SCOPING REVIEW OF EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING STRATEGIES

BUILDING EVALUATION CAPACITY IN ONTARIO PUBLIC HEALTH UNITS: A LOCALLY DRIVEN COLLABORATIVE PROJECT

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Scoping Review of Evaluation Capacity Building Strategies complements the February 2015 report by the same authors, *Building Evaluation Capacity in Ontario's Public Health Units.* Both reports are available on Public Health Ontario's website at www.publichealthontario.ca.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Boards of Health are required to evaluate their programs and services, as indicated in the Foundational Standard of the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS). Despite provincial expectations, public health units (PHUs) face challenges in undertaking program evaluation activities. Strengthening evaluation capacity (EC) across health units is an important strategy to promote effective program and service delivery, and thus a health unit's ability to improve health statuses.

The purpose of this Locally Driven Collaborative Project (LDCP), *Building Evaluation Capacity in Ontario's Public Health Units*, is to systematically determine what evidence-based tools are available to measure evaluation capacity, to select and apply an appropriate instrument for use within and across PHUs in Ontario, and to look into the literature to determine strategies for building evaluation capacity. Knowledge generated from this project will build an understanding of the current evaluation capacity levels in Ontario PHUs and will be used to inform future strategies on how to enhance program evaluation at the local level.

The LDCP project has three research objectives:

Objective 1: To identify an appropriate instrument to assess current evaluation capacity within and across PHUs in Ontario.

Objective 2: To adapt, test, pilot and implement the chosen instrument for assessing the extent of evaluation capacity within and across Ontario PHUs.

Objective 3: To identify strategies for building evaluation capacity in Ontario PHUs.

The results of this project are divided into two reports. This report addresses Objective 3. Objectives 1 and 2 are addressed in a complementary report published in February 2015, entitled *Building Evaluation Capacity in Ontario's Public Health Units*. Both reports are available on Public Health Ontario's website at www.publichealthontario.ca.

KEY FINDINGS

Through this scoping review, we were able to determine six ECB themes, each with several elements, which seem to be key to implementing a strong organizational evaluation culture: Strong Leadership, Organizational Environment, Adequate Resources, External Supports, evaluators with strong Skills and Knowledge, and a Comprehensive Organizational Evaluation Framework.

Although these themes are recurrent throughout the literature, they are also interdependent and different elements could be captured within different categories. Strong leadership that supports evaluation sets the tone within the organization to establish a framework and an organizational learning culture, to offer opportunities for individuals to develop their skills and knowledge, and to provide resources in order to cement ECB efforts. External supports are useful as they can help to infuse expertise and innovation within the organization.

METHODS

Using a librarian-assisted literature search of multiple electronic databases and journals, and following Arksey and O'Malley's (2005) scoping review methodology, the researchers identified 73 studies for review. The bulk of the articles were case studies, outlining how the authors were able to build evaluation capacity in different organizations and settings.

CONCLUSION

Current literature on ECB focuses more on describing specific organizational ECB programs and initiatives and less on the effectiveness of ECB strategies. We therefore unfortunately cannot recommend strategies that have been tested and proven effective. More research is necessary to determine the effectiveness of the key themes and elements of ECB strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Evaluation capacity building (ECB) is a topic of interest within the field of evaluation (Preskill & Boyle, 2008). It is also a topic of growing interest within the field of public health. As discussed in our complementary report, *Building Evaluation Capacity in Ontario's Public Health Units* (February 2015), strengthening evaluation capacity is essential to promote effective public health program and service delivery with the aim of improving population health statuses. This ccoping review shall focus on a review of ECB literature in order to identify strategies that will allow Ontario public health units (PHUs) to build a comprehensive ECB framework that addresses their weaknesses and contextual constraints.

It is important to define ECB prior to discussing ECB strategies. Despite there being many definitions of ECB, the one most often cited is provided by Stockdill, Baizerman and Compton (2002).

> *ECB is a context-dependent, intentional action system of guided processes and practices for bringing about and sustaining a state of affairs in which quality program evaluation and its appropriate uses are ordinary and ongoing practices within and/or between one or more organizations/programs/sites. (p. 8)*

Preskill and Boyle (2008a) also offer us a working definition of ECB that elaborates upon the previously cited definition.

> *Evaluation capacity building involves the design and implementation of teaching and learning strategies to help individuals, groups, and organizations learn about what constitutes effective, useful, and professional evaluation practice. The ultimate goal of evaluation capacity building is sustainable evaluation practice-where members continuously ask questions that matter; collect, analyze, and interpret data; and use evaluation findings for decision-making and action. For evaluation practice to be sustainable, organization members must be provided leadership support, incentives, resources, and opportunities to transfer their learning about evaluation to their everyday work. Sustainable evaluation practice also requires the development of systems, processes, policies, and plans that help embed evaluation work into the way the organization accomplishes its strategic mission and goals. (p. 444)*

Both definitions provided the scoping review team with direction regarding the identification of ECB strategies, as well as factors that contribute to or inhibit ECB efforts.

The purpose of this scoping review is to define the scope of the peer-reviewed literature regarding ECB strategies, as well as to provide the reader with a summary of the current body of knowledge concerning these strategies. The following questions guided the scoping review:

Primary question: *What is the breadth of the peer-reviewed literature regarding evaluation capacity building strategies within organizations?*

Secondary question: *What is known regarding these ECB strategies?*

METHODOLOGY

The general purpose of a scoping review is to assess the extent of the literature regarding a specific topic. Scoping reviews provide readers "with relevant and quantified results about the knowledge available on a particular topic, within and without particular research disciplines and communities" (Landa et al., 2011, p. 46). Scoping reviews tend to address broad subjects where many different study designs may be applicable. This scoping review was based on the Arksey and O'Malley (2005) scoping study methodological framework. Arksey and O'Malley identified four possible purposes for conducting a scoping review:

- » "To examine the extent, range and nature of research activity" (p. 6)
- » "To determine the value of undertaking a full systematic review" (p. 6)
- » "To summarize and disseminate research findings" (p. 6)
- » "To indentify research gaps in the existing literature" (p. 7)
- » This review will focus on providing the reader with "the extent, range and nature of research activity" (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005, p. 6), while also summarizing and disseminating findings from the studies reviewed.

LITERATURE SEARCH

A librarian-assisted literature search of multiple electronic databases and journals was conducted in June and July of 2014. The scope was limited to peer-reviewed English articles published from January 1994 to June 2014. Two reviewers independently reviewed all abstracts. The final inclusion criterion for article review was that an ECB strategy had to be discussed. The full article was also ordered when discrepancies arose between the reviewers, or if an abstract was not available for the article. Given the large number of articles, and the limited amount of time, the review team was required to modify its scoping review methodology by randomly distributing the articles between three reviewers for revision. They initially summarized each article using a standardized data abstraction instrument and then met to discuss article content, overarching themes that they identified throughout the literature, and final inclusion of articles.

Figure 1: Scoping Review Flow Chart
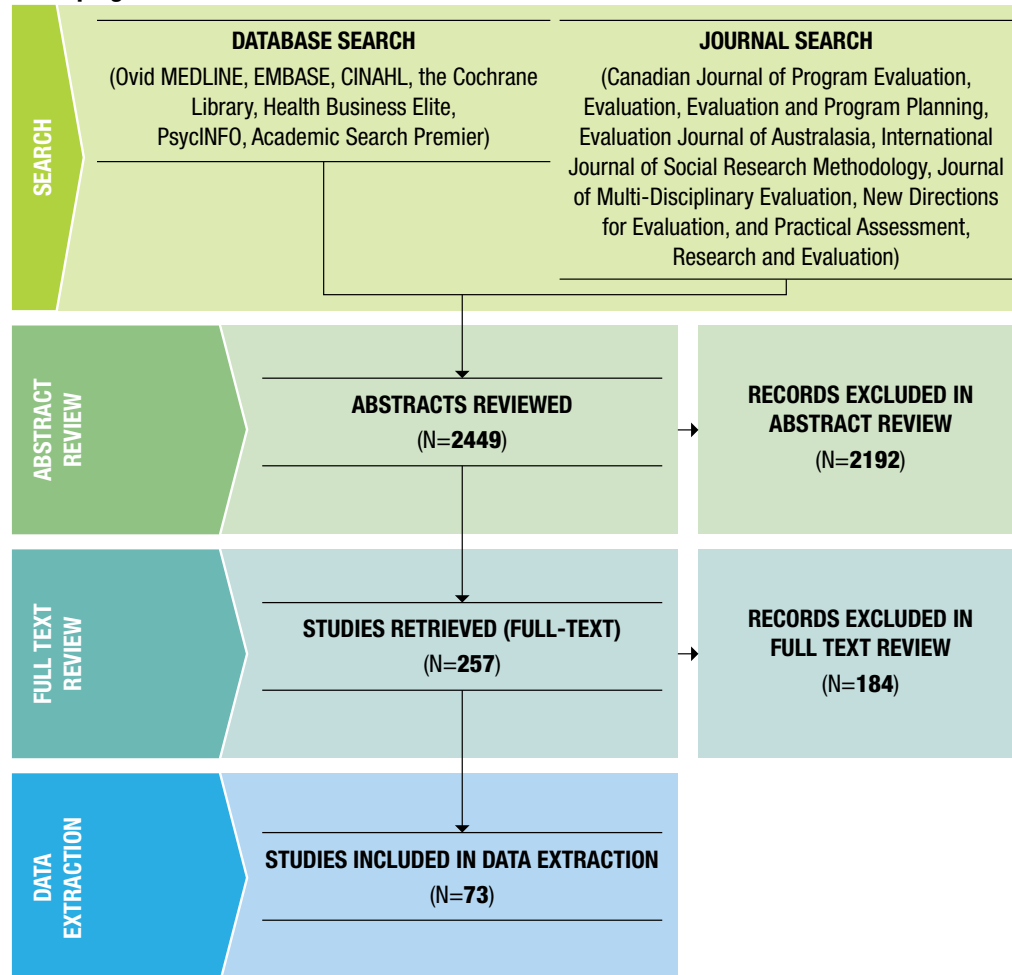
An example of the "Strategies to Build Evaluation Capacity within an Organization" search strategy conducted in Ovid MEDLINE is available in Appendix A: *Evaluation Capacity Building Strategies: Literature Search Strategy.*

RESULTS

The literature search yielded 2,449 potential articles of which the reviewers reviewed 257 articles in full text. After reading all of the articles, the reviewers agreed that 73 articles met the inclusion criteria for this scoping review. The following are the findings regarding the entire body of articles included in this scoping review:

» The majority of the journal articles are case studies, and most of them are a reflective account of ECB efforts (Cousins, Goh, Elliott, & Bourgeois, 2014; Nielsen, Lemire, & Skov, 2011).

» A smaller portion of the journal articles are theoretical explorations of ECB and ECB strategies.

» The majority of the articles do not present us with quantifiable measures regarding the results of implementing ECB efforts. However, many authors provide us with anecdotal lessons learned.

» The majority of the case studies involved the implementation of several ECB strategies as part of a greater ECB plan.

The organizational context appears to be a major factor that influences ECB efforts, which is one of the 11 elements of the Stockdill et al. (2002) ECB definition.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS ORGANIZED BY THEMES AND KEY ELEMENTS

Given that most of the articles are case studies, and that organizational context is paramount to building evaluation capacity, it is difficult to compare findings between articles. However, through their analysis, the review team identified six key themes that occurred consistently throughout the body of literature. The key themes and key elements for ECB associated with each theme are provided in Table 1. We strongly encourage readers to consult our list of references, and to read the specific articles that are of interest to them in order to develop an ECB plan that is tailored to their respective organizational context.

Table 1. Evaluation Capacity Building Themes and Strategies

Theme	Key Elements
Leadership	» Strong leadership that supports evaluation and makes it an organizational priority » Evaluation champions (at all levels) » Buy-in for evaluation (at all levels)
Organizational Environment	» Internal situational assessment » Supportive environment » Evaluation use » Organizational culture: learning organization, evaluative inquiry, mainstreaming evaluation
Building Individual Skills, Knowledge & Attitudes	» Formal education (evaluation course) » In-house sponsored training opportunities (workshops, seminars, webinars) » Mentorship and coaching » Print/web based learning resources » Communities of practice
Comprehensive Organizational Evaluation Framework	» Standardized role definition » Consistency of procedures » Advisory committee (for evaluations) » Participatory/collaborative/empowerment approaches to evaluation
Resources	» Financial » Staff » Time » Technology » Data collection programs » Incentives » Written materials (toolkits, checklists, etc.) to support evaluation
External Support	» Technical assistance » Fellowship programs » Partnerships » Use of external evaluators/consultants

LEADERSHIP

Providing leadership support for evaluation is an important organizational level ECB strategy (Labin, Duffy, Meyers, Wandersman, & Lesesne, 2012); it is important because leadership provides the vision and mission upon which the members of an organization perform their activities. If leadership does not emphasize the importance of evaluation,

it is likely that they will not invest in ECB efforts. Despite the perceived importance of leadership, Labin et al. (2012) commented that "leadership was the least frequently targeted organizational factor and the least frequently reported organizational outcome" (p. 327) in terms of ECB. Our review of the literature led us to a similar conclusion. However, there are some examples within the literature of targeting leadership as an ECB strategy:

» Evaluators can demonstrate the value of evaluation as a management tool as well as an instrument for learning and accountability (Dabelstein, 2003).

» Evaluators take on an advocacy and change agent role by strategically positioning themselves at all levels throughout the organization (Sonnichsen, 1998). This advocacy role also includes stimulating the use of evaluations in order to demonstrate their need and value to leaders (Compton, 2009).

Leadership should strive to foster a culture that is conducive to ECB throughout the organization. The following list of ideas may demonstrate leadership's involvement in ECB efforts:

» Show a commitment to ECB efforts by using the results of evaluations to support programming, ensuring adequate resources for evaluation (i.e. staff, time, budget, etc.), and positioning evaluation as a high priority (Volkov, 2008). Leadership should have the following attitude regarding evaluation within their organization: "We need evaluation – of course it should be done" (Mackay, 2002, p. 95).

» Foster a commitment to evidence-informed decision making and the use of findings (Cousins & Bourgeois, 2014; King, 2002).

» Involve upper and middle management in the evaluation process (Cousins, Bourgeois, & Associates, 2014).

» Hire skilled evaluation staff, and foster evaluation champions throughout the organization (Cousins, Bourgeois, & Associates, 2014; Preskill & Boyle, 2008b; Taylor-Powell & Boyd, 2008).

» The Catalyst-for-Change approach as described by Garcia-Iriarte, Suarez-Balcazar, Taylor-Ritzler, and Luna (2011) presents itself as an interesting option. In this approach one individual is trained to infuse evaluation capacity within an organization. The authors highlighted that the selection of an appropriate leader to act as the change agent is key to the success of this approach. The leader should be a fairly stable person within the organization in order to reduce the possibility of staff turnover issues. The leader should have the authority to allocate the resources that can affect organizational culture and infrastructure regarding evaluation. Finally, the leader should diffuse evaluation skills and knowledge throughout the organization.

» Senior management can stimulate ECB by "developing structures conducive for ECB, such as an ECB plan, inclusion of evaluation in organizational policies and procedures, a system for reporting and monitoring, and incorporation of a feedback mechanism and effective communication system" (Alaimo, 2008, p. 77).

» Improve evaluation staff access to key decision-makers (Baron, 2011; Cousins, Bourgeois, & Associates, 2014).

» Take measures to reduce the fear of evaluations within an organization by fostering a positive learning culture (Alaimo, 2008). Leadership needs to understand that improving EC requires a culture change, and the visionary change should be communicated repeatedly throughout the organization in order to encourage buy-in at all levels (Milstein, Chapel, Wetterhall, Cotton, 2002).

ORGANIZATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The scoping review team noticed that, while quite a few ECB interventions are directed toward changes at the individual level, these individuals also require a supportive organizational environment that embraces evaluation in order for ECB to grow throughout the organization. The reader should keep in mind that the organization is an important element of the Stockdill et al. (2002) ECB definition. "The essence of ECB is changing the structure, practice, and process within and between organizations. This is an immensely complex process but possible in the short term" (Compton, MacDonald, Baizerman, Schooley, & Zhang, 2008, p. 214). Internal situational assessments of evaluation capacity and a supportive organizational environment, which foster the use of evaluations toward the pursuit of a learning organization, are key factors that should be considered as part of the organizational environment. ECB is a consolidated effort that requires buy-in from staff members throughout the organization (Forss, Kruse, Taut, & Tenden, 2006).

INTERNAL SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT FOR EVALUATION CAPACITY

It is important to fully understand the strengths and constraints of an organization and its members regarding evaluation. A situational assessment provides leaders with information regarding contextual factors, which are important to developing an overall ECB strategy that is tailored to the context (Labin et al., 2012; Taut, 2007).

SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

The use of evaluations and building a learning organization are often cited as key factors that contribute to an organization that supports evaluation.

» Resistance within organizational culture was often reported as a barrier to evaluation and ECB efforts (Heward, Hutchins, & Keleher, 2007; Kniker, 2011).

» It is important to address the fear of evaluation, because some staff may see it as way to impose control and reveal flaws, rather than an opportunity to learn (Milstein et al., 2002; Volkov, 2008).

» Evaluations should be implemented in a way that does not detract staff from implementing their programs (Kegeles, Rebchook, & Tebbetts, 2005).

» Communication between program staff and evaluators is an important factor that affects whether or not the organizational context is supportive (Kniker, 2011; Tang et al., 2002).

» Organizations need to invest in information technology and computers in order to support EC (Carman & Fredericks, 2010).

USE OF EVALUATION

» The use of evaluation results for decision-making purposes is an important aspect of EC and the organizational culture (Carman & Fredericks, 2010; Cousins & Bourgeois, 2014; Fraser, Tremblay, Bourgeois, & Lahey, 2013). Evaluators should promote the value of evaluation as a management tool as well as an instrument for learning (Dabelstein, 2003; Patton, 2001).

» Evaluators need to deliberately plan the dissemination of evaluation findings and recommendations by tailoring their dissemination plan to the key stakeholders who will use evaluation findings (Brazil, 1999). As much as possible, evaluation findings should be presented in a concise user-friendly manner (Cousins, Bourgeois, & Associates, 2014).

» Interventions to stimulate evaluation use should be directed at multiple levels throughout the organization in order to improve existing support and address barriers to use (Humphries, Hampe, Larsen, & Bowen, 2013).

» Stimulating use of evaluations will in turn stimulate the demand for evaluations, which means that an organization needs to be ready to adapt and grow with the increase in demand (King, 2002; Schooley, 2009).

» Process use is another important aspect to consider. It is defined as "cognitive, behavioral, program, and organizational changes, resulting either directly or indirectly from engagement in the evaluation process and learning to think evaluatively" (Patton, 2008, p.108). The following examples of process use were mentioned: enhancing shared understandings, supporting and reinforcing the programmatic intervention, increasing engagement, self-determination and ownership, program and organizational development (Mattessich, Compton, Baizerman, 2001). Evaluators can take a purposeful role in stimulating process use by involving stakeholders, communicating with stakeholders throughout the evaluation process, and identifying teachable moments when participants can learn evaluation skills (King, 2007). In her article, King (2007) provides us with a summary table of factors that can affect process use.

» The Canada International Development and Research Centre (IDRC) developed a reporting system that stimulated both instrumental use and process use of evaluations. Instead of the typical report that is written at the end of an evaluation, they developed what they coined as the Rolling Project Completion Report. Essentially, different key staff members interview the project manager at three specific moments throughout the life cycle of the project (initial project design, midpoint, and end of project). These are open-ended interviews that start with a standard set of questions. The interviewers have the opportunity to provide feedback to the project manager after each interview. This innovative reporting system allows for more individuals to learn from projects, and stimulates diffusion of learning opportunities throughout the organization. This initiative was strongly supported by IDRC leadership. Also, training was offered regarding interviewing techniques for staff members (Carden & Earl, 2007).

» The creation of a feedback and knowledge management unit was identified as another way to continue to stimulate use (Cousins, Bourgeois, & Associates, 2014). In addition, the Trillium Foundation of Ontario created a deliberate "cycle of use" (Cousins, Bourgeois, & Associates, 2014, p. 97) in order to maximize involvement and ownership of evaluations.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

» There is no doubt that organizational culture strongly influences ECB efforts.

» Many authors stress the importance of building a learning organization in order to improve EC and support ECB efforts (Alaimo, 2008; Cousins & Bourgeois, 2014; Danseco, 2013; Labin et al., 2012; Milstein et al., 2002; Sieppert, 2005).

» "The organization must foster a learning culture that values trust, risk-taking, openness, curiosity, inquiry, and experimentation, and champions the ongoing learning of all its members" (Preskill & Boyle, 2008b, p. 149).

» A common barrier to institutionalizing evaluation in organizations has been inadequate or underdeveloped learning-oriented cultures and a failure to integrate evaluation with other major organizational processes (Patton, 2001; Taut, 2007).

» Other factors that limit learning within an organization are a lack of transparent communication and decision-making, lack of management support, lack of incentives for innovation and learning from mistakes and lack of a collaborative culture (Forss et al., 2006).

» Evaluation needs to be integrated into the organizational culture by incorporating evaluation directly into programs, work plans, organizational policies and procedures (Cousins, Bourgeois, & Associates, 2014; King, 2007; Milstein et al., 2002; Volkov, 2008).

» The development of an evaluation culture is a gradual process (Diaz-Puente, Yague, & Afonso, 2008).

» A participatory approach to evaluation can contribute to the organizational culture that supports evaluations (Brazil, 1999; King, 2007). The more the users are involved in evaluation planning and implementation, the more likely they will be to use the findings and implement the recommendations (Brazil, 1999; Fleischer, Christie, & LaVelle, 2008).

» "It seems appropriate to view ECB as an iterative process such that ECB leads to organizational learning and evaluation use, which then contributes to developing further evaluation capacity and eventual organizational change" (Fleischer et al., 2008, p. 42).

» The evaluator can play a key role in organizational learning by providing new experiences, new interactions, new information, or new ways of looking at old information (Levin-Rozalis & Rosenstein, 2005).

» The evaluator should be strategically placed within the organization to have access to key decision-makers as well as access to all staff in order to affect organizational culture (Sonnichsen, 1998).

A separate literature review regarding learning organizations will provide further insight on how to build a learning organization.

BUILDING INDIVIDUAL SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES

This theme encompasses the various ECB training and learning opportunities that are provided to individuals, with the exclusion of external supports. Individual strategies noted in the reviewed literature are below.

» The goal is to improve attitudes, knowledge and skills regarding evaluation (Labin et al., 2013; Nelson & Eddy, 2008).

» It is hoped that individual staff members will share skills, knowledge and attitudes with other individuals throughout the organization (Garcia-Iriarte et al., 2011; Naccarella et al., 2007; Preskill & Boyle, 2008b).

» Heward, Hutchins, and Keleher (2007) however caution us that training individuals alone is not sufficient to increase organizational evaluation capacity. While the participants can gain skills, knowledge and confidence through training, this may not resolve systemic, structural or funding related barriers to implementing organizational evaluation capacity changes. In addition, the individual that receives training should hold a position of leadership within the organization in order to diffuse knowledge throughout the organization (Garcia-Iriarte et al., 2011). Therefore, ECB efforts should focus on individuals as well as organizational level strategies.

» Learning opportunities should focus on adult learning principles such as situated learning, transfer of learning, and experiential learning (Preskill & Boyle, 2008b).

FORMAL EDUCATION (EVALUATION COURSE)

Many higher learning institutions and evaluation organizations offer evaluation courses. The Canadian Evaluation Society's Essential Skills workshops, the Evaluator's Institute courses, and the International Program for Development Evaluation Training are the examples that were identified in the reviewed literature (Cousins, Goh, et al., 2014).

IN-HOUSE SPONSORED TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES (workshops, seminars, webinars)

» One way to reach more staff members is for organizations to host workshops, seminars and webinars. These should be adapted to the level of capacity of the participants such as offering introductory workshops to new participants, and more advanced workshops for returning participants (Fourney, Gregson, Sugerman, & Dellow, 2011).

» Participants should also be able to provide input into the workshop content (Karlsson, Beijer, Eriksson, & Leissner, 2008).

» It appears that many smaller workshops that are staggered at various intervals are preferred over a one-shot type of workshop in order to keep evaluation relevant (Karlsson et al., 2008; Stevenson, Florin, Mills and Andrade, 2002).

MENTORSHIP AND COACHING

Mentoring and coaching were mentioned as a strategy to build individual skills, knowledge and attitudes (Bamberg, Perlesz, McKenzie, & Read, 2010; Cousins, Bourgeois, & Associates, 2014; Taylor-Powell & Boyd, 2008).

» Evaluators also need to take on the role of coach/educator (Andrews, Mores, Floyd, Flerx, & Fede, 2005; Fourney et al., 2011).

» Staff require consistent coaching or mentoring rather than a one-time training in order to get the most out of their participation in an evaluation (Bamberg et al., 2010).

PRINT/WEB BASED LEARNING RESOURCES

» Web-based technologies can be used to complement external supports such as technical advice. This improves access to the training (available to more staff), and reduces costs. The following is a short list of constraints regarding web-based ECB resources: staff members that are uncomfortable with technology, lack of motivation, technical problems, and not as responsive to individual needs (i.e. one-size-fits-all approach) (Sundar, Kasprzak, Halsall, & Woltman, 2010). Web-based technologies should not be used as a stand-alone method of training; they should be used to complement more traditional learning methods (Sundar et al., 2010).

» Hard copy resources, such as manuals on program evaluation, are also useful resources that should be combined with other training strategies (Dabelstein, 2003; Naccarella et al., 2007). The Canadian Evaluation Society Sourcebook for Evaluation Methods is an example of a resource that was identified in the literature (Cousins, Goh et al., 2014).

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

One potential role of evaluation champions might be to create an internal community of practice (COP) in order to diffuse knowledge throughout the organization. However, most of the COPs cited in the literature were formed of members from various organizations that have a common interest and a desire to learn from each other.

» COPs allow for the building of relationships to strengthen organizational capacity (Ayala et al., 2007).

» They allow individuals to share and compare evaluation resources and best practices, and to collaborate on projects; they can also be a great platform for peer learning (Carman & Fredericks, 2010; Ohmer, 2008; Tang et al., 2002).

COMPREHENSIVE ORGANIZATIONAL EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

For the purpose of this scoping review, we are referring to the framework as the overarching structure of evaluation within an organization. The goal of the organizational framework is to standardize evaluation throughout the organization and "make evaluation visible" (Cousins & Bourgeois, 2014, p. 117), by establishing the organizational structures, policies and procedures regarding evaluation.

The reviewed literature indicates that the following items should be considered when establishing an organizational evaluation framework. It should be noted that this list is not exhaustive because specific organizational contexts may give rise to different recommendations.

» The organizational framework should identify who within the organization will be involved in evaluations, and their roles should be clearly defined (Brazil, 1999; Rotondo, 2012).

- » The location of the evaluator, or the evaluation unit, within the organization is another important item to consider. Evaluators should report directly to key decision-makers, and they should also be linked to planning and management activities (Brazil, 1999).

- » The framework should include evaluation policies and procedures (Rotondo, 2012; Taylor-Powell & Boyd, 2008). Policies legitimize evaluation, they can promote positive expectations and attitudes, and they can incorporate evaluation into daily operations (Brazil, 1999; Cousins, Bourgeois, & Associates, 2014).

- » Formal structures and processes can also help staff and managers deal with evaluation workload (Compton, 2009). Processes could include how evaluations are requested and approved, ethical reviews, data storage, communication of evaluation results, follow up on recommendations, etc.

- » The framework should encourage consistency of procedures throughout the organization. Standardized templates for logic models, evaluation plans, and reports are items to consider (Tang et al., 2002). However, it should be noted that flexibility is also important in order to fit the best evaluation methodologies to the evaluation (Volkov & Baron, 2011).

- » Data collection and monitoring systems, as well as information technology support for these systems are other items to consider in the framework (Carman & Fredericks, 2010).

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

- » Evaluation advisory committees are an important item to consider as they can help to provide input into the context (Compton, Glover-Kudon, Avery, & Morris, 2001).

- » The members will be aware of the evaluation as it proceeds, thus avoiding the possibility of surprising results, while also increasing potential use of findings (Compton et al., 2001).

- » Committee members can also learn about the process to conduct evaluations, and apply the learnings to other projects (Compton et al., 2001; King, 2002).

PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION APPROACHES

Participatory evaluation approaches are included as a part of the organizational framework theme because their application is part of the organization's vision and philosophy regarding evaluation. Many authors emphasize the importance of staff participation in evaluation projects as a complement to the various training and learning opportunities in order to apply learning immediately and stimulate motivation (Arnold, 2006; Cousins, Bourgeois, & Associates, 2014; Forss et al., 2006; Joss & Keleher, 2007; Karlsson et al., 2008; Preskill & Boyle, 2008b; Taut, 2007). Participation in evaluation activities help staff develop evaluation skills and knowledge, as well as improve attitudes toward evaluation and use of findings (Arnold, 2006).

The following is a summary of the information that was captured regarding participatory approaches:

- » Staff involvement in evaluations can contribute to building a culture of evaluation (King, 2002; MacLellan-Wright, Patten, De la Cruz, & Flaherty, 2007) and help to reduce the effects of staff turnover (Danseco, Kasprzak, Witteveen, Woltman, & Manion, 2009).

- » Evaluators should identify primary users of evaluation results and involve them in all phases of the project. The more the user is involved in evaluation and implementation, the more likely the eventual recommendations will be applied, because of the greater acceptance and ownership of the results by the participants (Brazil, 1999; Cousins & Bourgeois, 2014; Dabelstein, 2003).

- » Staff members that have more contact with the evaluation team appear to be those that benefit the most from participatory approaches (regarding ECB efforts). "The crucial question then becomes, who are the main stakeholders, or primary intended users, whose capacity should be built through their active participation in the evaluation process" (Forss et al., 2006, p. 137).

- » Prior to participation in the evaluation process, participant readiness should be assessed (Andrews et al., 2005). Breaking programs and evaluations into smaller more measurable parts can help to reduce possible fears associated with evaluation (Wandersman, 2003).

- » Evaluators need to develop trust with participants and actively encourage involvement (Diaz-Puente et al., 2008; King, 2002).

- » Appropriate time and resources need to be allotted, including time for reflection throughout the evaluation (Diaz-Puente et al., 2008).

- » "Training, role clarity, management of power relations, participant readiness, adequate resources, technology, and coaching skill made a significant difference in adoption of evaluation practice" (Andrews et al., 2005, p. 101).

» "Participants must have the latitude to experiment, to take risks and responsibility for their actions, and to operate in an environment that is conducive to sharing both successes and failures…(and) requires an atmosphere characterized by support, trust, honesty, and the ability to be self-critical" (Andrews et al., 2005, p. 94). A punitive environment in the case of evaluation is not useful, nor is it productive (Milstein et al., 2002).

» The progression from simple evaluation designs to complex evaluation designs was seen as a positive approach that helped to reduce potential frustrations (Fourney et al., 2011).

» It can be difficult for participants to maintain their engagement in the evaluation. Lennie (2005) proposed a simplified 4-step evaluation process in order to provide structure for the participants: 1 – Plan the review, 2 – Involve people in the review, 3 – Do the review, 4 – Review the results and make the changes.

The following is a list of items that might impose constraints on participatory approaches: the unwillingness or lack of interest to participate by staff members, communication problems and delays, time constraints, costs, political obstacles, conflicting or lack of knowledge regarding organizational policies. (Dabelstein, 2003). Competing scope between the responsibility of the evaluation teams to complete an evaluation and to provide ECB support can limit ECB efforts (Forss et al., 2006).

Taut (2007) comments that a participatory approach is not recommended when an evaluation is very much "control-oriented from the outset…participation seems contradictory because evaluation is not open for influence by those affected" (p. 50). An evaluation that has a focus on control and accountability is better suited for an external independent evaluator (Taut, 2007). Thus, organizational policies regarding evaluation should also indicate when a participatory approach to evaluation is not appropriate (Taut, 2007).

An additional literature review regarding participatory approaches is warranted as it would provide a much more detailed explanation of these approaches as well as allow organizations to select the approach that best fits their respective organizational contexts.

RESOURCES

The scoping review team did not identify any case studies that indicated resources as a stand-alone ECB strategy. Resources were always combined with another ECB strategy such as technical assistance, fellowship programs, professional development, etc. Carman and Fredericks (2010) suggest that time, funding and other resources for evaluation are an essential part of planning, and they should simply be seen as the cost of doing business. The following items were listed as important resources to include within a greater evaluation capacity building strategy:

FUNDING

Many sources highlight the importance of long-term funding that is specifically dedicated to evaluation (Brazil, 1999; Danseco, 2013; Ohmer, 2008; Taylor-Powell & Boyd, 2008; Volkov, 2008; Wilson, 2004).

» In the case of the Canadian Mental Health Association, they include evaluation funding as part of new program funding requests, and they may seek additional separate funding for evaluation (Cousins, Bourgeois, & Associates, 2014).

» There was one example of a funding agency that required the grant recipient to dedicate 10 percent of their budget to evaluation activities (Tang et al., 2002). However, it should be noted that the funding requirement had no effect on the grant recipients because less than one percent of projects met the requirement.

» Separate funding should also be allotted for ECB efforts (Ploeg, Witt, Hutchinson, Hayward, & Grayson, 2007; Taylor-Powell & Boyd, 2008). For example, an extensive ECB project such as the Collaborative Evaluation Fellows Project received a five-year $1.5 million grant from the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation (Compton et al., 2001).

STAFF AND TIME

» Adequate staffing was also mentioned often throughout the literature (Brazil, 1999; Milstein et al., 2002).

» In addition, an appropriate amount of staff time should be specifically dedicated to conducting evaluations (Cousins & Bourgeois, 2014; Dabelstein, 2003).

» A particular concern is that front line staff have to balance their regular workload in addition to evaluation duties (Cousins, Bourgeois, & Associates, 2014).

» Staff and time allotment for ECB efforts is also an important resource to consider as this was noted as a potential constraint in ECB interventions (Levin-Rozalis & Rosenstein, 2005).

TECHNOLOGY

Investing in technology (computers, software, etc.), and providing training to use the technology was seen as beneficial (Carman & Fredericks, 2010; Taylor-Powell & Boyd, 2008).

DATA COLLECTION AND MONITORING SYSTEMS

Data collection and monitoring systems that are linked to program indicators are an important resource because they provide access to data that can be used throughout many evaluations (Brazil, 1999; Cousins, Bourgeois, & Associate, 2014). In addition, these systems are seen as cost saving in the long term. However, Leviton (2014) comments that a data monitoring system "is not a good value if the data are not used for program improvement, learning, or sustainability" (p. 91). Finally, a phased in approach to the training and use of the data collection and monitoring system should be considered in order to reduce possible frustrations on behalf of users (Nelson & Eddy, 2008).

INCENTIVES

Incentives are often cited throughout the literature as an ECB strategy. The incentive could be that evaluation is a requirement of funding (Wilson, 2004). Intrinsic rewards, primarily recognition through presentations within the organization and externally, and published articles that are stored in an organization's Intranet, are suggestions that were mentioned in the literature (Bamberg et al., 2010).

PRODUCTION OF EVALUATION RESOURCES/TEMPLATES

Providing access to the templates, possibly in a central registry such as an Intranet or a similar location, and providing training to staff regarding how to use the templates are beneficial.

» Planning, reporting, data gathering, analysis (Andrews et al., 2005; Arnold, 2006; Fourney et al., 2011; Tang et al., 2002).

» Logic model templates also appear to be a useful resource (Milstein et al., 2002).

EXTERNAL SUPPORT

The review team identified four main strategies to build evaluation capacity that rely on external actors and would fall within the external support theme: technical assistance, fellowship programs, partnerships with external partners (i.e. higher learning institutions), and the use of external consultants.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (TA)

Preskill & Boyle (2008a) define TA as receiving help from an internal or external evaluator to aid with a variety of different evaluation activities such as needs assessments, staff readiness assessments, evaluations, and much more. The review team did not find any examples of internal evaluators offering help to staff that were explicitly identified as TA within the articles that we reviewed. Therefore, for the purpose of this review, TA is defined as receiving technical assistance regarding evaluation from an external source:

» Many authors mention the importance of conducting a needs assessment of the organization that will receive the technical assistance in order to provide a service that is tailored to the organization (Ayla et al., 2007; Jolly, Gibbs, Napp, Westover, & Uhl, 2003; Kelly, LaRose, & Scharff, 2014).

» The assessment should include staff readiness in the areas of evaluation knowledge, skills and attitudes (Andrews et al., 2005). Organizational culture, leadership and resources are other important items to assess. The needs assessment should inform the content that will be delivered as well as the modes for delivering the content.

» The relationship between organization members and the TA provider is essential. It has to be a meaningful collaboration. TA providers have to take the time to get to know the context/organization. They cannot simply provide resources and training and move on (Kegeles et al., 2005; Kelly et al., 2014). TA should also include the development of resources that are tailored to the organization (Jolly et al., 2003).

» The commonly identified areas for assistance included: evaluation tools (i.e. survey instruments), data analysis, basic orientation to evaluation, evaluation planning, development of logic models and measurable outcomes, and report-writing training of staff at all levels (Andrews et al., 2005; Jolly et al., 2003).

» Providing technical assistance for disseminating data for use was also mentioned (Compton, MacDonald, Baizerman, Schooley, & Zhang, 2008).

» TA can be provided in-person via site visits, telephone calls, electronic mail, and other web-based technologies. The development of periodic workshops for a larger group is frequently mentioned, but it is important to have a TA provider available throughout the evaluation cycle (Compton et al., 2008; Fourney et al., 2011; Joss & Keleher, 2007; Kegeles et al., 2005; Kelly et al., 2014).

» Individualized TA appears to be more useful than larger group sessions (Roseland, Volkov, & Callow-Heusser, 2011).

» TA providers that are also program content experts can streamline the collaborative relationship (Kelly et al., 2014).

» If the TA provider is also helping to conduct the evaluation, sufficient funds and balance of the mandate between conducting the evaluation and ECB efforts needs to be established (Jolly et al., 2003). The roles of TA providers and organization staff need to be clearly defined.

» Finally, organizations should ensure that the evaluation tasks that were performed by the TA provider are transferred over to the TA recipients in order to maintain the sustainability of evaluation efforts when TA support is no longer available (Hunter et al., 2009).

FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS

Several articles presented fellowship programs as an ECB strategy. The most popular one is the American Cancer Society Collaborative Evaluation Fellows Project (CEFP) (Compton, 2009; Compton et al., 2001; Mattessich et al., 2001; Milstein et al., 2001; Patton, 2001). Another program is the Presidential Management Fellows Program that was used by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Schooley, 2009).

The CEFP is a collaboration between the American Cancer Society (ACS) and higher learning institutions (primarily universities that have a public health graduate program). It was originally developed at the ACS home office but eventually expanded to all 17 ACS divisions throughout the United States of America. The program is grounded in the following approaches/theories: Utilization-Focused Evaluation (Patton), Theory of Evaluative Inquiry for Organizational Learning (Preskill & Torres), and Himmelman's approach to collaboration. Each evaluation project involves an evaluation facilitator, an advisory group, a faculty supervisor, and a graduate student (also known as a fellow). Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. They developed a 15-step evaluation process that is divided into four stages: groundwork, formalization, implementation, and utilization. They offer training to all internal and external CEFP participants regarding evaluation and the program. Staff that serve within the advisory committee come to have a better understanding of evaluation, appreciate it, make use of its results, and increase demand for evaluation. Over the course of five years, the ACS developed relationships with 22 universities, and almost 200 students and 35 faculty members participated in approximately 150 evaluation projects (Compton, 2009). In addition, some fellows have also joined the ACS as volunteers or paid staff after their term in the program, thus directly increasing capacity. "The ACS has deepened its understanding of evaluation and has dramatically increased its evaluation capacity through its university partnerships" (Compton et al., 2001, p.S9).

PARTNERSHIPS

The literature provides us with other examples of partnerships with external partners that are not fellowship programs.

» Ploeg et al. (2007) reported on a partnership between McMaster University faculty members and 20 members of local community care organizations. This resembled more of a mentorship program that focused on research skills and knowledge. The mentees drafted their individual learning plan with the help of the external mentors. The mentees attended monthly education sessions and participated in one or more research or evaluation projects. It was also recommended that mentors and mentees meet on a monthly basis. Mentors committed 1-2 hours per month to each mentee, and received course release payments. Funding was also provided to mentees that allowed them to dedicate a half-day per week to this program. Engagement in active research and evaluation projects was a major strength of this project. Organizationally, some mentees contributed to a culture shift toward integrating research and evaluation within their organization. However, some mentees mentioned that they did not have an impact within their organization because they had no opportunity within their current role to affect change in the organization. High staff turnover within the community agencies was a major constraint of this project.

» Partnering with academic institutions can be beneficial particularly for organizations that are in the earlier stages of evaluation capacity (Cousins, Bourgeois, & Associates, 2014).

» Organizations should consider partnering with evaluation and higher learning institutions in order to increase

their evaluation capacity (Joss & Keleher, 2007; Ohmer, 2008).

» Building collaborative relationships among organizations working on similar projects should be considered in order to pool resources (Stevenson et al., 2002).

USE OF EXTERNAL EVALUATORS

The use of external evaluators to complement internal evaluators presents itself as an interesting option that requires time and effort in order to build productive and mutually beneficial relationships. Including external staff reduces the potential impact of organizational influences, increases respect for planned evaluation activities due to the contracts that are in place, and increases access to specialized knowledge that may not be available internally (Bourgeois, Hart, Townsend, & Gagné, 2011). Volkov and Baron (2011) also note that a combination of internal and external evaluators can add credibility to the evaluation. Bourgeois et al. (2011) present the following lessons learned regarding a hybrid (internal/external) evaluation structure:

» Start with several small projects and develop a common work approach prior to embarking on a large project.

» Evaluators should share a common view of the purpose of the evaluation and the intended use of the results.

» External resources should be involved in more than one phase of the evaluation, including the analysis activities, generation of findings and recommendations.

» All evaluators should agree in principle on the key findings.

The case studies found in Cousins, Bourgeois and Associates (2014) also present us with different options for the use of external consultants ranging from consultants offering peer reviewing services to evaluations that are done by a research partner that has a professional evaluation studies unit. Unfortunately, direct results on EC are not provided.

Organizations should be wary of overreliance, or worse, depending solely on external evaluators as this may be detrimental to ECB. Internal staff may eventually not see the need to truly engage in evaluation (Volkov, 2008). Internal evaluators are important because they "are better able to facilitate environments that are conducive to learning, to act as change agents focused on organizational improvement and development, and to empower their organization" (Bourgeois et al., 2011, p. 231).

CONCLUSION

This scoping review allowed us to determine six key ECB themes in the peer-reviewed literature. Although these themes are recurrent throughout the literature, they are also interdependent and different elements could be captured within different categories. Strong leadership that supports evaluation sets the tone within the organization to establish a framework and an organizational learning culture, to offer opportunities for individuals to develop their skills and knowledge, and to provide resources in order to cement ECB efforts. External supports are useful as they can help to infuse expertise and innovation within the organization. The current state of the literature on ECB is more about describing specific organizational ECB programs, and therefore we cannot with any certainty identify strategies that have been tested and proven effective. More research to determine the effectiveness of the recommended strategies, i.e. participatory approaches, evaluation frameworks, organizational learning, etc., is necessary. The review team strongly encourages readers to consult the ECB literature, and the following references in order to prioritize themes that are relevant to their respective organizational context. In Appendix B, we have identified 20 articles that we feel are very pertinent to helping implement organizational ECB.

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APPENDIX A

EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING STRATEGIES: LITERATURE SEARCH STRATEGY (OVID MEDLINE EXAMPLE)

Searches	Results	Search Type	Actions
1	Capacity Building/ or (evaluat$ adj2 (capcit$ or build$ or practic$)).mp. or "evaluation capacity".tw.	4860	Advanced
2	exp Organizations/	365767	Advanced
3	Methods/ or Program Development/ or (strateg* or approach* or process* or plan* or polic* or model* or framework* or intervention* or initiative*).mp. [mp=title, abstract, original title, name of substance word, subject heading word, keyword heading word, protocol supplementary concept word, rare disease supplementary concept word, unique identifier]	5752713	Advanced
4	1 and 2 and 3	315	Advanced
5	limit 4 to yr="1994 - 2014"	301	Advanced

APPENDIX B

SCOPING REVIEW: 20 RECOMMENDED ARTICLES

Alaimo, S. P. (2008). Nonprofits and evaluation: Managing expectations from the leader's perspective. *New Directions for Evaluation, 119,* 73-92. doi:10.1002/ev.269.

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