared)</li> <li>• Logic model &amp; theory of change</li> </ul>
January 2014	Consultation/discussions with Coordinating Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Community outcomes</li> <li>○ Group outcomes</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
February	Review of evaluation tools
April-June	Presentation of draft report to Committee

### Risks and inconveniences

There are no known or anticipated risks in participating in this project.

### **Voluntary Participation**

Please be assured that your participation in this project is voluntary and you are under no obligation to participate. There will be no negative consequences if you decide to withdraw and you may also request that information you have provided during this group discussion not be used.

### **Data Collection Methods**

There are limits to confidentiality as it may be possible to identify individual participants from records of meeting discussions. When possible, I will use pseudonyms and change identifying information and features.

I will protect the confidentiality of the information about the project by storing all documentation of your responses in a locked drawer in my home. Electronic information will be password protected on my laptop.

### **Benefits of the Project**

The goal of this project is to help the Committee to evaluate its work so that they can better understand their successes as well as learn from their mistakes. It is hoped that they will increase their evaluative capacity and build a stronger evaluative culture.

### **Confidentiality**

I intend to use data collected during groups in summarized form with no identifying information.

However, I cannot guarantee your confidentiality as it may be possible to recognize individual participants from this group discussion due to the small size of Board. When possible, I will use pseudonyms and change identifying information and features.

I will protect data during the project by storing all documentation of responses in a locked drawer in my home. Electronic information will be password protected on my laptop.

### **Project Report**

As part of my school requirements, I will write a report about this project and share it with the Partners in Action Committee for review, revision and approval. Because this project has been undertaken in collaboration with Committee, members will collectively decide about how the report will be shared and with whom.

### **Questions?**

Contact me at (250) 558-6796 or email me at [hjtodd@uvic.ca](mailto:hjtodd@uvic.ca).

You may also contact my UVIC Academic Supervisor, Catherine Althaus at (250) 721-8060 or email her at [calthaus@uvic.ca](mailto:calthaus@uvic.ca).

In addition you may verify the ethical approval of this project or raise any concerns you might have by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250 472-4545 or [ethics@uvic.ca](mailto:ethics@uvic.ca)).

Sincerely, Heather Todd

## Appendix E: List of PIA Committee Documents

<b>Name of Document</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Evaluation of North Okanagan Homelessness Strategy	2007-2010	Outside evaluation of strategy
PIA Quarterly Reports (3)	2008	Reports to City Council
PIA Final Report	2008	Annual final report to City Council
PIA Update	2009	Update to PIA members, affiliated organizations
PIA Quarterly Report (3)	2009	Reports to City Council
PIA Final Report	2009	Annual final report to City Council
PIA Strategic Goals 2010-2011	2010-2011	Priorities and plan for upcoming year
PIA Quarterly Report (2)	2010	Reports to City Council
PIA Final Report	2010	Annual final report to City Council
PIA Quarterly Report (1)	2011	Report to City Council
PIA Final Report	2012	Annual final report to City Council
PIA Strategic Goals	2012	Priorities and plan for upcoming year
PIA Strategic Goals Results	2012	Report on results
PIA Strategic Goals	2013	Priorities and plan for upcoming year
<b>Specific Action Teams Reports</b>		
Emergency Food Action Team Background Paper	2011	Inventory and needs assessment
Emergency Food Action Team Consultation Results	2011	Report on goals and results of consultation
Harm Reduction Update	2012-2015	Harm Reduction Action Team follow up actions

## Appendix F: Selection of Information Sources

<b>Academic Journals</b>	
American Journal of Community Psychology	
American Journal of Evaluation	
Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation	
Evaluation and Program Planning	
Evaluation Review	
Health Education and Behavior	
Health Education Research	
Health Promotion Practice	
New Directions in Evaluation	
<b>Websites about evaluation</b>	
American Evaluation Association	<a href="http://www.eval.org/">http://www.eval.org/</a>
Aspen Institute	<a href="http://aspeninstitute.org">http://aspeninstitute.org</a>
Better Evaluation	<a href="http://betterevaluation.org/">http://betterevaluation.org/</a>
Bruner Foundation (Evaluation Capacity Building and Evaluative Thinking)	<a href="http://www.brunerfoundation.org/">www.brunerfoundation.org/</a>
Caledon Institute	<a href="http://www.caledoninst.org/">http://www.caledoninst.org/</a>
Canadian Evaluation Association	<a href="http://www.evaluationcanada.ca/">http://www.evaluationcanada.ca/</a>
Center for Disease Control and Prevention Framework for Program Evaluation	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/eval/framework/index.htm">http://www.cdc.gov/eval/framework/index.htm</a>
Center for Evaluation Innovation	<a href="http://www.evaluationinnovation.org/">http://www.evaluationinnovation.org/</a>
Centre for Civic Partnerships	<a href="http://www.civicpartnerships.org/#!organizational-learning-resources/cwu6">http://www.civicpartnerships.org/#!organizational-learning-resources/cwu6</a>
Community Tool Box: Workgroup for Community Health and Development University of Kansas	<a href="http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents">http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents</a>
Evaluation Capacity Development Group	<a href="http://www.ecdg.net/">http://www.ecdg.net/</a>
FSG/Collective Impact Forum	<a href="http://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/">http://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/</a>
Harvard Family Research Project	<a href="http://www.hfrp.org/evaluation">http://www.hfrp.org/evaluation</a>
Organizational Research Services	<a href="http://orsimpact.com/">http://orsimpact.com/</a>
Tamarack Institute	<a href="http://tamarackcommunity.ca/">http://tamarackcommunity.ca/</a>
<b>Community Indicators Sites</b>	
National Neighbors Indicators Partnership Urban Institute (tools)	<a href="http://www.neighborhoodindicators.org/">http://www.neighborhoodindicators.org/</a>
Perform Well (tools)	<a href="http://www.performwell.org/">http://www.performwell.org/</a>
Child Trends (tools)	<a href="http://www.childtrends.org/databank/">http://www.childtrends.org/databank/</a>
Community Indicators Consortium	<a href="https://communityindicators.net/projects">https://communityindicators.net/projects</a>
Sustainable Measures	<a href="http://www.sustainablemeasures.com/company">http://www.sustainablemeasures.com/company</a>
Community Indicators-Winnipeg	<a href="http://www.mypeg.ca/">http://www.mypeg.ca/</a>
<b>Tools</b>	
Western Michigan University Evaluation Center Evaluation Checklists	<a href="http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/checklists/evaluation-checklists/">http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/checklists/evaluation-checklists/</a>
Innonet's Coalition Assessment	<a href="http://www.innonet.org/resources/files/innonet-coalition-assessment.pdf">http://www.innonet.org/resources/files/innonet-coalition-assessment.pdf</a>
United Way of Canada –Centraide Canada (2007) Collaboration Guide and Tool	<a href="https://dspace.lib.uoguelph.ca/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10214/3115/Kellerman_Collaboration_Assessment_Guide_and_Tool_co">https://dspace.lib.uoguelph.ca/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10214/3115/Kellerman_Collaboration_Assessment_Guide_and_Tool_co</a>

	<a href="#">mplete_copy.pdf?sequence=7</a>
Various tools from Frances Butterfoss regarding coalition assessment	<a href="http://coalitionswork.com/resources/tools/">http://coalitionswork.com/resources/tools/</a>
Evaluation Capacity Diagnostic Tool	<a href="http://informingchange.com/cat-publications/evaluation-capacity-diagnostic-tool">http://informingchange.com/cat-publications/evaluation-capacity-diagnostic-tool</a>
A Checklist for Building Organizational Evaluation Capacity (Volkov & King, 2007)	<a href="http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/archive_checklists/ecb.pdf">www.wmich.edu/evalctr/archive_checklists/ecb.pdf</a>
The Readiness for Organizational Learning and Evaluation Instrument (Preskill, 2000)	<a href="http://www.fsg.org/tabid/191/ArticleId/439/Default.aspx?srpu sh=true">http://www.fsg.org/tabid/191/ArticleId/439/Default.aspx?srpu sh=true</a>
<b>Theory of Change, Logic Models and Evaluation Plan Builders</b>	
Aspen Institute Advocacy Progress Planner (tools)	<a href="http://www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/apep/tools">http://www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/apep/tools</a>
Center for Theory of Change	<a href="http://www.theoryofchange.org/">http://www.theoryofchange.org/</a>
Innovation Network	<a href="http://www.innonet.org/index.php?section_id=64&amp;content_id=185">http://www.innonet.org/index.php?section_id=64&amp;content_id=185</a>
W.K. Kellogg Foundation (Logic Model Development Guide)	<a href="http://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resource/2010/w-k-kellogg-foundation-evaluation-handbook">http://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resource/2010/w-k-kellogg-foundation-evaluation-handbook</a>

## Appendix G: Interview Questions for PIA Coordinator

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These are the questions we will be discussing over two meetings. You can choose to answer as many as you like:

- What do you think was the motivating reason that the PIA decided to take on this project? How about for you as the coordinator? What was the incentive?
- Preskill & Boyle (2008) provide this definition of evaluation capacity building (ECB):
  - ECB involves the design and implementation of teaching and learning strategies to help individuals, groups, and organizations, learn about what constitutes effective, useful, and professional evaluation practice. The ultimate goal of ECB is sustainable evaluation practice—where members continuously ask questions that matter, collect, analyze, and interpret data, and use evaluation findings for decision-making and action. For evaluation practice to be sustained, participants must be provided with leadership support, incentives, resources, and opportunities to transfer their learning about evaluation to their everyday work. Sustainable evaluation practice also requires the development of systems, processes, policies, and plans that help embed evaluation work into the way the organization accomplishes its mission and strategic goals. Would you consider this project a ECB initiative?
- The literature suggests that the motivations, assumptions and expectations of any ECB effort need to be fully thought through before designing & implementing an ECB effort – in what ways did we do this?
- You have deemed this project a success – do you feel that we have built an evaluative culture within the PIA?
- Why was this the right time to do this project for you as the Coordinator, for the PIA in general?
- Why did we pick the methods we did?
- How did the methods that we use help to build an evaluative culture?
  - a) Surveys/Questionnaires
  - b) Meeting together at least 27 times!
  - c) Building a logic model
  - d) Meeting with the PIA
  - e) Literature review (why did certain things that I brought forward resonate, while others did not?)
  - f) Journaling
- What parts of the methods were not useful? Why?
- Describe any surprises/unanticipated findings.

- We found that the City of Vernon officials' evaluation expectations a little surprising. Please comment on how their attitude influences how the PIA might approach evaluation in the future.
- Time & resources are scarce. Describe the value that this project has provided for you as the Coordinator of the PIA . Was there value added for the members of the PIA?
- How was this project different than if an evaluator came in and evaluated the work of the PIA?
- Now that you feel that you are thinking evaluatively, what follows in the long term? For you are the Coordinator? For the individual members of the PIA? For the PIA as a whole?
- What could we have done differently that would have resulted in a better outcome for you and the PIA?
- What outstanding questions/issues do you still have about evaluation?
- What help will you need moving forward to sustain this momentum?
- The literature emphasizes that quality evaluation activity requires a variety of financial, personnel & material resources. What resources would be helpful for you are the Coordinator and for the PIA Committee in general?
- Leadership is a key factor in building and sustaining an evaluative culture. Please comment on the commitment of the PIA Coordinating Committee to promote evaluative inquiry in their work.
- What kind of technology does the PIA Committee need in order to support data collection & analysis, as well as to share monitoring & evaluation information for continuous learning and improvement?
- How do you see the PIA Committee using and communicating the results from the monitoring system you have developed?
- If the PIA Committee were to develop an evaluation vision in 2-4 sentences, what would it say?
- Is there a role in evaluation for the key stakeholders of the PIA Committee, namely, the City of Vernon, SPCNO, the vulnerable populations you target?
- Any other comments you would like add.

<b>KNOWLEDGE</b>	Rate your current knowledge <b>now</b> as a result of participating in the PIA Evaluation Project	Reflect back and rate that same knowledge <b>before</b> participating in the PIA Evaluation Project
1. That evaluation involves purposeful, planned, and systematic activities	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge
2. Evaluation terms and concepts	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge
3. The relationship between research and evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge
4. How evaluation processes and findings can contribute to decision making	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge
5. The strengths and weaknesses of different evaluation approaches	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge
6. The strengths and weaknesses of different data-collection methods	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge
7. How to apply basic statistical analyses to quantitative data	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge
8. How to apply basic content and thematic analyses to qualitative data	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge
9. How politics can affect evaluation processes and findings	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge

	<input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge
10. The importance of using culturally appropriate and responsive evaluation approaches and methods	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge
11. What constitutes ethical evaluation practice	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge
12. That various stakeholders may have differing opinions, experiences, & perspectives about an evaluand	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge
13. The relationship among a program's goals, objectives, activities, and expected outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> No knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> A little knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Some knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of knowledge
<b>SKILLS</b>	Rate your current skills <b>now</b> as a result of participating in the PIA Evaluation Project	Reflect back and rate that same skill <b>before</b> participating in the PIA Evaluation Project
1. Developing a program logic model	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill
2. Developing key evaluation questions	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill
3. Writing an evaluation plan	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill
4. Designing data-collection instruments	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill
5. Choosing appropriate and	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill

relevant data-collection methods	<input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill	<input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill
6. Collecting credible and reliable data	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill
7. Analyzing quantitative data	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill
8. Analyzing qualitative data	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill
9. Interpreting results and draw conclusions	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill
10. Developing an evaluation budget	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill
11. Communicating and reporting evaluation processes and findings using a variety of strategies	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill
12. Using the Program Evaluation Standards and/or the American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles for Evaluators	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill
13. Teaching others about evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill
14. Developing an evaluation strategic plan	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill

	<input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill	<input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill
15. Managing the evaluation process	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill	<input type="checkbox"/> No skill <input type="checkbox"/> A little skill <input type="checkbox"/> Some skill <input type="checkbox"/> Quite a bit of skill <input type="checkbox"/> Lots of skill
<b>BELIEFS/ATTITUDES</b>	Rate your current beliefs <b>now</b> as a result of participating in the PIA Evaluation Project	Reflect back and rate that same belief <b>before</b> participating in the PIA Evaluation Project
1. Evaluation yields useful information	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not believe <input type="checkbox"/> Believe a little <input type="checkbox"/> Believe somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Believe quite a bit <input type="checkbox"/> Believe a lot	<input type="checkbox"/> Did not believe <input type="checkbox"/> Believed a little <input type="checkbox"/> Believed somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Believed quite a bit <input type="checkbox"/> Believed a lot
2. Evaluation can be a positive experience	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not believe <input type="checkbox"/> Believe a little <input type="checkbox"/> Believe somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Believe quite a bit <input type="checkbox"/> Believe a lot	<input type="checkbox"/> Did not believe <input type="checkbox"/> Believed a little <input type="checkbox"/> Believed somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Believed quite a bit <input type="checkbox"/> Believed a lot
3. Evaluation should be part of a program's design process	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not believe <input type="checkbox"/> Believe a little <input type="checkbox"/> Believe somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Believe quite a bit <input type="checkbox"/> Believe a lot	<input type="checkbox"/> Did not believe <input type="checkbox"/> Believed a little <input type="checkbox"/> Believed somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Believed quite a bit <input type="checkbox"/> Believed a lot
4. Evaluation contributes to a program's success	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not believe <input type="checkbox"/> Believe a little <input type="checkbox"/> Believe somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Believe quite a bit <input type="checkbox"/> Believe a lot	<input type="checkbox"/> Did not believe <input type="checkbox"/> Believed a little <input type="checkbox"/> Believed somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Believed quite a bit <input type="checkbox"/> Believed a lot
5. Evaluation adds value to the organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not believe <input type="checkbox"/> Believe a little <input type="checkbox"/> Believe somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Believe quite a bit <input type="checkbox"/> Believe a lot	<input type="checkbox"/> Did not believe <input type="checkbox"/> Believed a little <input type="checkbox"/> Believed somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Believed quite a bit <input type="checkbox"/> Believed a lot
6. Evaluation is an important part of their work	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not believe <input type="checkbox"/> Believe a little <input type="checkbox"/> Believe somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Believe quite a bit <input type="checkbox"/> Believe a lot	<input type="checkbox"/> Did not believe <input type="checkbox"/> Believed a little <input type="checkbox"/> Believed somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Believed quite a bit <input type="checkbox"/> Believed a lot
7. Evaluation is worth the time and money	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not believe <input type="checkbox"/> Believe a little <input type="checkbox"/> Believe somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Believe quite a bit <input type="checkbox"/> Believe a lot	<input type="checkbox"/> Did not believe <input type="checkbox"/> Believed a little <input type="checkbox"/> Believed somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Believed quite a bit <input type="checkbox"/> Believed a lot

Appendix H: Levels of Evaluation Handout for PIA members

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**Three possible levels of evaluation in community coalitions:**

**Level 1: Process Evaluation (about the Coalition infrastructure, processes & functioning)**

Can answer such questions as:

- What kind of representation do we have at the table? Are we inclusive?
- Are meetings run effectively?
- Do we have the necessary skills/experience/expertise at the table?
- How is the PIA operating as a collaborative?

Measures that the PIA Committee can use to evaluate their functioning:

- Consistency of attendance
- Annual feedback from members during strategic planning
- Representation/make-up of the coordinating committee & action teams

**Level 2: Outcome Evaluation (about the work that the Coalition does-interventions)**

Can answer such questions as:

- What kind of changes has happened as a result of PIA's interventions?

Measures that the PIA Committee can use to evaluate their work:

- Goals accomplished by action teams
- New policies/practices/programs

**Level 3: Impact Evaluation (about the larger community change)**

Can answer such questions as:

- What longer term impact has the PIA committee's work had on the community?

Measures that the PIA Committee can use to evaluate their impact:

- Review of past action teams-what is happening now
- Community-level indicators that can be gathered from local sources

Appendix I: PIA Evaluation Cycle Draft

