Project Venture – An Exploration of its Principles of Sustainability

By

Chris Amell

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DEFENCE COMMITTEE

Supervisor: Dr. Jill Anne Chouinard, Ph.D.

School of Public Administration, University of Victoria

Second Reader: Dr. Walter Lepore, Ph.D.

School of Public Administration, University of Victoria

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The National Indian Leadership Development Project (NIYLDP) has been in existence since the early eighties. Project Venture (PV) emerged from McClellan Hall's (Mac) early visions and his passion for helping Native American youth make healthy choices. NIYLDP supports organizations and communities that wish to replicate PV and its known benefits by offering regular training, curriculum, and literature. Despite having replication sites throughout North America, Hawaii, and now Jamaica, like many evidence-based programs, PV replication often ends in termination, costing valuable resources, planting seeds of mistrust, and losing known benefits.

Project Purpose and Questions

This research project explores and analyzes practitioners' implementation experiences and activities reflective of known domains that support sustainability. By identifying how practitioners overcome common challenges and barriers, this project will capture practitioners' wise practices and provide recommendations to guide the development of NIYLDP literature, training, and mentorship, helping PV practitioners build capacity for sustainability and offer programming benefits beyond initial funding.

The primary question guiding this research is:

1. In what ways are PV practitioners building capacity to sustain PV programming and its benefits?

Secondary questions are:

2. What barriers or challenges exist to building capacity to sustain PV programming past its initial implementation?

3. How can NIYLDP support the sustainability of non-NIYLDP-led PV programming in replication communities?

Literature Review

The literature review included forty-plus articles covering more than thirty years of research, focusing on implementation and sustainability. Researchers agreed that terminating an evidence-based program results in wasted resources, loss of trust, and loss of benefits. Depending on the researcher, the literature expresses in various ways why programs need to be sustained and what elements or components are required for sustainability. The literature also

demonstrated a clear gap in understanding how to sustain an evidence-based program past initial funding.

However, three researchers did provide some clarity. Moore et al. (2017) reviewed definitions used in research to identify five common constructs that assist with creating a definition for a program's sustainability. Pluye et al. (2005) contextualized how program implementation and sustainability efforts should start simultaneously and that, although separate, there are joint activities that can achieve different objectives. Finally, Luke et al. (2014) consolidated sustainability research and created the Program Sustainability Assessment Tool (PSAT), which defines eight domains of sustainability and measures the forty elements necessary to support sustainability. The literature provided essential insight to investigate PV sustainability and guide the analysis of collected data.

Methodology

This mixed-method approach applied what Creswell (2007) labelled Explanatory Design: Participant Selection Model. This model allows for meaningful and comprehensive inquiries from a larger group, with participants meeting specific criteria. Using convenience sampling, phase one participants provided their perspectives of experience with PV through an online survey, allowing for phase two selection of PV practitioners to engage in meaningful and comprehensive one-on-one interviews. Phase one collected quantitative data using an 81-question self-designed study that included the validated Program Sustainability Assessment Tool v2 (Luke et al., 2014) and other questions that provided insight into a PV practitioner's experiences, relationship, and perception of delivery.

Phase two engaged selected participants from phase one in a one-on-one semi-structured respondent-type interview that was collaborative and interactive (Tracy, 2020). Participants were asked ten questions that promoted dialogue and encouraged participants to offer opinions, motivations, and experiences based on breadth and depth of understanding to reveal unique perspectives (Tracy, 2020) and otherwise inaccessible knowledge on PV implementation and efforts for sustainability.

Findings

In Phase One, twenty-eight individuals responded to survey questions, reporting their firsthand experiences, revealing opportunities for further investigation, and suggesting that individual experiences and NIYLDP support impacted practitioners' PSAT scores. Phase Two

interviewed eight participants purposefully selected from Phase One, who appeared happy about the opportunity to share their knowledge and experiences in delivering PV. They felt successful at panning and debriefing and at their ability to adapt to gain program support. It was also discovered that practitioners commonly defined sustainability as a continuation, focused on implementation, and believed that funding equalled sustainability. Practitioners shared a need for more mentorship, wanting more engagement with NIYLDP, and that sustainability efforts needed to start earlier rather than later.

Qualitative data analysis found that practitioners believed in PV's benefits and that common themes for each of the eight PSAT domains emerged, offering insight into how PV practitioners think and help PV continue past a program's initial funding. Common challenges discovered were that practitioners were unprepared to deliver PV, lacked internal organization support, and needed to understand sustainability better. Practitioners were able to recognize the services and support provided by NIYLDP but felt they could do more to assist with PV sustainability.

Recommendation

PV is an effective program that supports positive youth development, and termination wastes valuable resources, fuels mistrust, and is a missed opportunity to achieve known benefits. This project highlights the complexities of addressing the sustainability of Project Venture programming. Years of research tell us that terminated programs waste money, jeopardize relationships, and leave those needing help still needing help. Project Venture is a valuable program that regularly faces obstacles to its continuation, requiring practitioners to adapt and use their skills and experience. Finally, the Project Venture organization can provide ongoing support through guidance, training, and outreach to assist practitioners in mitigating these challenges, fostering knowledge-sharing and skills development that strengthens the successful implementation and sustainability of Project Venture.

This project makes three recommendations to the Project Venture organization to help avoid the negative impact of PV discontinuation.

1. Offer online tools that assist practitioners with identified challenges to implementation and sustainability.

2. Offer training that acknowledges, reflects, and emphasizes Project Venture's complexity that builds practitioner capacity for specific tasks, roles, and goals that support implementation and sustainability.

3. Provide proactive, consistent outreach and technical assistance to practitioners to facilitate the use of available tools and offer helpful feedback, insights, and connections that help achieve expected delivery.

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Completing this project required me to trade the greatest gift we are given in this life...time. With that acknowledgement, I must thank Kelly, my wife, who bared the brunt of my selfishness, her acceptance of my goals, and her continued and unconditional support. This journey began long before the start of this project, and Kelly has been at my side the whole way. I also want to thank my four children, Kaitlyn, Douglas, Sydney, and Samantha, who were also robbed of my time, affording me the space to seek understanding and achieve personal growth.

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

This research focused on Project Venture (PV), an evidence-based program that blends Western science and traditional American Indian practices to address life challenges faced by Indigenous youth at risk of making unhealthy choices (National Indian Youth Leadership Project, n.d.). Using a strength-based approach, PV utilizes experiential learning to build resilience, embrace the youth's culture, and support healthy choices (NIYLDP | National Indian Youth Leadership Project, n.d.). It was created in 1995 by the National Indian Youth Leadership Development Project (NIYLDP) and has been replicated in over two hundred unique communities. Unfortunately, despite communities being unique and achieving positive outcomes (Carter et al., 2006), most replicated PV programs do not sustain beyond their initial funding (Hall, M, personal communication, November 3, 2019).

While there is substantial literature on program sustainability, there is little consensus on which elements are required to sustain a program over the long term. Some research suggests that much of the sustainability literature is too "theoretical and [offers] little guidance on how to sustain program (or the clinical intervention) delivery, implementation strategies, and outcomes" (Moore et al., 2017, p.1). The literature also notes that definitions of sustainability vary widely, with some simple definitions focused on program continuation (Durlak et al.,2008), while other more complex definitions including time components, the maintenance of program fidelity, or the achievement of routinization or institutionalization (Chambers et al., 2013; McIntosh et al., 2009; Vitale et al., 2018).

Despite sustainability challenges, no research or evaluation has been conducted to capture what practices best support a PV program's capacity for sustainability beyond initial funding. Thus, this research study explores how PV practitioners address their program's capacity for sustainability, looking also at the role NIYLDP plays in guiding program sustainability in replication communities, explicitly focusing on PV practitioners' experiences, observations, and perspectives regarding continuing PV's program benefits beyond initial funding.

Purpose of Study

To explore what PV practitioners' activities and actions are reflective of core sustainability components identified by Luke et al., (2014) known to assess a program's capacity for sustainability. A particular focus is on the perceptions of PV practitioners' experiences, practices, and efforts to achieve program continuation past initial funding. To support the success of future replication practices, the objective will be to identify practices that overcome common challenges and barriers to PV sustainability experienced by PV practitioners during replication, and to make recommendations to assist NIYLDP to support a replicated PV program's capacity for sustainability. Recommendations will guide the development of NIYLDP literature, training, and mentorship to assist PV practitioners in building capacity for sustainability and providing programming benefits beyond initial funding.

Research Questions

The primary question guiding this research is:

1. In what ways are PV practitioners building capacity to sustain PV programming and its benefits?

Secondary questions are:

2. What barriers or challenges exist to building capacity to sustain PV programming past its initial implementation?
3. How can NIYLDP support the sustainability of non-NIYLDP-led PV programming in replication communities?

Background and Program Context

In the early 1980s, McClellan Hall (Mac) began developing and delivering strength-based experiential learning programming to both Cherokee and Navajo Indigenous youth. Hall's experiences and efforts fostered the NIYLDP's growth and the creation of PV, becoming a social innovator in positive youth engagement. PV is an evidence-based youth program that addresses the needs of youth through habilitation efforts focusing on positive, preventative methods to achieve desired outcomes that result in resilience to making unhealthy choices (Carter et al.,

2006). PV includes sequentially taught curriculum through in-school, after-school, out-of-school, and extended overnight camping sessions. PV has six guiding principles:

1. Culture and Tradition.
2. Strength-Based Approach.
3. Experiential Learning.
4. Engagement with Nature.
5. Service Ethic; and
6. Connection Building: Peers, Family, Community and Culture.

Equally important is NIYLDP's full value commitment (National Indian Health Board | Project Venture, n/d), providing a guide for personal development. Participants are introduced to this commitment and have it reenforced while completing the PV curriculum. The 'Full Value Commitment' includes:

- Be Here. Being present without distractions.
- Be Safe. Paying attention to physical & emotional safety of self & others.
- Set Goals. Setting personal and group goals to strive for.
- Speak Your Truth. Sharing opinions and thoughts in a constructive way.
- Let Go & Move On. Resolving problems with positive solutions and moving on.

NIYLDP's mission is premised on "Indigenous youth embracing their potential through outdoor adventure and service." As such, NIYLDP envisions creating a generation of resilient young people capable of positively contributing to their communities (NIYLDP, 2015). The program uses experiential, culturally connected and strength-based programming to address the root causes of youth suicide, alcohol and drug abuse, teen pregnancy, bullying and school completion to create a positive future for high-risk indigenous youth (Hall, M, personal conversation, November 3, 2019; *National Indian Youth Leadership Project*, n.d.). With recognition in both the United States and Canada, in 1999 NIYLDP shifted to replicating its flagship program, Project Venture.

As an evidence-based program (EBP) for American Indian youth, in 2005, PV was awarded 'model program status' (Carter et al, 2006). Since then, and with the help of government grants, NIYLDP began offering the use of its PV curriculum to communities interested in replicating PV outcomes (replication communities). Although rooted in Native American culture, NIYLDP programs can be adapted to support urban and suburban youth of all ethnicities (Public

Safety Canada, 2018), leading to the implementation of projects at multiple sites located in over 25 states, and in eight Canadian provinces (NIYLDP, 2015). Training materials include a "Project Venture Implementation Guide" (2011), NIYLDP Project Venture Facilitator Guide" (2015), and of recent development, "Project Venture: A Year-Long Curriculum - Adventure with an Indigenous Mind" (2018). To support implementation, NILYP champions the benefits of PV, mentors program practitioners, delivers in-community training, completes site visits, and conducts program evaluations and feedback.

NIYLDP's pathway of organizational growth reflects what Westley et al (2014) refer to as 'The Volcano', an organization with characteristics of organic growth and a 'learning as it goes' approach. Westley et al., (2014) go on to explain that, like a volcano, pressure to create change builds, fueled by experimentation and continuous learning, ultimately leading to an eruption, potentially leading to system-wide changes. In 2005, NIYLDP's eruption occurred, and PV was awarded 'model program status,' identified as an evidence-based program (EBP) (Carter et al., 2006). Since that time, supported by government grants, NIYLDP offers its PV curriculum to a range of communities interested in replicating PV outcomes.

Despite NIYLDP's organizational success of nearly 40 years, public acknowledgement of dedication to youth programming, and the creation and distribution of PV, achieving long-standing replicated PV program sustainability often, it is believed, meets with failure (Hall, M, personal communication, November 3, 2019). Practitioners and interest holders invest in implementing PV programming while knowing little about the components that facilitate capacity for programming sustainability. Adding to these challenges of building capacity for sustainability, NIYLDP does not formally define program sustainability and does not have the organizational resources to guide and support PV replication communities in sustaining its PV program past the implementation phase.

Although a variety of research has identified various components necessary for programming sustainability, there is a significant gap in the knowledge of how to define and measure program sustainability (Stirman, 2012). However, research does show that programs that treat sustainability planning as equally crucial as program implementation are successful past their first cycle of funding (Cooper et al., 2013).

Client

The client for this project is McClellan Hall, the Executive Director of the NIYLDP, a non-profit organization located in Gallup, New Mexico. Created in 1982, NIYLDP is dedicated to delivering prevention programs to American Indian Youth. A Board of Directors governs NIYLDP, a Director of Operations, administrative staff, and Experiential Educators, who together develop and deliver evidence-based prevention programs, providing support through training and mentoring initial implementation in replication communities.

Positionality

I approach this project from a unique perspective. I am a white Canadian with a Western worldview and a desire to gain a deeper understanding of indigenous programming. As a community law enforcement officer since 1994, my lived experiences helped me understand the need for PV and its benefits. Between September 2013 and December 2018, I designed, coordinated, and delivered a positive engagement program for youth and community members, which included PV programming. My accumulated experiences afforded me the opportunity to relate to research participants discuss shared experiences.

My program had secure funding, diverse partnerships, and adapted programming to ensure effectiveness through regular adjustments to the environmental context. However, other areas that facilitate and promote programming sustainability beyond initial funding, like communication, organizational capacity, and strategic planning, went unaddressed or were neglected. Drawing on my experiences, I connected with PV practitioners' feelings of 'just winging it', the struggles of not having the necessary skills to deliver specific activities, and frustration when they talked about how some people 'just didn't understand PV'. Like most PV practitioners, I believe in PV. I did things that worked, not knowing why, and encountered similar sustainability obstacles**.** I am undertaking this research to understand better why an evidence-based program such as PV, with widespread acceptance, strong outcomes, and community support, failed to sustain itself past its initial implementation. This unique perspective shaped the lens through which I analyze the data and how I approach this project to understand better what to do differently so other PV replication sites avoid a similar fate.

Knowledge gained from the project will help address the known consequences of failing to sustain programming and assist communities in maintaining PV benefits over the longer term.

Using the PV program as an example may address the knowledge gap in sustainability literature and help guide future research on 'how to' sustain programs beyond initial funding. NIYLDP communities and PV practitioners will also benefit from having identified and captured practices for addressing elements that support sustainability. Finally, despite programming outcomes, this study may be a resource for other evidence-based programs that struggle to overcome sustainability challenges and maintain long-term benefits.

CHAPTER 2 - REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This literature review aims to understand what factors influence the efforts of evidence-based programs to sustain beyond initial funding. The initial articles reviewed resulted from a targeted search of peer-reviewed academic work on implementation and sustainability. In addition, using references and citations found in critical articles, other pertinent sustainability studies were located and reviewed. The scope of this review includes the rationale for sustainability, as well as current definitions.

Why Sustainability Matters

> *We have a responsibility to our program recipients. They've had so many losses in their lives, and for us to come in for a year or two or three and give them hope, only to have the program go away, we've just caused another loss and a further loss of hope in their lives* (P. Lee, personal communication, June 1997, as cited in Akerlund, 2000).

Only half of all evidence-based practices initiated are reported to be sustained and on average, programs that do sustain require 17 years to become part of an organization regular operations (Bauer et al., 2015). According to Cooper et al., (2013) the sustainability of programs past initial funding is rare, leaving expected impacts unrealized. Some researchers have even suggested that failure to plan for program sustainability may be "irresponsible or even unethical" (McIntosh, 2009, p.329). In short, good programs end when evidence-based programs are not sustained, resulting in well-documented negative consequences.

The literature captures that the sustainability of evidence-based programs continues to provide benefits and positive community impacts. Failed sustainability, on the other hand, can lead to three principal outcomes. First, the original need for the program is left unresolved, it is counterproductive to discontinue innovations that successfully address ongoing and persistent community issues. Second, finite resources, both human and financial, are wasted. Third, mistrust, program termination can result in jeopardizing future programming and initiatives (Player et al., 2005), creating potential community mobilization barriers (Shalowitz et al., 2009).

Definition of Sustainability

Agreement on what sustainability looks like and what must be sustained are the first steps to achieving sustainability (Bodkin & Kakimi, 2020). Despite this need, the definition of sustainability is elusive, with no agreement in the literature on how it should be defined. At the same time, the literature provides numerous definitions of sustainability (Stirman et al., 2012). Some researchers use previously established definitions, while others create more customized versions (Bodkin & Kakimi, 2020). Definitions range from simple, suggesting sustainability as merely continuing an implementation for six months or longer (Shea et al., 1996), to complex, identifying program fidelity, long-term benefits, and program adaptation as essential (Ahluwalia et al., 2010).

Most recently, Moore et al., (2017) reviewed 24 definitions of sustainability and identified the following five essential components: (1) time, (2) the program, clinical intervention, and/or implementation strategies continue to be delivered and/or (3) individual behaviour change (i.e., clinician, patient) is maintained; (4) the program and individual behaviour change may evolve or adapt while (5) continuing to produce benefits for individuals/systems." For our purposes, Moore et al,'s definition will be utilized for this study as it captures the essential features of sustainability identified in the literature. What follows is a description of each component.

Time

For some, sustainability refers to six months from the beginning of implementation (Shea et al., 1996), one or two years past implementation (Scheirer et al., 2005), two or more years beyond the end of start-up funding (Cooper et al., 2013), or over a long period of time (Schmidt et al., 2012), or merely 'overtime' (see Ceptureanu et al., 2018; Demiglio et al., 2013; Durlak et al., 2008). Time, considered by Moore et al. (2017) as *"after a defined period of time"* (p. 1), was included in most definitions.

Continued Delivery

Continued delivery was also found throughout the literature and referred to as "to maintain programming" (Schell et al., 2013), "long-term implementation" (McIntosh et al.,

2009), or to “maintain service coverage” (Shediac-Rizkallah et al., 1998). The implication here is that the program continues as designed.

Behaviour Change

The Behaviour change components of Moore et al.’s sustainability definition captures the maintenance of an intended behaviour change. It is an important distinction from the construct of continuation, as it allows a program's efforts to be recognized as sustained despite its discontinuation (Moore et al., 2017). References to this construct included concepts such as “maintenance” (McIntosh et al., 2009) or “provide continuing control” (Shediac-Rizkallah & Bone, 1998), highlighting that an individual adopts the benefits.

Evolution/Adaptation

While some suggested adaptation is a negative deviation from program fidelity (Durlak et al.,2004), most agreed programs require adjustments to meet the needs of those benefiting from the intervention (Johnson et al., 2004; Krahn & Kevkoff, 2006; Marcini & Marek, 2004), recognizing the role of context (Moore et al., 2017) and how allowing that adaptations to a program may result in better outcomes (Carey, 2013). For Moore et al. (2017), evolution/adaptation included changes to behaviour maintenance, implementation strategies, or the program itself.

Continuing Benefits

“Continuing to produce benefits for individuals/systems” (Moore et al., 2017), refers to the idea that a program continues to produce expected outcomes. For some, this concept was referred to in terms of the “capacity of the program to continuously respond” (Mancini et al., 2004), “providing continuing control of health benefits” (Shediac-Rizkallah et al., 1998), or “continuing to produce valued outcomes” (McIntosh et al., 2009).

Initiating Sustainability

Overall, the research reviewed for this study did not address precisely when to initiate sustainability efforts, commonly accepting sustainability as part of the implementation stage

(Aarons et al., 2011; Pluye et al., 2005; Scheirer, 2005). For many programs, this stage model of program implementation sees sustainability as the last phase of implementation or an endgame (Chambers et al., 2013), resulting in planning for sustainability being dismissed for accomplishing short-term goals (Ceptureanu et al., 2018). Often resulting in program implementation, rather than continuation past initial funding, being the focus (Johnson et al.,2004). Acknowledging that sustainability is widely accepted as a stage of implementation and the resulting impact on the successful outcome of sustainability, some researchers concluded it is beneficial to plan for sustainability and recommended that this occurs at the beginning of implementation (Bergmark et al.,2018,2019; Hanson & Salmoni, 2011; Mancini & Marek, 2004; Whitely et al., 2015), while others conceptualize sustainability as being equally important to implementation. For example, Pluye et al., (2005) conceptualized both sustainability and implementation having separate processes that operate simultaneously, utilizing joint events to achieve goals for both implementation and sustainability (Refer to Appendix A – Initiating Sustainability).

The Knowledge Gap "How-To"

Much of the research did not address actions necessary to achieve sustainability, often identifying the negative consequences of program termination to explain why program sustainability is essential (Vitale et al., 2018; Ceptureanu et al., 2018). Furthermore, in the past 30 years, despite the number of studies conducted on sustainability, very little literature guides organizations on 'how to' sustain a program that provides a benefit (Moore et al., 2017), leaving many skeptical that validating or developing a standard "how-to" guidance to organizations will ever emerge (Scheirer, 2005). At the same time, many researchers acknowledge that there are challenges in attempting to apply evidence-based programs in real-world settings, citing the lack of guidance, tools, and agreement for 'how-to" sustain valuable programs as problematic (Hodge & Turner, 2016; Vital et al., 2018), and recommending further study to address this gap (Greenhalgh et al., 2004).

Components of Sustainability

Extensive research on sustainability has cultivated a host of conceptual models separated into dimensions, domains, settings and systems, and levels (Bergmark et al.,2018,2019; Chambers et al., 2013; Schell et al., 2013; van Lunenburg et al., 2020) that include a long list of elements, components, and factors affecting sustainability (Ceptureanu et al., 2018; Coppola et al., 2020; Durlak et al., 2008; Mancini & Marek, 2004; Pinkelman et al., 2014). For example, Pinkleman et al. (2014) identified thirteen enablers and barriers that impact sustainability, while Aarons et al. (2011) identified inner and outer contextual elements as influencing the sustainability stage of implementation. In contrast, Schell et al.'s (2013) research explored capacity and created a framework for sustainability that reflects similarities and cohesiveness of nine domains that identified 'contextual characteristics' beneficial to program sustainability.

Although other researchers identified organizational characteristic and efforts that support program sustainability, Luke et al., (2014) further refined Schell et al.'s (2013) work to create the validated Program Sustainability Assessment Tool that applies to various organizations in various fields of study (Refer to Appendix B – Program Sustainability Assessment Tool (PSAT)). By asking questions specific to each of the eight identified domains of sustainability, this tool assesses an organization's capacity for sustainability. Responding to each of five questions in each of the eight domains, reveals program strengths and challenges to continuation past initial program funding. It reenforces a programs approach while alerting a program to areas that require attention to ensure continuation. Each of the eight domains (Refer to Table 1 - Summary of Eight Domains of Capacity for Sustainability included below) although interconnected, can be addressed individually, allowing organization to concentrate resources and assemble a balanced approached to sustainability.

Table 1 – Eight Domains of Capacity for Sustainability

Eight Domains of Capacity for Sustainability (Luke et al., 2014)

Domain	Description
Environmental Support	Requires Internal and external. • Champions • Resource Access • Leadership • Public Support • Ability to Keep Decision Makers Informed

Funding Stability	Requires
	• Sources of funding
	  ○ Flexible
	  ○ Diverse
	• Support organizational policies that address economic climate

Partnerships	Partners must be • Diverse • Passionate • Involved, and • Informed about programming activities
Organizational Capacity	• the ability to integrate programs • shape supportive systems • share vision • ensure sufficient staffing and • effectively manage resources and personnel
Program Evaluation	• conduct quality evaluations • Share outcomes • use data to plan and implement • show the program's success and • demonstrate that the program works
Program Adaptation	Activities that adjust: • strategies, • review evidence, • navigate new knowledge, • adapt to changes in the environment, and • the determination and discontinuation of ineffective program components
Communications	Strategic efforts: • ensure staff communicate how it is meeting needs, • market to attract support, • Goals are understood and then shared, • addressed issues are comprehended and • value to the community is established.

Strategic Planning	• prioritizing long-term planning
	• Integration with organizational objectives
	• address resource needs and financial requirements for each of the seven domains of sustainability
	• ensuring that all stakeholders
	  ○ understand their roles and responsibilities and
	  ○ the program's objectives

The Program Sustainability Assessment Tool (PSAT) is a systematic and structured approach to assessing a programs capacity for sustainability. It is widely available to the public, free to use, and adaptable to the community context. Using this tool will facilitate the integration of multiple responses to help frame this project's understanding of the influences affecting program sustainability and will provide a lens to view PV practitioners' activities, challenges,

and NIYLDP support. Below is a brief description for each of the established domains of the PSAT.

Environmental Support:

This domain includes champions inside and outside the program and organization that can navigate politics, muster resources, create leadership, and garnish public support (Luke et al., 2014). Carey (2013) also includes keeping policy and decision-makers up to date on program complexities. For Ceptureanu et al. (2018), program champions, leadership and community support are vital, whereas, for Hodge et al. (2016), knowledge of politics is considered essential for sustainability.

Funding stability

In this domain, funding more than just financial resources. Luke et al., (2014) considered economic climate, organizational policies, types and sources, flexibility, and sustained funding as all indicators of funding stability. For Bodkin and Hakimin (2020), funding was a tier-one factor for sustainability, suggesting that lacking multiple and diverse funding sources hinders sustainability, often distracts staff, and consumes valuable human resources. For Cooper et al. (2013), a transition from seed funding to alternate reliable and sustained sources of funding correlates with sustainability. One study found that “funding and accountability structures" typical of grant funding, did not always support what was helpful, amplifying the importance of funding flexibility to support cultural adaptations (Carey, 2013).

Partnerships

The Partnership domain pertains to relationships between the programming organization and its interest holders. For example, Luke et al. (2014) determined that indicators of healthy partnerships are when partners engage in program goal setting, invest in success, participate in program delivery, are committed to the program, and maintain open communication. For Hodge et al., (2016), strong partnerships are characteristics of processes and enable existing capacity to grow and to bring organizations together to solve complex issues. In contrast, Castleden and Garvin (2008) used partnerships to gain trust and community support to facilitate sustainable Indigenous research. In addition, Coppola et al., (2019) found that partnerships support building

connections to parallel programs, developing networks to share knowledge, and penetrating organizational silos.

Organizational Capacity

Schell et al. (2013) identified organizational capacity as an internal activity that includes program integration, supportive systems, vision sharing, sufficient staffing, and effective management of staff and resources. For some, integration reflects 'organizational fit,' which Pluye et al., (2005) include as part of the sustainability process achieved through routinization events. Most of the literature recognizes the importance of utilizing, modifying, or creating new systems to gain continued support and to avoid resistance to change (Gustafson et al., 2003), or to avoid being at odds with the host organization (Hodge et al., 2017). Leadership, a common theme for sustainability, is needed to encourage innovation (Greenhalgh et al., 2004), clearly articulate program goals (Mancini & Marek, 2004), and promote shared vision (Loman et al., 2010). Organizations with the capacity for sustainability effectively allocate human and physical resources (Luke et al., 2014), potentially being both an enabler and a barrier to sustainability (Pinkelman et al., 2015). Staffing was either included as a component of a conceptual model (Bergmark et al., 2018,2019; Chambers et al., 2013; Gustafson et al., 2003; Mancini & Marek, 2004; Vitale et al., 2018) or acknowledge in their discussions and recommendations, observed as a significant difference between sustained and non-sustained programs (Bergmark et al., 2018,2019) or as critical to program effectiveness (Carey, 2013).

Program Evaluation

The ability to conduct program evaluations, communicate findings, promote successes, and utilize knowledge for continuous learning are elements of the Program Evaluation domain (Luke et al., 2014). Evaluations facilitate consultation, sharing of information, and improvement to services (Hodge et al., 2016), are considered essential to organizational learning (Pluye et al., 2004), and for providing insight into what strategies, messaging, and programs are effective (Shea et al., 1996). It was noted that although evaluation is often desired, opportunities to complete evaluations are limited due to planning, funding, or timing deficiencies (Ahluwalia et al., 2010).

Program Adaptation

Program Adaptation includes activities that adjust strategies, review evidence, navigate new knowledge, adapt to environmental changes, and determine the discontinuation of ineffective program components (Luke et al., 2013). Most literature includes adaptation, suggesting that it supports partner engagement and secures resources (Whitley et al., 2015), allows for program adjustments due to context and changing goals (Aitaoto et al., 2009; Shediac-Rizkallah & Bone, 1998; Stirman et al., 2012,), and helps to navigate delivery adjustments while ensuring program fidelity (McIntosh et al., 2009). However, despite adaptations being viewed as imperative, there are noted risks. For example, an organization risks diluting program efficacy through extensive community influence (Ivanich et al., 2018) and innovation drift before understanding fidelity (Fixsen et al., 2005).

Communication

This domain includes strategic efforts to ensure staff communicate the need for the program, establish its value to the community, conduct marketing to attract support, understand and share goals, and comprehend and address issues. Typically, this includes how, when, and where to effectively disperse information that celebrates program successes and denotes challenges to interest holders, allowing for feedback and solutions (Bodkin & Bone, 2020). Some found that community coalitions are effective and promote programming to key partners when organizers communicate a program's logic model (Cooper et al., 2015), and that staff awareness of the program mission and goals significantly impacts sustainability (Hodge et al., 2016). Others suggest identifying champions to promote the program, community participation that includes program awareness, transparency that encourages sharing of process and outcomes, and program effectiveness being 'documented and disseminated to all interest holders (Ceptureanu et al., 2018).

Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is interconnected with all other domains and focuses on program direction, goals, and strategies (Luke et al., 2014). For example, for Cooper et al. (2105), strategically planning finances and program alignment is a predictor of sustainability, whereas,

for Mancini and Marek (2004), successful programming is less likely to continue without addressing elements of sustainability planning. Additionally, sustainability planning that occurs at the onset and continues throughout implementation reduces challenges and increases the likelihood of program sustainability (Pluye et al., 2004; Whitley et al., 2015). However, most researchers reports that sustainability is unplanned (Ceptureanu et al., 2018).

When it comes to programs and projects, achieving sustainability is crucial to avoid negative consequences like lost resources, mistrust, or missed opportunities. To help ensure program sustainability, Moore et al. (2017) identified key elements that need to be considered when defining sustainability. Which, Bodkin & Kakimi (2020) suggest is the first steps towards understanding what sustainability looks like. Another important concept is Pluye et al.'s (2005) idea that sustainability should be initiated and addressed at the same time as implementation, rather than being the last stage of programming. Finally, Luke et al. (2014) synthesized sustainability characteristics into the PSAT, which is a useful tool for interpreting collected data and a programs capacity for sustainability.

CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY

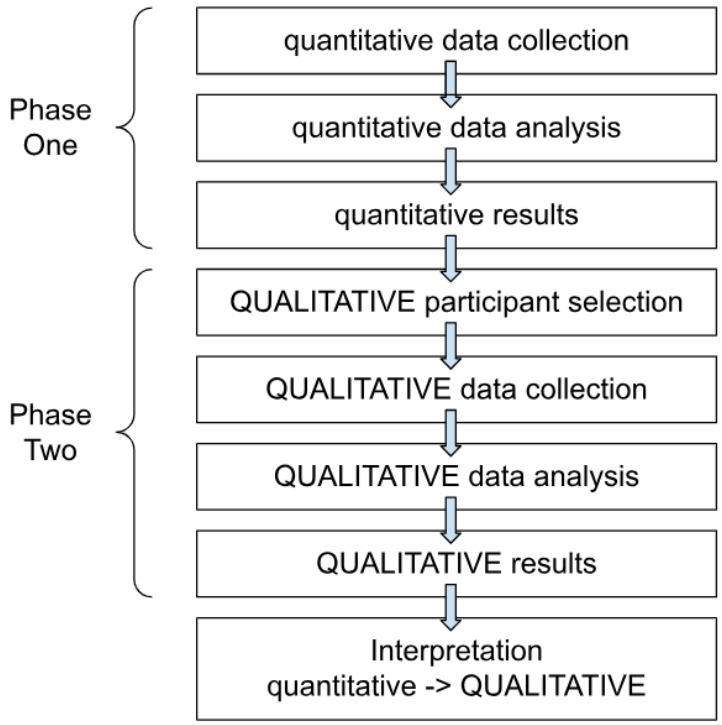
Introduction

This study aims to understand practices implemented by PV practitioners reflecting known sustainability components as identified by Luke et al., (2014).

Research Approach

This project used a mixed methods approach for data collection to allow quantitative and qualitative data to be mixed, connected, and interpreted in various ways that might support a more fulsome understanding of what is being researched (Greene, 2007). A mixed methods approach recognizes that a qualitative or quantitative approach can be the best method while suggesting that a more thorough investigation can occur by combining techniques from both (Teddie & Tashakkori, 2010). According to Creswell (2007), mixed methods consist of four design types: triangulation, embedded, explanatory, and exploratory designs, each with benefits and limitations. Considerations when using a mixed method approach need to include timing (the order of data collection), weighting (the emphasis placed on the data) and mixing (mixing of several types of data) (Creswell, 2007). This study opted for the explanatory design type and utilized its variant, the participant selection model (see Image 1), which consists of two distinct phases, employing quantitative and qualitative data collection (Creswell, 2007).

Image 1 - **Explanatory Design: Participant Selection Model**



(Creswell, 2007)

The participant selection model allows for meaningful and comprehensive inquiries with participants meeting specific criteria from a larger group. Although a significant limitation identified with this design is the time required to implement, because of its sequential data collection, a single researcher can efficiently complete both phases and present findings with a direct and detailed approach (Creswell, 2007).

Data collection from human participants requires ethics approval, which was sought and received from the University of Victoria's Office for Human Research Ethics. Also, since PV was initially designed for use with American Indian Youth and primarily delivered by and to Indigenous communities, Chapter 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit, and Metis People of Canada, contained in the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, was addressed. Accordingly, Mr. McClellan Hall (The Client), a Cherokee Elder, was established as the cultural adviser to review and approve the inclusion/exclusion of cultural material obtained through data collection methods and steps required to ensure that

communities, when necessary, were appropriately consulted to ensure respectful presentation of information.

Study Design

Phase one collected quantitative data using a self-designed survey that included the validated Program Sustainability Assessment Tool v2, created by Luke et al. (2014) from Washington State University, to capture inclusionary and exclusionary selection criteria for phase two participants. This consisted of an 81-question survey divided into seventeen sections. It opened on the 7th of February 2022, and closed on the 21st of March 2022. The survey was delivered using Survey Monkey and served two purposes. First, to gain insight into the PV practitioner's background, relationship with PV, details about the PV they were involved with, their understanding of how sustainability was defined, and the perceptions of their program's sustainability capacity. (Refer to Appendix C – Implementers On-Line Survey – Sections). Second, the inclusion and exclusion criteria within the survey aimed to identify six to eight PV practitioners who would participate in a one-on-one interview.

Phase two engaged selected participants from phase one to collect qualitative data, utilizing a technologically mediated approach that permitted access to participants despite geographical barriers. Selected participants participated in a one-on-one semi-structured respondent-type interview that was collaborative and interactive (Tracy, 2020). Interviews were flexible and organic, allowing for conversation to flow based on probing inquiry that promoted dialogue and encouraged participants to offer opinions, motivations, and experiences based on breadth and depth of understanding to reveal unique perspectives (Tracy, 2020) and otherwise inaccessible knowledge on PV implementation and efforts for sustainability.

Quantitative data was not subjected to statistical analysis; hence, it cannot be used to draw general conclusions regarding PV practitioners. As apparent in the findings and discussion sections, qualitative data was the priority of the two data types. Once quantitative data was collected and analyzed, the results allowed for bridging the two phases that supported the development of interview questions and selection of interview participants. Qualitative data was the priority as it allowed for comparisons to quantitative findings, comparison to known components for sustainability, and a deeper understanding of actions taken that directly addressed the research question.

Phase One (Quantitative)

Participant Selection

Participant selection for this study utilized convenience sampling (Tracy, 2020), which allowed all members of a specific group to participate. Members of this group were believed to hold unique knowledge and experience regarding PV implementation and sustainability and were required to meet specific criteria for eligibility. Participants had a valid email address in the NIYLDP database. They had some contact through training attendance, mentoring, and personal relationships with the NIYLDP organization or were known to be involved in the delivery of PV programming. In addition to convenience sampling, using the 'snowball' approach, participants receiving an invitation to participate were encouraged to forward the email and invite other PV practitioners not included in the NIYLDP database. This sample group was considered PV practitioners, those individuals involved in PV delivery and replication.

Using contact information held by NIYLDP, PV practitioners (n=300) received a series of three emails from the client (NIYLDP) that introduced the study (Refer to Appendix D – Email Invitation to Participate, Refer to Appendix E – Reminder Message From Mac Hall – 27Feb22, Refer to Appendix F – Final Email Reminder Message From Mac Hall), providing an invitation to participate and a link to the survey. Fifty emails were inactive, resulting in n=250 invitations to participate. Invitation recipients were requested to forward the email to anyone with PV implementation experience (snowball approach).

Twenty-eight individuals responded to the survey (representing a response rate of 11%), and 18 completed questions related to the Program Sustainability Assessment Tool (PSAT). An attached link to Survey Monkey provided those choosing to participate access to the PV practitioner's online survey, further details about the study, how their participation would contribute, and a link to obtain an in-depth project explanation titled "Letter of Information to Survey Participants" (Refer to Appendix G – Letter of Information to Survey Participants). Finally, after reviewing the introduction and the "Letter of Information Survey Participants," participants gave consent to participate before the beginning of the survey. This approach resulted in respondents (n=31) that either initiated the survey or completed it in full (Refer to Appendix H – Participant Response Rate).

Data Analysis

Quantitative data collected from survey respondents was analyzed and categorized into three groups: data collected using the Program Sustainability Assessment Tool, data identified as an internal variable, and finally, data identified as external variables. Internal variables are within the control of the individual or the PV-replicating organization and are viewed as experiences, skills, or perceptions. Variables within the control or influenced by NIYLDP were considered external variables.

The Program Sustainability Assessment Tool provides a snapshot of a program's capacity for sustainability by offering feedback on program and organizational characteristics. This tool is an opportunity to understand what factors allow programs to sustain their effects over time. The PSAT has eight domains containing five questions, each designed to assess the capacity for program sustainability. Each question is scored by respondents between 1(has little or no extent) to 7 (a very great extent), allowing each of the eight domains to receive a score from 5 to 35 for a possible total PSAT score of 40 to 280. Adding scores of all respondents together for each of the domains produced an overall average score for each domain. Researchers suggest that a higher PSAT score indicates a program's increased capacity for sustainability (Luke et al., 2014, p.13) (Refer to Appendix B).

Internal variables identified in the online survey included previous experience, being a community member, not knowing if you had a mentor, performing the role of practitioner or coordinator, and finally, performing more than one role concerning the replication of PV. External Variables are actions supported through the direct involvement of NIYLDP. External variables identified in the online survey included reviewing research or receiving training, reporting on PV curriculum delivery, awareness of the program's definition of sustainability, providing a mentor, and delivering PV as recommended by NIYLDP. Some external variables could be internal. However, for this analysis, it is believed that NIYLDP has the influence to control each variable assigned as external and support programming standards and sustainability.

Phase Two (Qualitative) – One-On-One Interviews

Sampling

Participants for a one-on-one interview were recruited from those who participated in the ‘Implementers On-Line Survey’’. Nine phase one participant’s met inclusion and exclusion criteria (See Appendix I – Criteria to Participate in Phase Two One-On-One Interviews) and were sent, via email, information letters outlining the study's purpose, their role, and how the work would be disseminated (Refer to Appendix J - Letter of Information - One-on-One Interview). Also, the email included a consent form to be signed and returned by each participant (Refer to Appendix K - Consent Form - One-On-One Interview). On the day of the interview, the participant was sent a Zoom conference link to facilitate their participation in the One-On-One Interview.

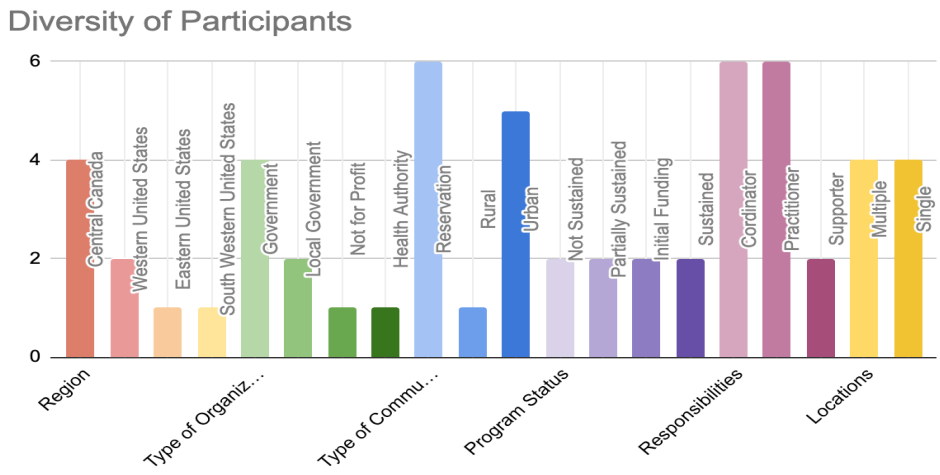
Response Rate

Ten individuals who participated in Phase One did not complete the survey, thus they were excluded from Phase Two. Among the 10 Phase One participants who expressed interest in participating in Phase Two, nine were found to be eligible based on the inclusion criteria, and one participant was excluded because they were reported to be an employee of NIYLDP (Refer to Appendix H – Participant Response Rate). Finally, eight out of nine eligible Phase One participants completed one-on-one interviews as part of Phase Two.

Diversity of Phase Two Participants

Participants represented a diversity of organizations and communities where PV is delivered. At the same time, they also provided a diverse cross-section of delivery responsibilities, PV practitioner roles and program status.

Chart 1. Diversity of Participants



Interview Database

The interviews conducted in this study with each of the eight participants were transcribed and coded using 15 categories that addressed primary and secondary research questions. While 8 of the 15 categories were predetermined by the PSAT capacity for sustainability domains (Luke et al., 2014), during the data immersion phase (Tracy, 2020), 5 common categories (Obstacles, Purpose, Action, Outcomes, and Understanding) were revealed. The remaining 2 categories of coded data captured either a representation of implementation or sustainability (Refer to Appendix L – Graph 2 – Number of Data Points). These fifteen categories are defined in the research codebook (Refer to Appendix M – Code Book). Each piece of data was reviewed and coded, often resulting in multiple codes observed in one piece of data. From the 618 fractured data points, the 5 common categories resulted in 1092 codes, and 8 PSAT categories resulted in 1197 PSAT codes. This approach produced the unintended outcome of creating a searchable PV Practitioners database(beta) based on each of the above-listed categories.

For example, the PV practitioner database holds 171 identified obstacles, and when filtered for outcomes achieved by an action, what was learned or known by the PV practitioner resulted in fifteen actions to address a particular obstacle taken by PV practitioners. The database also allows for filtering data by a specific sustainability domain, resulting in 10 data points regarding obstacles relating to organizational capacity. One participant shared that they were not certified to deliver certain activities (obstacles), so they built partnerships with other

organizations that could deliver the activities (action). Partnerships allowed PV to continue programming while addressing their lack of capacity (outcome). It made them realize that partnerships permitted them to do more but required training to reduce their dependence on others (understanding).

CHAPTER 4 – RESEARCH FINDINGS AND LIMITATIONS

The primary research question guiding this project is:

1. In what ways are PV practitioners building capacity to sustain PV programming and its benefits?

The secondary questions are:

2. What barriers or challenges exist to building capacity to sustain PV programming past its initial implementation?
3. How can NIYLDP support the sustainability of non-NIYLDP-led PV programming in replication communities?

The findings are presented below and divided into Phase One Findings (quantitative) and Phase Two Findings (qualitative).

Phase One Findings (Quantitative)

Descriptive Findings

This section presents a descriptive analysis of the five sections of the survey: Personal Experiences, Your Project Venture, Elements of Sustainability Definition, Curriculum Fidelity, and the Program Sustainability Assessment Tool. All 250 people with valid email addresses contained within NIYLDP's database were contacted and provided an opportunity to participate. While 31 individuals initiated the survey, only 28 participants consented to participation and responded to the survey (representing a response rate of 11%), and only 18 completed the questions related to the Program Sustainability Assessment Tool (PSAT). Responses to questions from each of these sections are reported below. It is noted that the number of respondents varied for each question.

Survey respondents reported their firsthand experiences with evidence-based programs and PV, reporting whether they had received training, how long they have been involved with PV, and whether they felt they had an NIYLDP mentor. Interestingly, no survey participants reporting participating in PV when they were a youth (Refer to Table 2).

Table 2 – Personal Experience Section

Personal Experience	Participant Responses	Number of Respondents N=28
Prior delivery experience	50%	28
Had researched or received implementation and sustainability training	75%	28
Delivering PV in their community	63%	27
Less than five years of experience with PV	63%	27
Never assisting NIYLP with training others in administration, coordination, or delivery of PV	42%	27
Not knowing or not having an identified NIYLP mentor supporting their delivery of PV	32%	25
Never participated in PV as a youth	100%	27

The ‘Your Project Venture Program’ section provided insight into the respondents' first-hand experience and the context in which PV was delivered, including its overall success, the environment, and the respondents' role (See Table 3).

Table 3 – Your Project Venture Program Section

Your Project Venture Program	Participant Responses	Number of Respondents
Program Met Expectations (4 out of 7 or greater)	96%	25
Program funded 3 or more years	48%	25
Program Funded without specific direct funding	20%	25
Program operated until or continued past initial funding	52%	25
Government and community organizations primarily responsible for delivery	61%	18
Delivered in rural or indigenous communities	91%	22
Participant number of years of involvement with PV	Dispersed equally between	25
Participated in preparing original PV proposal	24%	25

Agreement on what sustainability looks like and what must be sustained, are the first steps to achieving sustainability (Bodkin & Kakimi, 2020). Moore et al. (2017) reviewed 24 definitions of sustainability and identified five constructs. To determine if participants felt sustainability had been defined for their PV program, participants were asked questions reflecting Moore et al.'s (2017) definition criteria (See Table 4).

Table 4 – Elements of Sustainability Section

Elements of Sustainability Definition	Participant Responses	Number of Respondents
PV was intended to be delivered past the initial funding period	87% agreed	23
Program allowed for adaptations before implementation	91% agreed	22
The anticipated behaviour changes were identified	77 % agreed	22
Program success was expected to continue even with adaptations	91 % agreed	20
Knowing the defined time before the program was considered sustained	57%% agreed	23

As one PV practitioner states, "If you are not meeting the fidelity of the model, you are not going to get the same evaluation outcomes." PV is an evidence-based program, and to obtain proven outcomes, the well-established curriculum requires a certain number of hours of engagement and a specific number of engagement sessions in various settings (See Table 5).

Table 5 – Project Venture Curriculum Section

Project Venture Curriculum	Participant Responses	Number of Respondents
Delivered as recommended by NIYLP	80%	25
Estimated Average Activity Time available for youth participation	102 hrs	15
Reported Average activity Time available for youth Participation	177 hrs	13
Reported In-class sessions delivered (Average)	19/25 sessions	14
Reported After-School Sessions Delivered (Average)	17/25 sessions	14
Reported Out-of-School Sessions Delivered (Average)	11/15 sessions	13
Reported Multi-Day Activities (Average)	2	11

The Program Sustainability Assessment Tool v2 developed at the Centre for Public Health Systems Science at Washington University in St. Louis has been evaluated and found reliable across various disciplines and use for community, state, and national programs (Assess – PSAT/CSAT, n.d.). Numerous interest holders can complete this tool, and it provides insight into eight identified domains for program sustainability (Refer to Table 1 – Eight Domains of Capacity for Sustainability). As displayed in Table 5, the average score results for sustainability domains vary, with range of 14.1/35 (41%) for Strategic Planning to 23.5/35 (67%) in the domain of Environmental Support (See Table 6).

Table 6 - Average Domain Scores for PSAT Responses

Domain	Average Domain Score	% of Total Possible Domain Score
Environmental Support	23.5	67%
Funding Stability	20.8	59%
Partnerships	19.8	57%
Organizational Capacity	20.2	58%
Program Evaluation	22.6	65%
Program Adaptation	21.5	61%
Communications	18.7	53%
Strategic Planning	14.3	41%

Of the 28 respondents who engaged in the survey, 36% provided additional comments regarding what they are doing to build sustainability capacity, the challenges they encounter, and how NIYLDP can help to make replication programs sustainable. For example, respondents commented that despite challenges regarding funding and COVID restrictions, they continue to engage with youth, include critical interest holders, adapt the program when necessary, and build support and champions through the inclusion of community members. One respondent outlined that NIYLDP replication support could include sustainability planning, accountability for the model's fidelity, hosting of an annual coordinator forum, and provide standard evaluation tools.

Synthesis of Phase One Findings

Survey Data

PV practitioner's online survey responses were separated into three parts. The first category is responses to PSAT questions. The PSAT has eight domains containing five questions, each designed to assess the capacity for program sustainability. Each question can be scored between 1 and 7, and each of the eight domains can receive a score from five to 35, for a total possible PSAT score of 40 to 280. A higher PSAT score suggests a program's greater capacity for sustainability. The second category, 'Internal Variables,' comprises of PV practitioner’s personal experiences, skills, or perceptions. The final category, 'External Variables' consists of support potentially provided directly or indirectly through the involvement of NIYLDP.

Analysis

To understand how internal and external variables impact specific domains of the PSAT, the average score for each PSAT domain was calculated (see row 'Average score for initiated or completed PSAT" in Table 7). Then, the Funding Stability domain was filtered for only those respondents indicating that they 'Participated in preparing the PV proposal', resulted in a 15% increase. That same variable decreased the Organizational Capacity domain by 22%. Table 7 displays the average assessed score for each PSAT domain of the 18 survey participants and average scores for each domain filtered for each variable.

Table 7 – Impact of Individual Internal/External Variables on PSAT Scores

	Domain	n	Environmental Support	Funding Stability	Partnership	Organizational Capacity	Program Evaluation	Program Adaptation	Communications	Strategic Planning	Total PSAT Score
	Average score for Initiated or Completed PSAT	18	24.6	20.8	20.9	20.7	23.1	22.6	21.9	16.8	171.4
Internal Variables	Previous Experience	11	24.9	22.2	21.1	23.5	22.8	26.1	22.7	18.0	181.4
	Score increase/decrease		1.1%	6.5%	1.2%	13%	-1.3%	15.8%	3.6%	7.2%	5.8%
	Community Member	12	22.8	20.0	21.9	19.0	24.5	24.7	22.0	17.1	172.0
	Score increase/decrease		-7.3%	-4.0%	5.0%	-8.3%	6.2%	9.3%	0.3%	1.9%	0.3%
	Unknown or does not have a Mentor	10	22.1	19.0	21.5	25.0	21.6	21.2	22.3	16.3	169.0
	Score increase/decrease		-10.3%	-9.1%	3.1%	20.7%	-6.3%	-6.2%	1.8%	-2.7%	-1.4%
	Participated in preparing PV proposal	5	25.4	24.0	23.3	16.3	22.0	23.3	23.8	19.3	177.1
	Score increase/decrease		3.1%	14.9%	11.5%	-21.6%	-4.6%	3.0%	8.3%	14.7%	3.3%
	More than one Role	12	25.4	21.5	23.6	20.4	24.4	24.2	22.9	17.1	179.5
	Score increase/decrease		3.1%	2.9%	13.1%	-1.4%	5.8%	7.1%	4.5%	1.8%	4.7%
	Practioner	14	25.4	21.7	22.8	21.2	24.7	24.8	22.7	17.3	180.5
	Score increase/decrease		3.2%	3.9%	9.5%	2.5%	7.0%	9.7%	3.4%	2.8%	5.3%
	Coordinator	11	25.6	20.7	23.9	19.7	25.8	25.2	24.3	18.3	183.5
	Score increase/decrease		4.0%	-0.9%	14.6%	-4.8%	11.9%	11.6%	10.8%	9.0%	7.1%
External Variables	Reviewed Research or Received Training	15	23.1	20.4	20.4	21.3	22.9	24.7	22.3	17.5	172.7
	Score increase/decrease		-6.4%	-2.0%	-2.3%	3.0%	-0.6%	9.6%	1.6%	4.5%	0.7%
	Has a Mentor	8	24.6	21.3	19.8	17.6	23.4	23.6	21.6	17.1	169.1
	Score increase/decrease		-0.1%	2.3%	-5.3%	-14.9%	1.3%	4.7%	-1.4%	2.0%	-1.4%
	Delivered as recommended by NIVLP	16	24.3	21.1	22.9	21.6	24.6	23.3	23.2	17.7	178.9
	Score increase/decrease		-1.3%	1.4%	9.9%	4.5%	6.8%	3.3%	5.9%	5.4%	4.4%
	Program aware of sustainability definition	7	26.3	22.2	26.1	22.4	28.3	28.0	27.1	21.1	201.6
	Score increase/decrease		6.7%	6.5%	25.3%	8.3%	22.6%	24.1%	23.8%	26.0%	17.6%
	Reported Curriculum Delivery	15	24.5	20.8	21.6	20.6	23.5	23.8	21.3	16.3	172.6
	Score increase/decrease		-0.4%	0.0%	3.8%	-0.3%	1.9%	5.6%	-2.8%	-2.8%	0.7%

These new PSAT domain scores were compared to the original PSAT domain score, revealing the impact each variable has on each PSAT domain score (Refer to Table 7). Percentage change in individual domains and the overall PSAT score captured what appears to be significant differences (change greater than +-10%), colour coded green for positive and red for negative (See Table 6). Of particular interest, those respondents(n=7) who reported their program had a definition for sustainability (external variable) recorded higher scores in all domains and notably produced a 17.6% higher average PSAT score (201.6). This suggests that those practitioners familiar with their program's definition of sustainable, assessed their program to have a higher capacity for sustainable than the average assessed capacity for sustainable achieved by all survey participants completing the PSAT. Further analysis of this quantitative data was completed to determine if a combination of specific variables might produce a significant difference in PSAT scoring. This analysis was completed for internal and external, and by combining both internal and external variables.

For example, when respondents(n=4) indicated that they had previous experience, participated in the preparation of the PV proposal, and were in a role of coordinator, the specific domains scores for Environmental Support, Funding Stability, and Strategic Planning were notably higher. However, respondents (n=6) that only reported having previous experience and being in the role of coordinator, on average achieved a higher overall PSAT score (Refer to Table 8).

Table 8 - Internal Variables Combination Analysis

Domain	N+11 Coordinator	N=4 Coordinator + Participating in Preparing PV Proposal	N=6 Coordinator + Previous Experience	N=4 Coordinator + Participating in Preparing PV Proposal + Previous Experience
Environmental Support	10%	14%	28%	31%
Funding Stability	3 %	19%	7%	30%
Partnerships	16%	13%	24%	2%
Organizational Capacity	-6%	-23%	2%	-10%
Program Evaluation	15%	-2%	19%	5%
Program Adaptation	12%	3%	22%	14%
Communication	11%	8%	19%	6%
Strategic Planning	9%	15%	22%	39%
Total PSAT Score	9%	6%	18%	14%

Similarly, when data was filtered to only include a combination of external variables, the impact on individual PSAT domains and the overall PSAT average score was observed. Notably, no combination of external variables exceeded the impact of respondents (n=7) who simply reported that their program had a definition of sustainability. Interestingly, mentorship produced a negative impact on Environmental Support, Partnerships, Organizational Capacity, and Communication sustainability domains (Refer to Table 7 and Table 9)., suggesting that mentorship reduces a programs capacity for sustainability.

Table 9 - Combination of External Variables Analysis

Domain	N=7 Program Aware of Sustainability Definition	N=7 Program aware of sustainability definition + Reviewed Research or Received Training	N=4 Program aware of sustainability definition + Reviewed Research or Received Training + Has A Mentor	N=7 Program aware of sustainability definition + Reviewed Research or Received Training + Delivered as Recommended by NIYLP	N=7 Program aware of sustainability definition + Reviewed Research or Received Training + Delivered as Recommended by NIYLP + Reported Curriculum Delivery
Environmental Support	13%	13%	7%	13%	13%
Funding Stability	10 %	10 %	10%	10 %	10 %
Partnerships	27%	27%	20%	27%	27%
Organizational Capacity	6%	6%	-10	6%	6%
Program Evaluation	26%	26%	14%	26%	26%
Program Adaptation	24%	24%	13%	24%	24%
Communication	24%	24%	14%	24%	24%
Strategic Planning	26%	26%	24%	26%	26%
Total PSAT Score	19%	19%	11%	19%	19%

The final step in analyzing the collected quantitative data was determining if any combination of external and internal variables had an even more significant impact on sustainability domains when internal and external variables were combined than when found in isolation. Interestingly, the greatest increase in the PSAT average score was observed when participants (n=4) reported the external variables of their program - being aware of the sustainability definition, they reviewed research or received training in implementation/sustainability, they delivered PV as recommended by NIYLDP, reported their curriculum delivery, and the internal variables of being in the role of a coordinator, and had previous experience (Refer to Table 8).

Analysis of quantitative data suggests that different sustainability domains are impacted by different variables. It also suggests that not all variables have a positive impact on individual

domains, or the overall PSAT score. It also indicates that practitioners and NIYLDP can take actions prior to and during implementation to create opportunities to build and maintain capacity for sustainability (Refer to Table 10).

Table 10 – Combined Internal and External Variables

Domain	N=7 Program aware of sustainability definition + Reviewed Research or Received Training + Delivered as Recommended by NIYLP + Reported Curriculum Delivery	N=6 Coordinator + Previous Experience	N=4 Program aware of sustainability definition + Reviewed Research or Received Training + Delivered as Recommended by NIYLP + Reported Curriculum Delivery + Coordinator + Previous Experience
Environmental Support	13%	28%	25%
Funding Stability	10 %	7%	7%
Partnerships	27%	24%	28%
Organizational Capacity	6%	2%	4%
Program Evaluation	26%	19%	30%
Program Adaptation	24%	22%	32%
Communication	24%	19%	31%
Strategic Planning	26%	22%	32%
Total PSAT Score	19%	18%	24%

Phase Two Findings (Qualitative)

Descriptive Findings

Phase Two asked participants 10 interview questions (Refer to Appendix N – One-On-One Interview Script) concerning their knowledge and experiences in delivering PV. Interviews were conducted via Zoom and, on average, lasted 82 min. Some questions explore phase one outcomes further, but most focused on PV sustainability and what was done or could have been done to achieve success. Participants appeared happy about the opportunity to participate and eager to share their successes, challenges, and lessons learned concerning their PV implementation and sustainability experiences. Each participant began with the opportunity to share how they became involved in PV, which led to their role in how it looked when delivered in their community.

Most related sustainability to the continuation of programming, demonstrated a general understanding and, despite the number of funding cycles they had completed, focused on a

limited number of domains to achieve sustainability goals. For example, one participant involved in PV for more than a decade suggested:

> …sustainability defined, means that we can continue it really infinitely [and] to make that happen, I think ultimately, we really need to have like a reserve account and an endowment, and you know things that we could turn to if some grant funding went away.

When discussing personal experience, responses were unique and varied, and other than NIYLDP training, no common pre-PV experiences, education, or career paths were prerequisites, revealing a disconnect between their experience and their sustainability action. For example, one talked about being a community networker, another pointed to having previous jobs, and in one instance, one practitioner suggested that they were severely under-prepared and simply learned on the job, admitting, "I wasn't even aware of sustainability until that workshop, I had no idea about it."

Mentorship of PV practitioners was elusive, although some practitioners' spoke of relationships with NIYLDP staff members, none identified a mentorship relationship. All PV practitioners desired NIYLDP mentorship, with suggestions that they could facilitate the use of the PV network, offer best practices, or simply "tell me where to start." Ultimately, practitioners wanted an ongoing relationship with NIYLDP and "felt a mentor would be somebody that would be shoulder to shoulder with you, almost giving you the next step." When discussing the role staff can play is sustainability, most PV practitioners agreed that the person delivering PV was able to easily adapt activities to context, collect data and document activities, witness behaviour changes, and build relations with participants and parents, enabling them to "be the salesperson…be the cheerleader…be the pitch man… waving their hands and saying there's really great stuff happening here." Equally important to program sustainability was the coordinator role who arrange for training, shared processes, secured funding, built partnerships, educated decision makers, and promoted PV externally.

Participants provided numerous examples where PV activities provided interest holders with common experiences, demonstrating knowledge that implementation is a vehicle for sustainability. For example, partners became PV promoters after participating in PV activities, family events develop community buy-in, and programs gain access to external resources when community service providers are included. To gain internal and external support from decision-makers and community elders, activities were adapted to reflect community interests and culture.

A few talked about how activities can present the opportunity to build the program's capacity to be sustained through knowledge transfer. The frequent practice of documenting the activity with observations and suggestions that guide future facilitators helped build program capacity.

When asked which domains they did well in, which were most challenging, and what they felt was most important to be sustainable, no one domain was the obvious choice for PV practitioners (Refer to Appendix O - Participant Responses to Question 7). Partnerships were selected by half of the participants as the most important. Four of the eight participants believed their program performed well at Program Adaptation, enabling them to continue delivery through COVID-19 restrictions, adjusting to the community context and their climate. Just under half explained how their program did well in identifying who they needed to partner with, which assisted them with delivering programming, gaining cultural knowledge, and developing expertise. Three of the four that did not select adaption as a domain they did well at, found it to be the most challenging, citing there attempts to continue past initial curriculum delivery saying, "we just didn't have it, so we had to create it ourselves and it definitely wasn't as good." Overall, participants reflected on their experience before answering, and most revealed that distinguishing between implementation and sustainability was challenging, often responding as if they were the same.

Most acknowledge that they had not received any sustainability training but recognized that they "Gotta do it from the beginning even before you start deliverables 'cause you gotta have an understanding why you're doing it." One suggested training would help broaden perspectives and see the bigger picture and another related sustainability to Strategic Planning. Most did not discuss the interconnectedness of the sustainability domains and either suggested training on how to implement or focused on a specific domain and what would be useful, such as grant writing or building community capacity. Most suggested NIYLDP had a leading role in supporting sustainability through continued relationships, regular check-ins, and training delivery. When provided the opportunity to provide advice to others, participant responses were varied and plentiful. Some highlighted the importance of networking, others became philosophical, suggesting "that what doesn't kill you makes you stronger" and warning that things rarely go as planned. Another wanted people to be prepared for the impact PV will have on your personal life, suggesting it will change you forever. Others offered advice addressing sustainability, sharing that "it's important for implementers to be able to kind of step back sometimes…to be

able to make sure that the pillars are in place in terms of sustainability." Another shared how funding needs to be about programming needs, not just delivery, and most importantly, participants wanted others to know that PV is big, with lots of moving parts and layers of complexity, requiring planning and well-established community relationships.

At the end of the one-on-one interview, participants were provided the opportunity to add comments or thoughts that may not have been covered. Most were happy with what they had shared and felt that everything had been covered. Some took the opportunity to provide general advice, such as thinking about your partnerships and where your money will be spent. Others talked about ensuring the right organization is chosen to lead PV, while one focused on working to demonstrate value to the community through cultural relevance and inclusiveness. Most shared ideas of how NIYLDP can provide support, suggesting they could require PV licencing, conduct exit interviews for terminated programs, facilitate the sharing of adapted lesson plans, or organized facilitators retreats. While others talked of the need for continuing curriculum and standardized evaluations. Above all, conversations with participants reflected their deep commitment to PV, their belief in the program, and their recognition that NIYLDP are the experts in PV and has an ongoing role in replication. Most impressive was the passion displayed by each participant, their willingness to adapt and create solutions to challenges, always looking for ways to ensure PV continued, and how they had been deeply impacted by their involvement in PV, often resulting in personal sacrifices and emotional attachment.

Synthesis of Qualitative Findings

In 2013, Schell et al., reviewed 85 studies, creating a framework to assist with assessing a programs capacity for sustainability. In 2014, Luke et al., continued this work and validated the framework across multi-disciplines, creating the Program Sustainability Assessment Tool (PSAT). The PSAT included eight domains to for assessment: Environmental Support, described as having a climate of support that exists both internally and externally, requiring program champions, resource access, leadership, public support, and informing decision-makers. Funding Stability domain assesses a programs financial platform looking for flexible, diverse funding sources that are supported by organizational policies to address the present and future economic climate. PSAT Partnership Domain explains that to impact sustainability, partners must be diverse, passionate, involved, and informed about programming activities.

Organizational Capacity reviews organizational efforts that create supportive systems, shares vision, ensures sufficient staffing, and effectively manages resources and personnel that enables the integration. Program Evaluation captures a programs ability to conduct quality evaluations, share outcomes, use data for planning and implementation, documenting the program's success, and demonstrating that the program has achieved its outcomes. Program Adaptation requires flexibility and decision-making about the context of delivery, changing conditions, and data evaluation to continue "ensuring that the program effectively uses resources and continues having an impact"(*Understand – PSAT/CSAT*, n.d.).

Environmental Support - Engagement Matters

PV practitioners faced challenges in this domain, including frequent turnover of people in decision-making roles and a broad lack of understanding of PV inside and outside the program. One practitioner stated that "politically inside the organization, there was a lot…of roadblocks, and that was because people did not understand what we were doing." Another noted,

> directors have been cycling through, like we've had I think five within the last eight years, so a lot of support that's needed on the higher level isn't there because [PV is] always having to be re-presented] to a new a new director with a new thought.

To overcome challenges and build environmental support, '*engagement matters'* emerged as a theme, as emphasized by prioritizing engagement with key decision-makers, influential individuals, parents, partners, and community members. One PV practitioner highlighted that "really getting to know the gatekeepers [provides you] ... access [to] those things that we need when administrations aren't available." Another would deliver activities that require community members to be involved, share their knowledge, and help participants build their identity through culturally relevant activities. One PV practitioner shared that he keeps new decision-makers informed through training and program updates that result in ongoing support, positive relationships, and access to community resources.

PV practitioners also shared that NIYLDP plays a role in helping them build support by offering suggestions for how they could be more collaborative. PV practitioners also acknowledged that NIYLDP's inclusiveness is a benefit, with one provider reflecting about those community members and decision-makers included in PV orientation training, and that while at school board meetings, "you could tell…that those people were a lot more passionate about it [PV] just because they could see the potential for impact." A number noted, however, that they

would like NIYLDP to provide the "secret sauce", a "path towards sustainability or information about how to carry the program forward to sustainability. As one PV practitioner suggested, “I think it would have been beneficial to have a formal training or an advisory group" for NIYLDP to enhance environmental support.

It is clear from the research that, whether it is resources, politics, or public understanding, both internal and external support matters. PV practitioners have demonstrated intentional ways to engage decision-makers by sharing how NIYLDP can help gain the environmental support necessary to overcome familiar challenges repeatedly faced by PV replication sites. Please see Tabe 11 below for a summary of findings regarding PV practitioners’ engagement with the Environmental Support sustainability domain.

Table 11 – Finding Highlights – Environmental Support

Table F1 – Finding Highlights – Environmental Support

Domain	Environmental Support
Description	Requires Internal and external. ● Champions ● Resource Access ● Leadership ● Public Support ● Ability to Keep Decision Makers Informed
Challenges	● Ensuring ○ Stakeholders understand PV. ○ Continued support of decision-makers ● Political roadblocks ● Changing of decision-makers ● Lack of commitment
What PV Practitioners are Doing	Theme - Engagement Matters ● Getting to know gatekeepers. ● Involve community members in activities. ● Intentionally brings people together. ● Provide training and updates to new decision-makers. ● Include and connect community elders
What NIYLP is Doing or Could Do	Doing ● Provide manuals that include the ‘why’. ● Inclusive training ● Helps problem-solve and shares solutions. ● Help with community presentations and training. Could Do ● Provide more precise direction to achieve sustainability. ● Provide formal training to help understand and achieve Environmental Support

Funding Stability - Be Creative

In this domain, PV practitioners face many challenges, with the most common being the belief that grant funding is synonymous with sustainability as far as it would guarantee program continuation. PV practitioners repeatedly reported that the sustainability of their program is closely tied to their initial funding grant for implementation. As one of the PV practitioners stated, "...you bring in a grant, and the grants only last three years to five years, then when that's gone, the program is gone."

As this domain highlights the financial factors necessary to fund programming past initial grant funding, it does require PV practitioners to 'be creative' in reducing expenses and for securing stable and flexible funding to keep the PV going. One PV practitioner described how they had arranged for multiple grants to end at various times, with one of his colleagues working on a mix of different grants. Another PV practitioner described an entrepreneurial approach, where he described the creation of "billable services" to ensure the PV can recover programming costs for clients referred by community health care clinicians.

While NIYLDP often promotes PV to support organizations and governments, PV practitioners have little recollection of NIYLDP guiding funding stability. In fact, there was broad consensus on the need for NIYLDP and others to offer guidance to help secure funding and resources to establish funding stability. One PV practitioner suggested:

> training in writing grant applications, and awareness of where to source some of that funding, how to engage with…governments…and to really build up confidence within communities to be able to access those pots of money.

Funding Stability is one component of the PSAT tool that aids in assessing an organization's capacity for sustainability. While many PV practitioners had unique and creative approaches for raising money, reducing expenses, or expanding resources to overcome challenges associated with grant funding, grant funding remains an ongoing concern. Missing from the discussion with PV practitioners was a clear strategy for securing diverse and flexible funding or suggested organizational policies to encourage or facilitate funding stability. Please see Tabe 12 below for a summary of findings regarding PV practitioners' engagement with the Funding Stability sustainability domain.

Table 12 – Finding Highlights – Funding Stability

Finding Highlights – Funding Stability	
Domain	Funding Stability - Be Creative
Description	Requires Sources of funding Flexible Diverse Support organizational policies that address economic climate.
Challenges	Belief that funding stability equals grant funding
What PV Practitioners are Doing	Theme - Be Creative Have different grants that end at different times. Use partner assets and certification to reduce program costs. Have partners apply for grants or use their existing budget to fund PV activities. Nurture donor support and fundraising Seize moments and adapt to unexpected resources. Be consistently writing for new grants that support specific activities
What NIYLP is Doing or Could Do	Doing Promote financial support for PV with funding agencies. Could Do Grant writing services or training Share knowledge of available funding sources

Partnerships - Be Strategic

Program partnerships are admittedly valuable, necessary, and a source of strength. However, PV practitioners are required to deal with changing priorities, make concessions, and be flexible so PV activities align with their partners' programs to avoid, as one of the PV practitioners described, “butt[ing] heads of who has a better program.” PV practitioners talked about a partner's motivation for their commitment and that it could be "a little bit of a political football for the [partner]...and they knew that if…it disappeared from the school without…making some effort to sustain it, they['d] pay a price.” One PV practitioner shared a partner’s message, "the project's not continuing, and [we are] ... not going to be engaged after the funding is done, period!" reflecting their priority change and ultimately undermining PV’s sustainability.

When creating and nourishing lasting partnerships, 'be strategic' emerged as a theme, described as the need to develop an understanding that partnerships start before implementation and are essential during implementation to ensure program sustainability. PV practitioners described the importance of keeping partners informed, sharing the truth about program challenges, as well as their roles and responsibilities. Also highlighted was the importance of leadership and the need for someone to be "holding everything together and catching the balls to

make sure that the agencies are working together [because] they want to work together, but they don't do that all the time." Acknowledging their shortcomings enabled PV practitioners to seek partners with specific knowledge, skills and abilities, equipment and assets, and existing programming to help them build their programming capacity. To help partners understand PV, their value to PV, and for having a personal connection with participants, PV practitioners strategically included them in activities to provide them with everyday experiences. To facilitate these opportunities, partners described the need to "take what they're observing and what [we're] doing back to their organizations to report on the type of activities [and] the benefit of the activities."

Partnerships are unique and attuned to the context in which PV is implemented. In some cases, PV practitioners suggested that NIYLDP's inclusive curriculum, training, and sharing of their vast network of relationships offered some assistance in developing program partnerships. Also, when NIYLDP comes to replication communities to train community members, sharing PV ideas and building relationships plays a significant role. Despite these activities, PV practitioners did not mention specific examples of NIYLDP support or guidance that facilitated building partnerships to support PV sustainability.

PSAT tells us that partnerships are essential to program sustainability and require diversity, commitment, and communication. PV practitioners share that when seeking partnerships, it is necessary to overcome partners' adaptation demands, motivations, levels of commitment, priorities, and constant changes of decision-makers. However, being strategic when investing in relationships, partnership selection, and partnership management helps to find common ground, define roles, and partner integration. Partnerships are essential but require time and energy, with emphasis on of being strategic. Please see Tabe 13 below for a summary of findings regarding PV practitioners' engagement with the Partnership sustainability domain.

Table 13 – Finding Highlights – Partnerships

Finding Highlights – Partnerships	
Domain	Partnerships - Be Strategic
Description	Partners must be • Diverse • Passionate • Involved, and • Informed about programming activities
Challenges	• Require alignment of PV to partner's activities • Annual adaptation to school schedules and curriculum • Accepting motivation for partner's support • Regular changes of personnel at the decision-making level • Change of partnership priorities • Inconsistent messaging from partners to undermine support. • Lack of dependability of partner's commitment and participation • Maintaining access with the right people
What PV Practitioners are Doing	Theme - Be Strategic • Seek the right partners. • Understand the importance of partnerships. • Begin relationships before implementation. • Keep partners informed. • Speak the truth. • Have someone lead partnership relationships. • Identify different skill sets of partners. • Partner with organizations that have needed activities, assets, and capacity. • Have multiple partners with similar capacity. • Know what you need from a partner. • Show partners their value in participating and supporting PV. • Help partners understand how PV is different. • Define a partner role in PV and help them take ownership of that role
What NIYLP is Doing or Could Do	Doing • Providing a curriculum that is inclusive. • Partner with programs in close proximity to direct service programs • Lend credibility to facilitate grants. • Attend share knowledge to replication communities. Could Do •

Organizational Capacity - Growth is Organic

This domain presented some of the most significant obstacles to PV practitioners, from the absence of supportive systems and vision casting to staffing shortages and under-resourcing of programming. Most talked about their lack of training and knowledge in implementation and sustainability. As one PV practitioner stated, "When I started the project, I really had no idea what I was getting into or the magnitude…I didn't even know where to start." As a result, staff retention and program success often depended on the passion and energy of PV practitioners instead of supportive organizational systems and capacity. Some practitioners noted that there is often poor leadership, unmanaged resources, unaddressed programming needs, and a lack of a

shared organizational vision. As one PV practitioner described, "we still had two years, but we didn't have any support during those two years to build those initiatives and to build that 'connective tissue'."

The theme 'growth is organic' described PV practitioners' approach to addressing the need for organizational capacity, their intentional efforts, and tactics to grow the capacity for sustainability that included training to build understanding and support, leadership, access to resources, hiring new employees, and developing greater organizational and community capacity. For example, some practitioners included organizational leaders in NIYLDP's annual PV orientation session, sharing that:

> I think that anybody that went to New Mexico for that training left feeling encouraged…like board members at the school…members of Chief and Council, a lot of teachers participated, and I think anyone who went out there came back feeling like yes we got to see Project [Venture]…continue.

Another strategy revolved around building staff capacity by passing on knowledge to community employees, maintaining an accessible living library of activities, and mentoring high school students in PV leadership roles. Through regular meetings, one PV practitioner shared program successes with decision-makers, leading them to "embed this [PV] program like within what we do, it's like an arm of a part of our organization."

Organizational capacity requires access to and influence on the internal decision-makers to ensure sufficient personnel and resources for program delivery and organizational integration. PV practitioners spoke of NIYLDP's willingness to attend their community and provide training to staff and community members or to be available by phone to provide guidance. They shared that NIYLDP encourages skilled staffing, recommends specific training, such as wilderness first aid, and requires PV orientation and facilitator training. Unfortunately, PV practitioners did not mention any specific actions regarding NIYLDP's involvement in supporting organizational capacity development.

PV practitioners found that organizational capacity grew organically despite being challenging at all levels of the organization. Whether challenged by a lack of capacity, insufficient staffing, or internal misunderstanding, PV practitioners worked to find ways to help their organization grow, overcome their lack of training and experience, and address staff and resource needs. They are thankful for NIYLDP's coaching during orientation training and their willingness to train others and provide guidance when contacted. Please see Tabe 14 below for a

summary of findings regarding PV practitioners' engagement with the Organizational Capacity sustainability domain.

Table 14 – Finding Highlights – Organizational Capacity

Finding Highlights – Organizational Capacity	
Domain	Organizational Capacity
Description	• the ability to integrate programs. • shape supportive systems • share vision. • ensure sufficient staffing and • effectively manage resources and personnel

Challenges	• Lack of
	  ○ supportive systems
	  ○ organization vision
	  ○ vision casting
	  ○ training and knowledge of implementation and sustainability
	  ○ resources
	• Staff
	  ○ Turnover
	  ○ Interest
	  ○ Knowledge, skills, and abilities
	• Poor leadership

What PV Practitioners are Doing	Theme - Growth is Organic • Include organizational members in community and PV orientation training. • Build staff capacity. • Share programming knowledge with community members • Maintain a living library for activities. • Mentor high school students • Regularly share program successes with decision-makers • Pre-program implementation training • Secure a PV classroom within the school. •
What NIYLP is Doing or Could Do	Doing • Recommend specific training. • Provide PV orientation and facilitator training. • Deliver on-site training for community and organization. Could Do •

<u>Program Evaluation - Become Educated and Aware</u>

Although most program funding requires evaluation, and NIYLDP encourages program evaluation, PV practitioners begin their program with little evaluation experience, no specific evaluation methodology, and little understanding its uses, benefits, or design, resulting in a 'learning as you go' approach. One participant admitted to simply not knowing where or how to start, stating, "We didn't have a specific evaluation tool in mind to use…[or]what we want[ed] to measure… because I feel like we just kind of winged it." Some expressed they felt left alone to figure things out, while another acknowledged that "it's a very specific skill set [and] unless you

deal with evaluation on a daily basis…like it's just foreign and… It's like something that takes years to truly grasp the concept.” Other challenges shared by PV practitioners included receiving results that were no longer current or were unusable, confusion regarding expectations, struggles to communicate program benefits effectively, and lack of confidence in evaluation design. One PV practitioner shared, "I wish we would have planned ahead a little bit more…I feel like we should have measured some different things.”

Despite a lack of evaluation knowledge and experience, PV practitioners clearly understand the need for assessment, finding ways to collect and share data and integrate feedback to adapt and improve programming. They ‘become educated and aware’ because, as one PV practitioner stated, “you always want to be looking at how to continue on or do a little bit better.” Many PV practitioners, in various ways, have regular planning meetings and establish program and activity expectations. One explained how they had a project planner that set expectations, and another PV practitioner shared that "there were regular planning meetings for all the different aspects of the program…and there is always a little bit of reflection built into that, just I think almost organically.” Others talked about data collection and regularly documenting activities. For example, one PV practitioner shared that:

> There's an evaluation piece …where each activity the leaders are checking off, was there an increase in a pro-social behaviour, did they talk about improvements at school…tracking the pro-social behaviour, positive interactions with family, positive attitude towards education, self-efficacy increases in…[and] track substance use attitudes.

Another discussed how they utilized an observer during program activities to make "extra notes of like hey, this is my thoughts on how we can improve it", recognizing that it supported an ad-hoc evaluation.

In some PV programs, practitioners reported that:

> there was a lot of reflective practice…to look and see what we could do better or change or improve for the good of the kids…and as the years went on, you would see some things kind of fall away that…just weren't like meeting the goals.

Others shared how they used evaluations to learn, saying "it also didn't just educate myself, but it educated community partners when we shared with them why we do evaluation.” Another PV practitioner reflected on evaluations: "I feel like that's something that's really important, that we can show the community that it… actually works for our [community and] being able to share about it in the media.”

Program evaluation can be complex, requiring proper experience and knowledge to assess and integrate results into daily programming. NIYLDP introduces evaluation concepts at different training sessions, but simply stated by one PV practitioner, "I wish that there was more follow up from PV or the NIYLDP, just to ensure the fidelity of the model was followed, but then again…I don't know if they placed as much value on the follow-up or the fidelity of the model." In some cases, PV practitioners indicated that "NIYLDP did give us a lot of potential tools that you could use." However, PV practitioners did not share details of specific guidance or evaluation training that NIYLDP provided to help prepare their program for evaluation, suggesting that "thinking through evaluation with them [NIYLDP] probably would really help too, because they've done an evaluation on it before it could show us the tool or tools that other folks have used so we would have just have been prepared with that in advance." Most suggested that they needed support from NIYLDP to know what type of evaluation to conduct and what tools to use. As one practitioner described:

> we did evaluate things and look to see what we should change over time, but I also think like, there's room to do better, maybe on the adaptation in certain areas, I think there is a hesitation to change too much or to completely throw out certain things that weren't working,

highlighting the need for NIYLDP support to develop their confidence to use evaluation data to make programming decisions.

Most PV practitioners create some form of program evaluation, know there are benefits to completing evaluations, and implement ways to capture lessons learned to help 'not reinvent the wheel'. However, few felt they had sufficient experience and knowledge or received the guidance necessary from NIYLDP to institute effective evaluations that would help them assess the delivery of their program, understand how and what data to collect, and how to effectively utilize evaluations to promote, improve, and adapt their PV. Without experience and training, PV practitioners needed direction for determining areas of interest, initiating, and executing effective evaluations, and required guidance to utilize evaluation data and findings to influence decision-makers and gain broad program support. Please see Tabe 15 below for a summary of findings regarding PV practitioners' engagement with the strategic Program Evaluation domain.

Table 15 – Finding Highlights – Program Evaluation

Finding Highlights – Program Evaluation

Domain	Program Evaluation - Become Educated and Aware
Description	• conduct quality evaluations. • Share outcomes • use data to plan and implement. • show the program's success and • demonstrate that the program works

Challenges	• Lack
	  ○ experience and knowledge about evaluation
	  ○ access to evaluation tools
	  ○ support and guidance
	• Unsure
	  ○ of expectation
	  ○ of how to use data to influence decision-makers
	• Results were not timely to assist in program adaptation.
	• Not sure of types of evaluation and evaluation design

What PV Practitioners are Doing	Theme - Become Educated and Aware • Reflective activity debriefings • Utilize external observers to record and make recommendations. • Record activities for future use • Collected data for simple quantifiable behaviour. • Created surveys for participants and parents to obtain feedback. • Conduct adhoc process evaluations. • Used data to adapt programming and share successes. • Learned and became educated from evaluation results

What NIYLP is Doing or Could Do	Doing
	• Share knowledge
	• Provide evaluation tools.
	• Talks about evaluation at training.
	Could Do
	• Guidance
	  ○ To select appropriate evaluation
	  ○ How to use evaluation data
	  ○ Integrating results into daily programming
	  ○ Maintaining fidelity
	• Share
	  ○ Evaluation tool options
	  ○ Evaluation blueprint
	• Offer evaluation training

Program Adaptation - Context Matters

PV practitioners understand that geography, climate, and community settings all place demands on how programming is delivered. The challenge identified was about what, when, or how to adapt while maintaining programming fidelity, not why to adapt. One PV practitioner commented:

> There was a hesitation to change… to completely throw out certain things that weren't working… when you're feeling especially connected to a certain project, or if it

> ran…really well under this person during this time…[or] there is a staffing change and…hope that it's going to improve…but then it doesn't.

PV practitioners also identified challenges to adaptation that are foundational, such as staff commitment, their knowledge and experience, and the community, all which factor into requiring PV practitioners to "take the intent of the lesson, what it's supposed to convey and then…just try…and come up with activities that will teach that thing, but… that was a struggle."

Despite these foundational challenges encountered by PV practitioners, adaptation is part of the PV fabric. Reality demands adaptation because, in some cases, "We have like six months of winter, so we're like ok, what can we do that's outdoors in the winter and adapt some of the curriculum." PV practitioners understand that 'context matters' and so readily develop solutions to adapt activities that embrace available resources, local geography, staff experiences and interests, and culture to create programming that realizes PV benefits. One PV practitioner said, "I mean… that's just something that's absolutely necessary." Others talked about the realities of delivery and the need to be flexible, saying it "...was really important to be able to adapt and regroup depending on the curveballs that were thrown at us on a daily but sometimes minute-to-minute basis."

One PV practitioner, whose program was embedded into a school physical education program acknowledged that partnerships require adaptation, explaining that "to be a part of those schools and then linking up with the teachers to make sure that the core standards and…[their] benchmarks are achieved." While another spoke of the importance of:

> adapting to what works for our participants and their families, providing transportation sometimes, you know, and then working within schools, adapting to kind of their schedules and what they want…trying to align with their curriculum or the counselling department.

Currently, it seems that most adaptation results from staff reflections, where workers meet to discuss an activity to determine if it is practical to deliver as suggested, based on geography, location, resources, and capacity. Another PV practitioner highlighted how PV can be easily adapted:

> Ultimately, I think there was something that was sort of happening at every level and every year and as the years went on, you would see some things kind of fall away that… weren't like meeting the goals as much as other things or other things were having a

> larger impact and those things would be focused on more in the following year, and I think that's a good thing.

Through discussions with PV practitioners, NIYLDP promotes program adaptation. They encourage PV practitioners first to understand the intent of a PV activity, then adapt the activity to embrace a program's geography, partnerships, resources, and their community's culture. PV practitioners recall:

> training from the NIYLDP people, and they gave us the advice for what they had done the year previous, and they said basically, take the intent of the lesson, what it's supposed to convey and then just try and come up with activities that will teach that thing.

Through mentorship and additional training, NIYLDP "gave us the advice of thinking about the intent of the lesson and finding related activities, and it worked." However, it is also evident PV practitioners felt overwhelmed at times, admitting that "We had to adapt project venture quite a bit," and when "I reached out to the NIYLDP to ask them about that" they felt they needed more than "well, just you know, take them and adapt them to…how you see fit." Others PV practitioner felt that a mentorship that guided them to create something:

> that still aligns with the project venture goals and the vision, it also works with the communities and what they want to do. You know, it's helpful to have…outreach of like hey, checking in like how are things going.

Program adaptation is embraced and promoted by both NIYLDP and PV practitioners. They understand that factors like culture, geography, resources, and capacity impact what and how activities are delivered, the knowledge, skills, abilities, and interests of staff, and the interests of the participants, that context matters. It is clear the intent of the PV activity is non-negotiable, and to stay the course, PV practitioners desire a stronger working relationship with NIYLDP, one that provides guidance and know-how, and "more in-depth thinking through how is this going to look within your community…you need to have a meeting with them [NIYLDP] and think through all of these things like adaptation and evaluation". Please see Tabe 16 below for a summary of findings regarding PV practitioners' engagement with the Program Adaptation sustainability domain.

Table 16 – Finding Highlights – Program Adaptation

Finding Highlights – Program Adaptation	
Domain	Adaptation - Contex ters

Description	• Activities that adjust.
	  ○ strategies,
	  ○ review evidence,
	  ○ navigate new knowledge,
	  ○ adapt to changes in the environment, and
	  ○ the determination and discontinuation of ineffective program components

Challenges	• Personal connection to activity • Staff knowledge, skills, and abilities • Maintaining intent of curriculum • What to adapt • How to adapt

What PV Practitioners are Doing	Theme - Context Matters
	• Adapt to
	  ○ culture
	  ○ local geography
	  ○ local climate
	  ○ school availability
	  ○ staff strengths and weaknesses, interests, knowledge, skills, and abilities
	  ○ what works for Participants, their families, and the community.
	• Embrace available resources.
	• Community activities
	• Being flexible and responsive to target group interests.
	• Partnership realities

What NIYLP is Doing or Could Do	Doing • Promotes adaptation and embrace context. • Encourages understanding of intent of activity. • Provide advise based on previous experiences. Could Do • Mentorship • Share ideas • Regular check-ins • A sustained relationship

Communication - Be Targeted and Purposeful

Despite understanding the importance of ensuring effective program communication, PV practitioners acknowledged that they did not prepare a formal communication plan nor identify ongoing challenges. One PV practitioner talked about bringing people together without seizing the opportunity to embed understanding. As they stated, "basically it was a training session and we explained what the project concept was, but we never delved into the deeper meaning behind the project." Another PV practitioner recognized the difficulties of mixed internal messaging amidst organizational change, disclosing, "It was frustrating for both of the coordinators because we'd get mixed messaging, no messaging, or covert messaging." This PV practitioner admitted that they:

> …haven't talked about it and we didn't make any kind of cohesive…communication plan of how we want to promote Project Venture…[that] we have done social media…[and] once in a while would throw something on there, but it wasn't strategic.

Although discussions with practitioners revealed minimal formal communication planning, a common theme emerged: communication must be ‘targeted and purposeful’. This theme produced unplanned and creative efforts of PV practitioners to share program success, attract support, help others understand program goals, and ensure that the program is valued. PV practitioners would also identify program interest holders and make a concerted effort to get a specific message to a particular group. This effort included maintaining a communication book for staff, producing newsletters for parents, hosting lunch and learns, and using short videos during presentations. One program reported that they "made a little short three-minute movie about just the highlights from our project venture, and we showed it at their commencement to their families, and then we just showed it this last weekend [at] an indigenous Film Festival.” To communicate PV to the public, PV practitioners used strategies such as hosting activities in public settings, using PV vehicles to spread positive messages, and using participants' volunteerism to demonstrate program values “so the kids, feeling valued by the community members and the community members valuing the kids.” To help decision-makers understand and recognize PV impacts, PV practitioners stayed connected using regular meetings, reporting that visually captured PV successes, and focused training for new council members “so that they're always knew what we're doing.”

Although some PV practitioners felt it important that one person coordinate messaging, they also understood the importance of program inclusion and that "basically the facilitator or the coordinator needs to be the salesperson, they need to be the cheerleader, they need to be the pitchman, the one waving their hands and saying there's really great stuff happening here.” In some cases, staff crafted stories from the natural world such as "we're all-inclusive, so if the school does have non-native children, they still get the same experience as everybody", with other staff sharing stories about participants that they had collected from school teachers. Other tactics used by PV practitioners was to have other agencies promote PV, send messages directly to teachers to inspire involvement, and have youth hear the PV core values and language repeatedly and from multiple sources so that "when they [youth] do hear project venture, they know exactly where to go.”

A sustainable program requires effective communication that shares goals, benefits, and program needs with the right people. Unfortunately, PV practitioners did not describe any training or guidance provided by NIYLDP regarding developing a strategic communication plan, nor any indication that NIYLDP provided materials to help with communication about the PV program. What became clear through interviews with PV practitioners was that communication seemed ad hoc, with different tactics utilized until something worked. There was no evidence that PV practitioners reached out to NIYLDP for assistance or felt NIYLDP played a role in developing the right messaging for a specific interest holder. It is evident that maintaining support for PV is necessary and that despite not having a predetermined strategy, communication with interest holders is a priority for PV practitioners. It is also clear that PV practitioners, when done, designed their contact to target specific audiences and that methods of communication are very purposeful. Please see Tabe 17 below for a summary of findings regarding PV practitioners' engagement with the Communication sustainability domain.

Table 17 – Finding Highlights – Communication

Finding Highlights – Communication	
Domain	Communication
Description	Strategic efforts: ● ensure staff communicate its needs, ● market to attract support, ● Goals are understood and then shared, ● addressed issues are comprehended, and ● value to the community is established.
Challenges	● No communication plan ● Missed opportunities. ● Mixed messaging ● Sporadic delivery ●
What PV Practitioners are Doing	Theme - Be Targeted and Purposeful ● Direct and deliberate actions ● Identifying stakeholders ● Included co-worker children to participate and share their stories. ● Maintain a communication book for delivered activities. ● Used program assets to communicate. ● Engage stakeholders in a public setting and invite participation. ● Produce a monthly newsletter. ● Help decision makers to understand PV benefits. ● Deliver PV correctly to produce known benefits. ● Connect youth to community through volunteerism. ● Host lunch and learns with partner organizations. ● Use familiar community stories to create inclusiveness. ● Identify one person responsible for communication. ● Encourage and give permission for others to be sales persons. ● Direct message to specific stakeholder ● Proactively inform decision-makers ● Use common social media channels. ● Create multi-media material
What NIYLP is Doing or Could Do	Doing ● Could Do ●

Strategic Planning - Vision

Conversations with PV practitioners show that the common challenge is that successes in other domains overshadowed the need to plan strategically and guide long-term sustainability. This lack of demand for a strategic plan, stems from their ability to forge strong partnerships, access funds, "adapt like crazy", and accept that “grants only last three years five years, then when that's gone, the program is gone.” Numerous comments reflected the belief that funding equals sustainability, such as, "Without funding stability, you would be able to continue with your strategic planning,” or “for sustainability I would have to say…you need funding to do almost everything.” PV practitioners are incredibly good at forging strong partnerships and “the

idea was…to bring all of those partners in…to carry the project forward…I mean…there was a little bit of…hope…and hope can kind of bite you sometimes." They also excelled at adaptation and finding workarounds, and in one case, a PV practitioner simply worked for six months without getting paid. Those who did explore strategic planning often either did not follow through, needed guidance, or could not get buy-in from decision-makers.

Despite the appearance of a lack of understanding of strategic planning and for creating official plans, there is evidence that practitioners had a 'vision' for PV success and what they believed would achieve sustainability. One PV practitioner articulated their understanding that "the funding and the buy-in from the community, making sure that we present this program to show like that it's meaningful, getting buy-in from youth." To achieve funding stability, some created PV services that could generate revenue independent of grants, and others "continued to write this [PV] curriculum in multiple grants." One PV practitioner set the goal to "get outside of a prescribed funding…so that you have an organization that is willing to commit to this." Some PV practitioners were able to see sustainability as several intertwined parts, acknowledging:

> [But]…quality [of] programming, I think is a big part of that sustainability, you know, documentation, what we're doing and working on, the policies…, activity planning, debriefing, relationships in schools and with other community members too…creating partnerships, they're helping with sustainability for sure, yeah.

PV practitioners use strong partnerships to secure program resources while others set sustainability goals that transition PV to community leadership.

For the strategic planning domain, PV practitioners did not reveal any specific action taken or training provided by NIYLDP that connected strategic planning to sustainability. Some PV practitioners spoke candidly, saying:

> I don't feel that we had mentors who were providing us with a path towards sustainability or information about how to carry it forward to sustainability…I never felt like there was a road map or a playbook that NIYLDP was able to provide us, [like] so when you're finished your funding model, here's how you sustain…we didn't have anything else from NYILP that supported sustainability.

As one practitioner stated, "that the orientation was more grassroots program delivery, I don't really truly think that there's a strong understanding within the NIYLDP of sustainability, that's an area of growth." Despite what appears to be an absence of guidance, all PV practitioners spoke of NIYLDP with respect and wanted NIYLDP to support their development and growth through training, mentorship, and literature that transfers NIYLDP's knowledge of sustainability.

For example, one PV practitioner suggested expanding the implementation planning session offered during PV orientation to "really understanding how much it's going to take to implement project venture." Many talked about funding stability, and one felt that NIYLDP could provide "training in terms of writing grant applications, [provide] awareness of where to source some of that funding, how to engage with…governments, and to really build up confidence within communities to be able to access those pots of money." Another saw a NIYLDP hosted session for:

> …brainstorming, [and explore] like what's your vision, what's the vision of project venture…and like intertwining that together to create something that still falls in line with the project venture goals and the vision but also it works with the communities and what they want to do.

This corresponded to an idea to have a "day or two spent in a retreat just focusing on program planning, including sustainability, would be really helpful." One suggested, "It's helpful to have…outreach…[and] checking in like how are things going?"

Strategic planning can be complicated, time-consuming, and overwhelming. The PSAT suggests that strategic planning helps guide decisions that use resources effectively, and when in place, a strategic plan would assist in moving past day-to-day programming obstacles toward long-term goals. PV practitioners felt NIYLDP's guidance and support would make a difference in developing PV strategic plans. Unfortunately, the absence of strategic planning, the belief that funding guarantees sustainability and organizational actions that counter sustainability efforts create challenges for PV's sustainability. Yet, using their vision, they found diverse ways to strategically navigate community support, secure resources, and build partnerships that help implement and, in some cases, sustain PV. Please see Tabe 18 below for a summary of findings regarding PV practitioners' engagement with the Strategic Planning sustainability domain.

Table 18 – Finding Highlights – Strategic Planning

Finding Highlights – Strategic Planning	
Domain	Strategic Planning - Vision

Description	• prioritizing long-term planning
	• integration with organizational objectives
	• address resource needs and financial requirements for each of the seven domains of sustainability,
	• ensuring that all stakeholders
	  ○ understand their roles and responsibilities and
	  ○ the program's objectives

Challenges	• Strengths in other domains • Did not know what they did not know • Dependency of partnerships • Proficiency at adaptation • Resistance from decision-makers • Believe funding to be foundation of sustainability • Length of grant funding
What PV Practitioners are Doing	Theme - Vision • Attract funding • Obtain grants to support pieces of PV curriculum • Create products/services to generate revenue • Build long term partnerships to support programming • Obtain buy-in • Treating all actions as important and intertwined • Transition program to community leadership
What NIYLP is Doing or Could Do	Doing • Introduce implementation planning at PV Orientation Could Do • Provide roadmap for sustainability • Create understanding for what it takes to implement PV • Training and support for grant writing • Host brainstorming sessions and create networks of PV • Regular NIYLP outreach and connection to PV sites

Limitations

Although I obtained ethics approval for this research, I acknowledge certain limitations. Being raised in a white, Anglo-Saxon, and Protestant community, being a student of Western education, being an agent of a provincial government, and possessing a Western settler's worldview has unknown impacts. Additionally, it is necessary to recognize limitations of both

the survey-based quantitative research and the interview-based qualitative research have inherent limitations:

- The client (NILYP) distributed the Online Implementers' survey to email addresses collected between 2005 and 2022, not knowing their relationship to NIYLDP nor able to confirm their experience with PV delivery.
- The survey design was lengthy and complicated; it attempted to collect data regarding various areas dealing with PV, potentially causing questions to be skipped, misunderstood, or answered incorrectly.
- It is noted that the number of respondents varied for each question. This may have impacted the findings and should be considered when interpreting the results.
- Data collected resulted in no statistical value due to the small sample size, incomplete survey responses, unknown interpretation of questions, and inability to verify responses.
- Some participants may have interacted or had professional relationships with the interviewer during the delivery of PV, which potentially affected their participation, their recollection of events, or the selection of memories they shared.

However, despite these limitations, the data collected provided access to the first-hand experiences of a diverse population of practitioners, a description of their challenges, and actions taken to both deliver PV and achieve sustainability.

CHAPTER 5 - DISCUSSION

This research project aimed to uncover strategies used by PV practitioners that promote PV sustainability, identify common challenges, and understand the support that NIYLDP can offer to assist PV replication sites in sustaining their efforts to deliver PV beyond initial funding. To achieve the project's purpose, a mixed methods approach was used that included an online survey (n=28) and one-on-one interviews (n=8). The survey helped provide understanding about participants pre-PV experiences, their relationship with PV and NIYLDP, the level of fidelity with which they delivered their PV program, their perception of their program's capacity for sustainability, and assisted in selecting participants for one-on-one interviews. The interviews provided insight into practitioners' personal PV experiences, their understanding of sustainability, and how they addressed challenges related to program sustainability. The survey revealed that sustainability scores, as measured by PSAT, are impacted by actions taken by PV practitioners and the support provided by NIYLDP. The one-on-one interviews found that although practitioners lack sustainability knowledge, the way they think and the things they do help them navigate encountered challenges to sustainability.

While the survey has certain limitations that disallows it from being applied to all PV practitioners, it provides valuable insights into the impact of PV practitioners' experiences, relationships, and perceptions of PV delivery during their involvement and can guide further research and NIYLDP actions. The one-on-one interviews created a window to view the first-hand experiences of a diverse population of PV practitioners, a description of their challenges, and actions taken to both deliver PV and achieve sustainability. And, although literature admittedly fails to provide guidance on ‘how to’ sustain a program, researchers provide insight of the components that impact sustainability. What follows is an interpretation of the reviewed literature and collected quantitative and qualitative date to address the questions ask of this research project.

In What Ways are PV Practitioners Building Capacity to Sustain PV Programming?

Replicating, delivering, and sustaining PV is complex, dynamic, and challenging. Efforts to assemble all the moving parts at the right time and in order require PV practitioners to be creative, strategic, and visionary. It also requires that they engage proactively, support organic

growth, embrace the context of delivery, purposefully target interest holders with meaningful messaging, and ultimately become educated and aware of how to measure, collect, and use results to support sustainability. Interviews with PV practitioners helped them understand that despite their effort and desire to sustain programming, their knowledge and formal instruction of what to maintain and how to sustain it is limited. What they have learned through delivery became apparent, and what they are doing that addresses known sustainability domains can be framed into two simple categories: What they think and what they do.

How Practitioners Think

How a PV practitioner thinks, sets in motion a trial-and-error process that finds solutions to program-impacting problems. For example, when addressing funding stability, PV practitioners think creatively, find unique and unorthodox ways to establish consistent program funding that lasts. They think strategically, finding the right partners to fill knowledge and skill gaps that support complete program delivery. To formulate plans that address known sustainability domains, PV practitioners develop a vision to achieve their program's goals in many of the known domains for sustainability. Unfortunately, a PV practitioner's personalized knowledge and experience often narrow the trial-and-error process, and solutions or approaches rarely become systematic or institutionalized.

What Practitioners Do

As important as how they think is what they do, PV practitioners' actions are intentional and calculated when addressing specific sustainability domains. For example, PV practitioners intentionally engage interest holders to understand expectations and educate and include them to shore up internal and external program support. They slowly build their organization's capacity to support PV, allowing it to grow organically to provide training, manage resources, and sometimes establish policies. To foster the adaptation of PV to their community, climate, geography, and culture, PV practitioners embrace the context surrounding the program. In their efforts to inspire, engage and help interest holders understand the benefits of PV, PV practitioners purposefully message and target specific interest holders.

Finally, to elicit feedback, demonstrate impact, share program success, and capture lessons learned, PV practitioners find ways to become educated and aware of accepted ways to

evaluate their efforts, deliver PV, and measure its outcomes. Realized success in these sustainability domains directly results from their passion for doing the right thing, their energy to persevere, and their belief in the benefits of delivering PV.

What Barriers or Challenges Exist to Building Capacity to Sustain PV Programming?

Three common challenges were evident when analyzing phase two data through the lens of the eight sustainability domains for challenges. First, PV practitioners seemed unprepared for PV's complexity and demands, having no required prerequisite knowledge and relying on personal experiences to tackle implementation. Secondly, they received limited internal support to guide and champion PV delivery. Finally, it became apparent that PV practitioners lacked knowledge and understanding of sustainability, focusing primarily on implementation while neglecting known domains supporting sustainability past initial funding. A brief discussion of each challenge follows.

Unprepared

PV delivery is complex, utilizing experiential learning to offer water activities, biking challenges, wilderness adventures, and mountaineering experiences that require access to school-age target groups, certified instructors, and costly specialized equipment. A wide range of support is needed to successfully deliver PV, including sufficient funding, formal partnerships, organizational alignment, program evaluation, program adaptation to the environment, successful messaging, and long-range planning. PV practitioners shared that they receive PV orientation training and the PV curriculum and are tasked with implementation. Neither the orientation nor curriculum prepares them for the politics of introducing a new youth engagement program, program concessions and realignment to secure necessary partnerships, or how to help decision-makers understand PV needs, expected outcomes, or its complexity. Adaptation of PV is encouraged and expected, yet PV practitioners admitted not knowing initially what or how to adapt or how to construct and maintain program evaluation to ensure fidelity. Though successful in their day-to-day activities, PV practitioners often find themselves ill-equipped and unprepared to plan effective messaging and think strategically about their communication and future plans.

Limited Internal Support

The second challenge faced by PV practitioners was a general lack of internal support needed to build and maintain momentum to achieve sustainability. It was typical for decision-makers responsible for establishing PV to move on or to shift their attention away from PV, demanding ongoing efforts to educate and maintain continuity of program support. Understaffing, staff retention, lack of training, exposed that leadership, organizational systems, and resource assignment are challenges to the support needed to ensure the growth of organizational capacity that embraces PV as routine. Having no communication strategy created obvious challenges to PV continuation. Still, in some cases, limited internal support for PV produced mixed messages to partners and supporters, suggesting PV continuation was in question. Admittedly, PV practitioners did not prioritize strategic planning; neither did decision-makers or leaders, despite PV practitioners identifying the need for strategic planning. Lack of internal support is costly to PV practitioners. It requires valuable time and energy to address, overcome, and counter, often creating anxiety, distraction, and disruptions that alter, delay, and disrupt the path of program sustainability.

Lack of Knowledge and Understanding of Sustainability

Ultimately, PV practitioners' unpreparedness and lack of support stem from their lack of knowledge or capacity for sustainability while prioritizing program implementation. Six of the eight sustainability domains display PV practitioners' lack of knowledge:

Funding Stability - PV practitioners initiate programming upon receiving funds, de-prioritizing the need to secure alternative funding sources and unaware that single-source grant funding does not equal sustainability.

Partnerships - Prioritizing activity implementation support necessary for day-to-day program delivery, PV practitioners fail to understand appropriate concessions and often do not know what to ask for from partners to secure meaningful, lasting, mutually sustainable partnerships.

Program Evaluation - Although PV practitioners know the need for evaluation, collecting and using data to demonstrate program needs, benefits, and successes is elusive. They share that they do not know where to start.

Program Adaptation - With practice, PV practitioners adapt daily activities very well. Unfortunately, they struggle to make structural adaptations based on evaluation feedback to ensure program effectiveness while continuing to provide program fidelity.

Communication - Although PV practitioners found ways to inspire, inform, and engage the community they served, failing to conduct interest holder analysis often created missed opportunities to build support and construct an effective program communication plan.

Strategic Planning - PV practitioners focused and relied on successfully delivering day-to-day activities, undermining the need to construct a strategic plan that organized the known domains of sustainability to ensure programming past initial funding.

How Can NIYLDP Support Sustainability?

PV practitioners view NIYLDP as experts in many areas of program delivery. Over 40 years, they have developed and refined PV to adapt to geography, climate, culture, and budgets. They have created a vast network of partners, built private and government institutional support, and maintained a highly skilled and knowledgeable staff. PV practitioners quickly develop strong relationship with NIYLDP staff and willingly share their experiences of what NIYLDP does and what opportunities NIYLDP has to further support PV sustainability.

What NIYLDP Does

Initially, to support the replication of PV and its implementation, NIYLDP offer PV orientation training to introduce its philosophy, principles, and values. They provide PV curriculum, and once a community has initiated PV replication, they offer facilitator training to help program facilitators develop experiential learning teaching skills and reinforce PV's guiding principles. NIYLDP and PV practitioners forge lasting relationships during this initiation process, facilitating ongoing ad-hoc support. NIYLDP is available and will provide suggestions on being more collaborative and delivering training to community members to build environmental support. They promote PV to foundations and governmental agencies to encourage financial support. To support partnership development, NIYLDP developed their curriculum to be inclusive and support adaptation; they connect PV replication programs to their network of relationships and provide customized training to help educate and inspire potential

partners. Their willingness to attend communities allows for NIYLDP presentations and information sessions that help build organizational capacity. During orientation training, they introduce evaluation concepts, tools, and benefits. Program adaptation is introduced and promoted at each step of NIYLDP's implementation process, providing continuing support through mentorship and additional training. During PV orientation, participants complete an exercise that helps them plan the first year of implementation, introducing them to required partnerships, programming and organizational needs, and necessary adaptions.

NIYLDP Opportunities

NIYLDP provides training and curriculum, is readily available to answer questions and travels anywhere to spread the word. However, from a sustainability perspective, PV practitioners report that NIYLDP support could be more consistent and sometimes more present. As described by one PV practitioner, sustainability support is a “growth opportunity” for NIYLDP to share their 40 years of experiences to facilitate successful and continued replication of PV through guidance, training, and outreach. For example, the guidance includes specifics on building program support internally and externally, available funding for PV programs to support funding diversity and using collected data and evaluations to promote and adapt PV effectively. Desired NIYLDP training would include formal grant application writing that builds knowledge and experience, evaluation methods and tools to educate and make PV practitioners aware of its benefits and preparing a strategic plan to help chart a path for sustainability. NIYLDP outreach to PV practitioners could include sharing experiences and helping evaluate programming fidelity, problem-solving encountered program adaptation challenges, and supporting adherence to the program's strategic plan to maintain focus.

CHAPTER 6 – FINAL THOUGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Final Thoughts

This project emerged from the desire to understand how an evidence-based program that received widespread public support, developed effective partnerships, adapted to the community context, collected program data, completed outcome evaluations, and produced expected outcomes could not be sustained past initial funding. Wondering what could have been done differently, I asked, what challenges do PV practitioners face? What are PV practitioners doing? What is NIYLDP doing to support sustainability? These questions required that I explore existing literature on program sustainability, connect with practitioners of PV to discover their program experience and understanding of sustainability, and finally, meet with PV practitioners to hear their stories and further explore their sustainability efforts to explore their actions, intentions, outcomes, understanding and what they learned about sustainability. It also exposed common themes shared by practitioners despite the level of programming success, leading to recommendations to help navigate and overcome sustainability challenges.

The literature review of 40-plus articles exploring sustainability helped me understand that program sustainability is elusive, and my experience of discontinuation was common. Despite its importance to the continuation (Bodkin & Kakimi, 2020), and no agreed definition of sustainability, there are recommended elements to consider when defining sustainability (Moore et al., 2017). The literature demonstrated that programs generally address sustainability as the last stage of implementation. However, researchers reported the benefits of initiating sustainability efforts at the beginning of implementation (Pluye et al., 2005). Most research focused on the necessity for sustainability, capturing the consequences of discontinuation, revealing that the knowledge gap is not about why or what to sustain but about agreement and guidance on achieving sustainability (Hodge & Turner, 2016; Vitale et al., 2018). Finally, the research was found to contain numerous conceptual models that include a variety of components believed necessary for sustainability, leading to the creation of the Program Sustainability Assessment Tool (Luke et al., 2014) that identified eight domains believed to contain the necessary elements to facilitate sustainability.

PV practitioners experience three common challenges: being unprepared to implement and sustain PV either because of lack of experience or lack of training, lack of continued internal support, reducing access to resources and influencers, and having little prior exposure to known domains of sustainability, learning about sustainable through trial and error. When attempting to address the known domains of sustainability, PV practitioners thought creatively, strategically, and with vision; they also took action, engaging intentionally to gain support; they supported organic organizational growth to build capacity; they embraced the context of their community to facilitate adaptation, communication was purposeful and targeted with specific messages for specific interest holders, and PV practitioner became educated and aware of data collection tools to assist with effective program evaluation. PV practitioners shared that NIYLDP's curriculum and training support implementation but identified desired guidance, specific training, and regular outreach that would benefit the continuation of PV beyond initial funding.

Program sustainability is known to be elusive. The consequences of program termination results in loss of resources, trust, and missed opportunities to realize the benefits of effective evidence-based programs. Challenges to continuation are common, and efforts to have PV continue past initial funding often stem from a PV practitioner's personal experience and through trial and error. PV is proven, and PV practitioners are capable and fueled by passion. NIYLDP has 40 years of knowledge and experience to share and by providing access to NIYLDP supported documentation and resources, training, and connections, successful PV implementation can transition to sustainable impact.

Recommendations

NIYLDP Supported Online Resource

NIYLDP has a wealth of knowledge and experience gained over 40 years regarding PV delivery, coordination, and adaptation in various contexts. To assist replication sites facing typical challenges, NIYLDP can provide access to various online resources, including checklists, templates, databases, and examples of documents that support PV continuation. For instance, checklists can assess readiness and monitor implementation. Tools such as the Program Sustainability Assessment Tool or one that assists in interest holder analysis can guide PV

practitioners in decision-making. An interactive map of known replication sites and their present activity level will support independent networking amongst replication sites.

To enhance the benefits for PV practitioners, creating and maintaining accessible databases that capture wise practices, program adaptations, and funding opportunities can provide valuable PV knowledge. Maintaining a PV definition database will ensure standard literacy of PV expressions, terminology, and core meanings. PV practitioners can also benefit from examples of organizational structures, including recommended positions and job descriptions, as well as organizational policies that support the institutionalization of PV. Templates for logic models, communication strategies, program evaluation, data collection, debriefing, data analysis, assistance with community assets and need mapping, partnership memorandums of understanding, strategic planning, and program report cards can save PV practitioners time and effort and allow them to focus on delivering high-quality PV.

Training and Knowledge Sharing

NIYLDP requires all organizations interested in replicating PV to attend an orientation training to learn about the philosophy, principles, and values of PV. They also offer PV facilitator training for those involved in its delivery. To acknowledge, reflect, and emphasize the complexity of PV, it is recommended NIYLDP develops and delivers training that offers knowledge sharing, skill development, and capacity building, supporting specific tasks, roles, and goals of PV. For example, training that helps with tasks like data collection, communication, strategic planning and grant writing, or training for coordinators and administrators that prepares individuals for the uniqueness of PV delivery, and finally, training for implementation and sustainability that educates interest holders on creating a PV program that lasts past initial funding.

Outreach and Technical Assistance

It is recommended that NIYLDP build on relationships developed during orientation training and offer consistent outreach and technical assistance by partnering replication sites with a specific staff member. The experiential educator's regular contact can help PV practitioners navigate NIYLDP's website and tools and provide opportunities to review program fidelity and strategic plans. NIYLDP staff can facilitate problem-solving of everyday issues, program

adaptation, and communication between NIYLDP and replication sites. This communication helps share new information, reinforces PV guiding principles, promotes upcoming events, and identifies events supporting sustainability. It is also recommended that NIYLDP organize PV summits and facilitates meaningful networking between replication sites. This will help support sharing successes, challenges, and lessons learned. It will also reinforce PV principles, values, and program fidelity. Ultimately, outreach and technical support by NIYLDP experiential educators offer helpful feedback, insights, and connections to ensure expected delivery.

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Appendix A - Initiating Sustainability (Pluye et al., 2005)

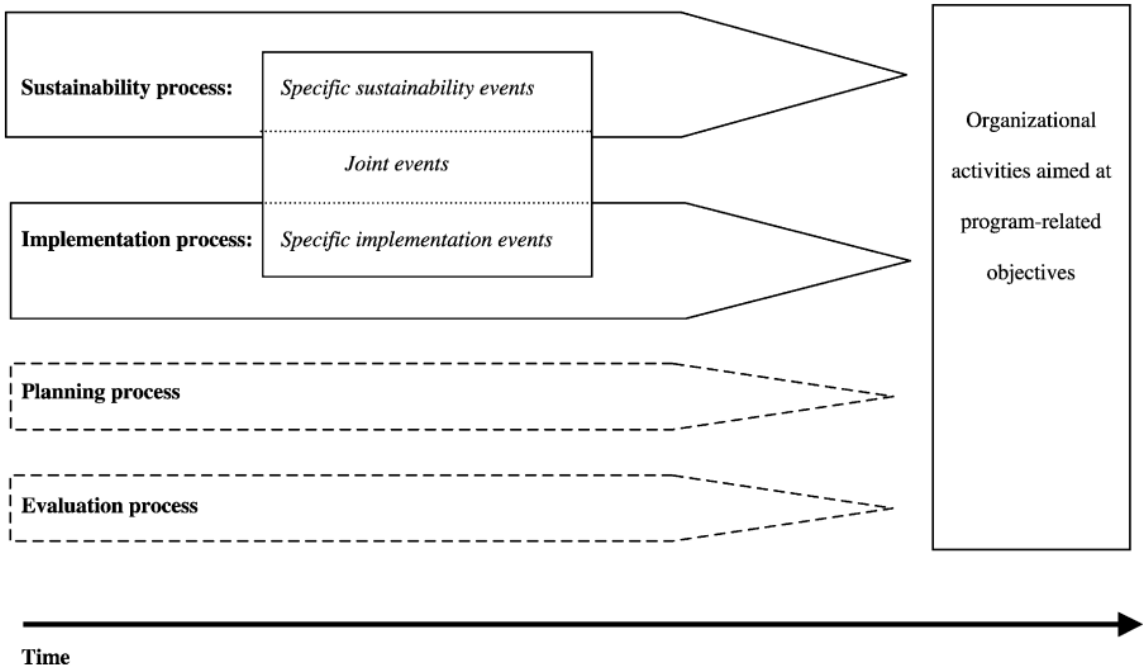


Fig. 1. Program sustainability: The 'concomitancy' conceptualization.

Appendix B - Program Sustainability Assessment Tool v2

Program Sustainability Assessment Tool v2

What is program sustainability capacity?

We define program sustainability capacity as *the ability to maintain programming and its benefits over time.*

Why is program sustainability capacity important?

Programs at all levels and settings struggle with their sustainability capacity. Unfortunately, when programs are forced to shut down, hard won improvements in public health, clinical care, or social service outcomes can dissolve. To maintain these benefits to society, stakeholders must understand all of the factors that contribute to program sustainability. With knowledge of these critical factors, stakeholders can build program *capacity* for sustainability and position their efforts for long term success.

What is the purpose of this tool?

This tool will enable you to assess your program's current capacity for sustainability across a range of specific organizational and contextual factors. Your responses will identify sustainability strengths and challenges. You can then use results to guide sustainability action planning for your program.

Helpful definitions

This tool has been designed for use with a wide variety of programs, both large and small, across different settings. Given this flexibility, it is important for you to think through how you are defining your program, organization, and community before starting the assessment.

Below are a few definitions of terms that are frequently used throughout the tool.

- Program refers to the set of formal organized activities that you want to sustain over time. Such activities could occur at the local, state, national, or international level and in a variety of settings.
- Organization encompasses all the parent organizations or agencies in which the program is housed. Depending on your program, the organization may refer to a national, state, or local department, a nonprofit organization, a hospital, etc.
- Community refers to the stakeholders who may benefit from or who may guide the program. This could include local residents, organizational leaders, decision-makers, etc. Community does not refer to a specific town or neighborhood.

The name of the program or set of activities I am assessing is:

_____

In the following questions, you will rate your program across a range of specific factors that affect sustainability. Please respond to as many items as possible. If you truly feel you are not able to answer an item, you may select "NA." **For each statement, circle the number that best indicates the extent to which your program has or does the following things.**

Environmental Support: Having a supportive internal and external climate for your program

	To little or no extent						To a very great extent	Not able to answer
1. Champions exist who strongly support the program.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
2. The program has strong champions with the ability to garner resources.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
3. The program has leadership support from within the larger organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
4. The program has leadership support from outside of the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
5. The program has strong public support.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA

Funding Stability: Establishing a consistent financial base for your program

	To little or no extent						To a very great extent	Not able to answer
1. The program exists in a supportive state economic climate.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
2. The program implements policies to help ensure sustained funding.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
3. The program is funded through a variety of sources.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
4. The program has a combination of stable and flexible funding.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
5. The program has sustained funding.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA

For each statement, circle the number that best indicates the extent to which your program has or does the following things.

Partnerships: Cultivating connections between your program and its stakeholders

	To little or no extent					To a very great extent		Not able to answer
1. Diverse community organizations are invested in the success of the program.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
2. The program communicates with community leaders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
3. Community leaders are involved with the program.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
4. Community members are passionately committed to the program.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
5. The community is engaged in the development of program goals.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA

Organizational Capacity: Having the internal support and resources needed to effectively manage your program and its activities

	To little or no extent					To a very great extent		Not able to answer
1. The program is well integrated into the operations of the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
2. Organizational systems are in place to support the various program needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
3. Leadership effectively articulates the vision of the program to external partners.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
4. Leadership efficiently manages staff and other resources.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
5. The program has adequate staff to complete the program's goals.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA

For each statement, circle the number that best indicates the extent to which your program has or does the following things.

Program Evaluation: Assessing your program to inform planning and document results

	To little or no extent						To a very great extent	Not able to answer
1. The program has the capacity for quality program evaluation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
2. The program reports short term and intermediate outcomes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
3. Evaluation results inform program planning and implementation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
4. Program evaluation results are used to demonstrate successes to funders and other key stakeholders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
5. The program provides strong evidence to the public that the program works.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA

Program Adaptation: Taking actions that adapt your program to ensure its ongoing effectiveness

	To little or no extent						To a very great extent	Not able to answer
1. The program periodically reviews the evidence base.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
2. The program adapts strategies as needed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
3. The program adapts to new science.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
4. The program proactively adapts to changes in the environment.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
5. The program makes decisions about which components are ineffective and should not continue.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA

For each statement, circle the number that best indicates the extent to which your program has or does the following things.

Communications: Strategic communication with stakeholders and the public about your program

	To little or no extent						To a very great extent	Not able to answer
1. The program has communication strategies to secure and maintain public support.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
2. Program staff communicate the need for the program to the public.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
3. The program is marketed in a way that generates interest.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
4. The program increases community awareness of the issue.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
5. The program demonstrates its value to the public.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA

Strategic Planning: Using processes that guide your program's direction, goals, and strategies

	To little or no extent						To a very great extent	Not able to answer
1. The program plans for future resource needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
2. The program has a long-term financial plan.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
3. The program has a sustainability plan.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
4. The program's goals are understood by all stakeholders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
5. The program clearly outlines roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA

Program Sustainability Assessment Tool v2

Rating Instructions

Once you have completed the Program Sustainability Assessment Tool, transfer your responses to this rating sheet to calculate your average scores. Please record the score for each item (1-7), or write "NA" if you were not able to answer.

		DOMAIN							
		Envirmntl. Support	Funding Stability	Partnerships	Organizational Capacity	Program Evaluation	Program Adaptation	Communications	Strategic Planning
	ITEM 1.								
	2.								
	3.								
	4.								
	5.								
Add up your scores in each column. Exclude 'NA'	**Domain Total:**								
Divide the domain total by the total number of items with a score. Exclude 'NA'	**Average Score for Domain:**								
Average together all the domain scores	**Overall Score:**								

Use these results to guide sustainability action planning for your program. The domains with lower average scores indicate areas where your program's capacity for sustainability could be improved.

Center for Public Health Systems Science
GEORGE WARREN BROWN SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Table 1 - Eight Domains of Capacity for Sustainability

Eight Domains of Capacity for Sustainability (Luke et al., 2014)

Domain	Description
Environmental Support	Requires Internal and external. • Champions • Resource Access • Leadership • Public Support • Ability to Keep Decision Makers Informed

Funding Stability	Requires
	• Sources of funding
	  ○ Flexible
	  ○ Diverse
	• Support organizational policies that address economic climate

Partnerships	Partners must be • Diverse • Passionate • Involved, and • Informed about programming activities
Organizational Capacity	• the ability to integrate programs • shape supportive systems • share vision • ensure sufficient staffing and • effectively manage resources and personnel
Program Evaluation	• conduct quality evaluations • Share outcomes • use data to plan and implement • show the program's success and • demonstrate that the program works
Program Adaptation	Activities that adjust: • strategies, • review evidence, • navigate new knowledge, • adapt to changes in the environment, and • the determination and discontinuation of ineffective program components
Communications	Strategic efforts: • ensure staff communicate how it is meeting needs, • market to attract support, • Goals are understood and then shared, • addressed issues are comprehended and • value to the community is established.

Strategic Planning	• prioritizing long-term planning
	• Integration with organizational objectives
	• address resource needs and financial requirements for each of the seven domains of sustainability
	• ensuring that all stakeholders
	  ○ understand their roles and responsibilities and
	  ○ the program's objectives

Appendix C – Implementers On-Line Survey Sections

- "Introduction" (section 1) introduced the study and obtained consent for survey participation.
- "You and Your Background" (section 2) collected information regarding the participant's experience and training in program delivery and sustainment.
- "Understanding Your Relationship With Project Venture" (section 3) clarified their personal experience with Project Venture, their level of engagement with NIYLDP, and program mentorship.
- "Your Project Venture Program" (section 4) explored the participants' involvement and perceptions regarding the program's who, what, and where, as well as the program's level of success.
- "Defining Program Sustainability" (section 5) captured the participant's knowledge regarding their PV program definition of sustainability.
- Project Venture Curriculum Delivery" (section 6) assessed the participant's PV program's adherence to NIYLDP's curriculum delivery expectations.
- "Program Sustainability Assessment Tool" (section 7) explained the tool, its purpose, and required consent for the participant to continue.
- Sections 8 through 15 presented questions to assess the eight components of sustainability.
- "One-On-One Interview Participation" (section 16) collected interest and consent to be contacted for participation in a one-on-one interview.
- "Contact Information" (section 17) gathered information that allowed for contact between the researcher and the participant.

Appendix D – Email Invitation to Participate

Greetings to the friends, partners and colleagues of Project Venture,

This message introduces Chris Amell and his graduate work on sustainability. Chirs ran an inspiring program in Ontario, Canada, for five years. He grasped the philosophy and approach and developed a great program in a remote First Nations community. After Chris's five-year commitment ended, he went on to a graduate program in community development at the University of Victoria. His thesis topic is Project Venture and the factors that lead to successful sustainability of the program beyond initial funding.

As most of you know, Project Venture has been implemented for over 30 years across the US, including Hawaii and Alaska and in eight provinces in Canada. But, honestly, the rate of successful sustainability of programs beyond the initial funding grant is low. There are many reasons for this, and it is the focus of Chris's research. Over the years, we have increased our emphasis on sustainability through training and technical assistance and coaching. In addition, we encourage new programs to think ahead about the program's life from Day one in the life of every program. Chris's research will gather valuable information to increase the likelihood of programs lasting for many years beyond initial funding. The young people we work with deserve long-term, quality programs that will result in generational change.

The survey will take about 25 mins of your time and provide valuable information. Therefore, I am personally asking that you participate in the survey attached (which can be accessed by clicking 'Access Survey Here') and provide Chris with your honest opinions and thoughts on improving the sustainability of future Project Venture programs. Please read the attached introduction letter carefully and know that all answers will remain anonymous.

Please complete the survey by March 10th, 2022 midnight.

Finally, I ask that you forward this email and encourage participation from colleagues with Project Venture implementation experience. The more responses, the better.

Thank you in advance for your valuable contribution.

Mac Hall

Founder, CEO and Developer of Project Venture

Access Survey Here

Appendix E – Reminder Message From Mac Hall – 27Feb22

Greetings,

Thank you to everyone that has completed and submitted the Project Venture survey. This will serve as a friendly reminder that this survey is being conducted by my friend and colleague, Chris Amell, regarding Project Venture (also called Project Journey and Project Sunset in Canada). Your responses are providing valuable insight into your successes, challenges and lessons learned. I also want to thank those who have offered to be part of the one-on-one interviews with Chris.

We are hoping for more responses. The survey should only take 10-15 minutes to complete. Don't worry if you can't answer every question. Often no response to a particular question also provides valuable information. Also, do not be concerned if your experience with the program has ended, or was several years ago. Your knowledge and perspective are still very valuable.

We know you are all very busy, but if you haven't had a chance to complete the survey, please take a few minutes to share your valuable insights to help future Project Venture implementers to build programs that will sustain. To complete the survey, please click the link below.

Best Regards, Mac

ACCESS SURVEY HERE

Appendix F - Final Email Reminder Phase One Recruiting

Not Available

Appendix G - Letter of Information to Survey Participants

Project Venture: Principles of Sustainability

You are invited to participate in a study entitled Project Venture: Principles of Sustainability, which is being conducted by Chris Amell.

Chris Amell is a graduate student in the Department of Public Administration at the University of Victoria and is required to conduct research to complete his degree in Masters of Arts in Community Development. You may contact him if you have further questions by telephone at (807) 728-7652 or by email at Chrisamell69@gmail.com. This study is being conducted for McClellan (Mac) Hall of the National Indian Youth Leadership Project and being supervised by Dr. Jill Chouinard who can be contacted at 778-678-0762.

Purpose and Objectives.

Chris Amell coordinated and implemented the delivery of Project Venture between 2013 and 2018 in a community in northern Ontario and is researching what activities and actions enhance a replicated Project Venture program's capacity for sustainability beyond initial funding. Particular focus will be on PV practitioners' experiences, observations, and perspectives concerning program sustainability.

Importance of this Research

This research is important for several reasons. First, indigenous youth face challenges at a higher rate than non-indigenous youth and will benefit significantly from sustainable evidence-based practice in programming that embraces cultural teachings. Second, Project Venture is one of the few evidence-based intervention programs designed for indigenous youth. Continued failure to sustain Project Venture programs past their initial life-cycle results in loss of program benefits, loss of resources, further jeopardizing community trust and increasing resistance to future programming. Finally, this research will support NIYLDP in providing guidance to community organizations to sustain PV's known outcomes beyond initial funding.

Participants Selection

You are being asked to participate in this study because the leadership of the NIYLDP has identified you as someone who has either:

- Participated in Project Venture training facilitated by NIYLDP, or
- Been part of the replication and delivery of Project Venture, or
- Been responsible for the coordination and replication of a Project Venture program separate from the NIYLDP, or
- Has championed the replication of Project Venture through a community program separate from the NIYLDP
- Has an understanding of the core components of Project Venture programming, and
- Has insight into challenges and barriers to implementing and sustaining Project Venture programming.

What is involved

If you consent to voluntarily participate in this research, you will be asked to complete an online survey that collects information regarding your experiences delivering and sustaining Project Venture.

As well, the survey includes the "Sustainability Assessment Tool v2" created by the Center for Public Health Systems Science at the George Warren Brown School of Social Work. This tool will assess your program's capacity for sustainability across a range of specific organizational and contextual factors. Your responses will help to assess program sustainability strengths and challenges. There is no right or wrong answer when completing the survey, responses should be based on your experiences and personal assessment of the Project Venture program you were involved with. At the end of the survey, you will be asked if you wish to participate in a one-on-one interview. Your survey answer will be collected through Survey Monkey that stores all collected data in Canada and will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Risks

There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research.

Benefits

The benefits of your participation in this research potentially include increased understanding of best practices and challenges for sustaining Project Venture and ways of creating a pathway to sharing that knowledge that will lead to successful programming sustainability.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation by simply exiting your browser. If you choose to submit your survey responses, this will constitute consent..

Anonymity

Survey Monkey will not collect identifying information such as your name, email or IP address. Therefore, your responses will remain anonymous. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study.

Confidentiality

Your survey answers will be captured in Survey Monkey where data will be transferred and stored on the University of Victory Net drive system, utilizing an account assigned to Chris Amell and/or a single external hard drive at the residences of Chris Amell, in the sole possession of Chris Amell, and only accessible by Chris Amell. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study.

At the end of the survey, you will be asked if you are interested in participating in a one-on-one interview [by phone, or video conferencing]. If you choose to provide contact information such as your phone number or email address, your survey responses may no longer be anonymous to the researcher. However, no names or identifying information would be

included in any publications or presentations based on this data, and your responses to this survey will remain confidential.

Dissemination of Results

It is anticipated that the results of this study may include your contributions and will be shared with others in the following ways: Published Articles, capstone and class presentations, presentations with PV practitioners and administrators, presentations that may be requested by NIYLDP to other community organizations. As well, this project will produce several items to support efforts for successful Project Venture sustainability.

1. A presentation to the board of directors of NIYLDP that details the importance of implementation strategies and their relationship to the successful sustainability of PV programming that can later be shared with other communities wishing to replicate the project.
2. A report for NIYLDP that shares best practices of Community PV practitioners to overcome common challenges and barriers to the sustainability of Project Venture programming.
3. Recommendations that will result in the production of literature, training and mentorship for sharing of best practices that address implementation components.

Disposal of Data

Data from this study will be disposed of five years after the completion of Chris Amell's Master's program with all electronic data erased and paper copies will be shredded.

Contacts

Individuals that may be contacted regarding this study include the researcher: Chris Amell at Chrisamell69@gmail.com or by cell phone at (807) 728-7652. The project supervisor, Dr. Jill Chouinard may be contacted at jchouinard@uvic.ca.

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, 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).

By completing and submitting the survey, YOUR FREE AND INFORMED CONSENT IS IMPLIED and indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers.

If you wish to participate in the research study, please click on this link to continue to the online survey (hover and click, then click on the link):

Access Survey Here

Thank you for participating and completing the survey if this applies to you.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Victoria Human Ethics Board. Please retain a copy of this letter for your reference.

Appendix H – Participant Response Rate

Participant Response Rate	Participants	% of Participants to Phase Respondents
Eligible Participants for Phase One (NIYLP Database)	N=300	
Participants Invited to Participate in Phase One	N=250	
Respondents for Phase One	N=31	12.4 %
Eligible Respondents for Phase One	N=28	11.2 %
Respondents for Phase One	N=24	9.6 %
Snowball Sampling Respondents for Phase One	N=4	1.6 %
Respondents to Initiate or complete PSAT	N=18	7.2%
Eligible Respondents for Phase Two	N=10	100%
Expressed interest in Phase Two Participation	N=10	100%
NIYLP is not responsible for program delivery	N=9	90%
Able to participate in an interview	N=8	80%
Interviewed	N=8	80%

Appendix I – Criteria to Participate in Phase Two One-On-One Interviews

	Inclusion	Exclusion
Interviewee	• Consented to be interviewed. • Completed Survey • PV was delivered with Fidelity. • Feels PV met outcome expectation. • Involved in the replication and delivery of PV	• Is an employee of NIYLDP

Appendix J - Letter of Information - One-on-One Interview

University of Victoria

Letter of Information - One-To-One Interview

Project Venture: Principles of Sustainability

Thank you for participating in the online survey and expressing interest in participating in a one-on-one interview.

The study titled - Project Venture: Principles of Sustainability, is being conducted by Chris Amell.

I am a graduate student in the Department of Public Administration at the University of Victoria. You may contact me if you have further questions by telephone at (807) 728-7652 or email at Chrisamell69@gmail.com.

As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a degree in Master of Arts in Community Development. It is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Jill Chouinard. You may contact Jill by email at jchouinard@uvic.ca.

This study is also being conducted for the National Indian Youth Leadership Project under the supervision of McClellan (Mac) Hall.

Purpose and Objectives

This research aims to identify and capture successful strategies and tactics used by PV implementers that build capacity for sustaining PV programming beyond initial funding. Particular focus will be given to the perceptions of Project Venture stakeholders and practitioners concerning program sustainability.

Importance of this Research

This research is important for several reasons. First, indigenous youth face challenges at a higher rate than non-indigenous youth and benefit significantly from sustainable evidence-based practice in programming that embraces cultural teachings. Second, Project Venture is one of the few evidence-based intervention programs designed for indigenous youth. Continued failure to sustain Project Venture programs past their initial funding results in loss of program benefits, and loss of resources, jeopardizes community trust and increases resistance to future programming. Finally, this research will support NIYLP by guiding community organizations attempting to effectively implement and sustain Project Venture programming and replicate known outcomes.

Participants Selection

You are being asked to further participate in this study because you have completed an online survey and consented to a one-on-one interview. Your survey indicated that the Project Venture you were involved with was implemented with fidelity. You also indicated that you observed and experienced both successes and challenges in sustaining your Project Venture program. You are one of 6 to 8 individuals that have been selected to participate in a one-on-one interview.

What is involved?

If you consent to voluntarily participating in this one-on-one interview, an interview time that is convenient for you will be identified. During the interview, you will be asked a series of questions regarding your experience related to the Project Venture program to explore further your perspective of successes, challenges and barriers, and lessons learned regarding the program's sustainability. The interview will take approximately 90 minutes.

Revised on April 2021

University of Victoria

Letter of Information - One-To-One Interview

With your consent, I will audio/video record this interview using UVic Zoom and take some hand-written notes. The audio/video recording will be transcribed for data analysis.

Please note that you have the option to decline to be audio recorded. You also have the right not to answer specific questions or to end your participation in the interview at any time, for any reason. After the interview, you have the right to withdraw any or all information disclosed up to four weeks after completion of the interview, as this is when data analysis will begin. Before beginning the interview, you will be asked for permission, and the consent form will be reviewed.

The information you share will help provide insight into the successes, challenges and barriers, and lessons learned while implementing and attempting to sustain Project Venture programming.

Risks
There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research. Your identity and responses will be confidential and only known by me.

Benefits
The benefits of your participation in this research include an increased understanding of best practices for sustaining Project Venture and ways of creating a pathway to sharing that knowledge that will lead to programming sustainability.

Voluntary Participation,
Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or explanation. If you withdraw from the study, your data will be used only if you permit its use.

Anonymity
To protect your anonymity, your participation will only be known by me, and no identifiers will be attached to the information you provide. Your name will be coded and kept in a separate document that will be password protected and stored on the University of Victory Net drive system, utilizing an account assigned to Chris Amell. Quotes may be used in final papers or presentations; however, you, nor your place of work, will be identified.

Confidentiality
Your name will be coded and kept in a separate document password-protected and stored on the University of Victory Net drive system, utilizing an account assigned to Chris Amell. Your confidentiality and the confidentiality of the data will be protected by being stored on the University of Victory Net drive system, utilizing an account assigned to Chris Amell and/or a single external hard drive at the home office of Chris Amell, in the sole possession of Chris Amell and only accessible by Chris Amell.

Dissemination of Results
It is anticipated that the results of this study may include your contributions and will be shared with others in the following ways: Published Articles, capstone and class presentations, presentations with Project Venture practitioners and administrators, presentations that may be requested by NIYLP to other community

Revised on April 2021

organizations. This project will also produce several items to support efforts for successful Project Venture sustainability.

1. A presentation to the board of directors of NIYLP that details the importance of implementation strategies and their relationship to the successful sustainability of PV programming can later be shared with other communities wishing to replicate the project.
2. A report for NIYLP that shares best practices of Community Practitioners to overcome common challenges and barriers to the sustainability of Project Venture programming.
3. Recommendations will result in the production of literature, training, and mentorship for sharing best practices that address implementation components.

Disposal of Data

Data from this study will be disposed of five years after completing the Master's program with all electronic data erased, and paper copies will be shredded.

Contacts

Individuals that may be contacted regarding this study include the researcher: Chris Amell, at Chrisamell69@gmail.com or by cell phone at (807) 728-7652. The project supervisor, Dr. Jill Chouinard, may be contacted at jchouinard@uvic.ca.

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study 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).

Revised on April 2021

Appendix K - Consent Form - One-On-One Interview

University of Victoria

Consent Form
One-on-One Interview

Thank you for agreeing to participate in a one-on-one interview. Chris Amell, a graduate student in the Masters of Arts in Community Development at the University of Victoria, will conduct the interview.

I will audio/video record this interview, and take some hand-written notes. Only I will listen to the recordings and read the notes. The transcribed recordings will be in a password-protected file stored on an external hard drive. The transcripts will be analyzed and may be reproduced in whole or in part for use in my capstone project, in presentations, and/or in written products that result from this study.

Please note that you have the option to decline to be audio recorded. You also have the right not to answer specific questions or to end your participation in the interview at any time, for any reason. After the interview, you have the right to withdraw any or all information up to four weeks after completion of the interview session, as this is when data analysis will begin.

The interview will be a series of questions regarding your experience related to the Project Venture and explore further your perspective of successes, challenges and barriers, and lessons learned regarding program sustainability. Please note that there are no right or wrong answers. Please share your experience openly. The interview will last approximately one to two hours.

Your name will be coded and kept in a separate document that will be password protected and stored on a password-protected external hard drive. Quotes may be used in my project, presentations, and/or in written products resulting from this study. However, you nor your place of work will be identified.

Individuals contacted regarding this study include the researcher: Chris Amell at Chrisamell69@gmail.com or by cell phone at (807) 728-7652. The project supervisor, Dr. Jill Chouinard, may be contacted at 778-678-0762.

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study 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).

By signing below, I agree:

- I have reviewed the information sheet and have had any questions about the study answered to my satisfaction.
- I agree to participate in the research study.
- I agree to have the interview audio/video recorded.
- I agree that my information during this interview can be used for the purposes indicated.
- I agree to maintain the confidentiality of information shared in this interview.
- I have received a copy of this information letter.
- I agree that collected data may be analyzed in the future by NIYLP to assist further program development.

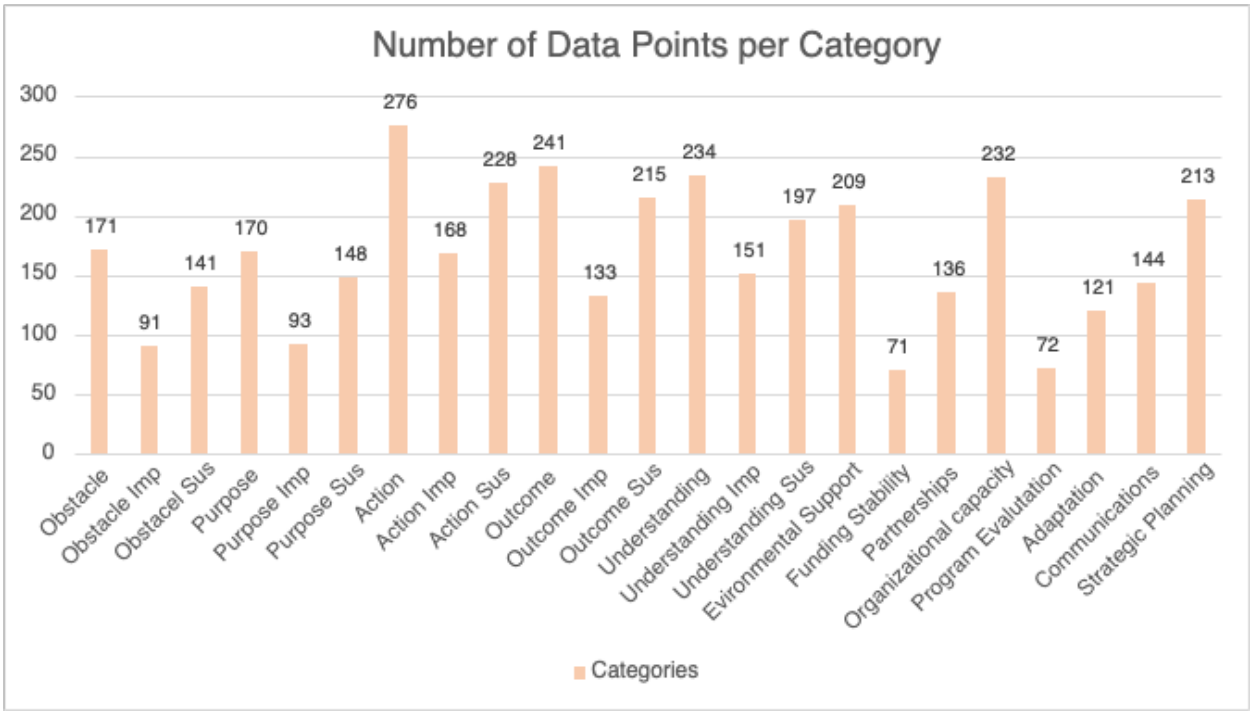
Name of Researcher: Chris Amell Date: _____

_____
Researcher Signature

Name of participant
(please print): _____ Date: _____

_____
Participant Signature

Appendix L – Graph 2 – Number of Data Points



Appendix M – Code Book

Code	Symbol	Definition
Obstacle	O	Either challenge or Barrier that interferes with achieving a set goal
Purpose	P	Reason for a specific action to be taken
Action	A _____	Efforts taken to overcome Obstacles
Outcome	Out	Results of efforts to achieve stated or desired goal/objective/action
Understanding	U	Why something is a challenged/barrier and how it affects stated or desired goal/objective
	Obs	Awareness of what is having impact on PV
	L	Acknowledged/stated learning, changed behaviour due to prior experience or understanding of outcome results
Environmental Support		Having a supportive internal and external climate for your program
Organizational Capacity		Having the internal support and resources needed to effectively manage your program and its activities
Funding Stability		Establishing a consistent financial base for your program
Adaptation		Taking actions that adapt your program to ensure its ongoing effectiveness
Communication		Strategic communication with stakeholders and the public about your program
Partnership		Cultivating connections between your program and its stakeholders
Program Evaluation		Assessing your program to inform planning and document results
Strategic Planning		Using processes that guide your program's direction, goals, and strategies
Implementation	Imp	Actions related to the delivery of Project Venture curriculum
Sustainability	Sus	Directly or indirectly supports the continuation of PV curriculum passed initial funding Period related to eight components of sustainability

Appendix N - One-On-One Interview Script

Questions

1. Could you please tell me about your project venture program and how you came to be involved with it?
2. Can you describe your understanding of sustainability as it relates to project venture?
3. From your perspective, what delivery experience, training and/or research have you found useful in helping to address sustainability concerns for Project Venture?
4. In your experience, what benefits does a NIYLDP mentor provide implementers in relation to sustaining Project Venture?
5. What influence and impacts do the different roles (practitioner, coordinator, administrator, or supporter) have on a program's sustainability?
6. When PV is implemented with fidelity, what activities do you think support both project implementation and project sustainability?
7. The Program Sustainability Tool identifies eight components that reflect a program's capacity for sustainability. They include,
    - Environmental Support,
    - Funding Stability, Partnerships,
    - Organizational Capacity,
    - Program Evaluation,
    - Program Adaptation,
    - Communication, and
    - Strategic Planning.

    In thinking about the eight components,
    a. In your opinion, what is the number one component necessary to ensure programming sustainability?
    b. For two of the components that suggested the capacity of your program for sustainability, please describe how you achieved success and what success looks like.
    c. Which of the eight components did you encounter barriers and find the most challenging?
8. What would ideal training in sustainability look like for PV?
9. What advice would you share with other implementations of PV to help achieve sustainability?
10. Can you think of anything else to add, related to sustainability, that you feel is relevant to this discussion?

Finish

- To attribute quotes appropriately, do you have a preferred pseudonym?
- Thank you for offering your time today and sharing your experiences, should you have any questions

Interview Protocol

Day _____ Time _____ CODE: _____

Opening

My name is Chris Amell and a former Implementer of PV. My Project Venture was for five years between 2013 and 2018 and delivered to the community of Pikangikum First Nations. I enrolled in the Masters of Community Development Program at the University of Victoria to better understand the processes, successes and challenges associated with community development. My purpose was to gain an understanding of why some of my efforts worked and others did not, leading me to undertake this research on an evidence-based program such as Project Venture. The project work will result in a presentation to the board of directors of NIYLDP , A report for NIYLDP that shares best practices and recommendations regarding the production of literature, training, and mentorship. The goal is to support replication, sharing best practices that overcome common barriers and challenges to sustaining known benefits of PV programming.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview and completing the Implementers On-Line Survey. This interview is designed to explore your experiences and understanding of how to sustain Project Venture and learn from both your successes and challenges to identify best practices that can assist other organizations to implement and sustain Project Venture past initial funding. The interview will consist of ten questions and take approximately 60 mins. However, it can go longer if necessary.

Informed Consent

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this one-on-one interview. I will audio/video record this interview and take some hand-written notes. Only I will listen to the recordings and read the notes. The transcribed recordings will be in a password-protected file stored on an external hard drive. The transcripts will be analyzed and may be reproduced in whole or in part

for use in my capstone project, in presentations, and/or in written products that result from this study.

Please note that you have the option to decline to be audio/video recorded. You also have the right not to answer specific questions or to end your participation in the interview at any time, for any reason. After the interview, you have the right to withdraw any or all information up to four weeks after completion of the interview session, as this is when data analysis will begin.

Your name will be coded and kept in a separate document that will be password protected and stored on a password-protected external hard drive. Quotes may be used in my project, presentations, and/or in written products resulting from this study. However, you nor your place of work will be identified.

By participating, you agree:

- I have reviewed the information sheet and have had any questions about the study answered to my satisfaction.
- I agree to participate in the research study.
- I agree to have the interview audio/video recorded.
- I agree that my information during this interview can be used for the purposes indicated.
- I agree to maintain the confidentiality of information shared in this interview.
- I have received a copy of this information letter.
- I agree that collected data may be analyzed in the future by NIYLDP to assist further program development.

Appendix O - Participant Responses to Question 7

Question	Participant Responses							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Most Important	Org capacity	Org capacity						
	Evaluation			Evaluation				
		Funding			Funding	Funding		
			Partnerships			Partnerships	Partnerships	Partnerships
Believed They Did Well	Comm's			Comm's				
	Adaptation		Adaptation		Adaptation			Adaptation
		Evaluation				Evaluation		
	Partnerships	Partnerships						Partnerships
			Org capacity	Org capacity				
			Funding			Funding		
Most Challenging		Adaptation		Adaptation		Adaptation		
			Evaluation				Evaluation	
					Org capacity			
								Strategic planning