

If capacity counts, what should we be counting? An evaluation perspective.

Mary Frances MacLellan-Wright
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Overview

- How has community capacity been defined?
- Why measure it?
- The Community Capacity Building Tool
- Applications & adaptations

Defining Community Capacity

- Characteristics of communities that affect their ability to identify, mobilize and address social and public health problems (Goodman et al. 1998, p.259)
- The potential or ability of a community to effect positive change (Kwan et al. 2003, p.vii)

More definitions

- An approach to the development of sustainable skills, organizational structures, resources and commitment to health improvement in health and other sectors, to prolong and multiply health gains many times over (Hawe et al. 2000, p i)

- Community capacity is not an inherent property of a particular locality, or of individuals or groups within it, but of the interactions between both. It is also a function of the resource opportunities or constraints (economic, political and environmental) of the conditions in which people live.” (Labonte & Laverack, 2001 p.114)

Why does it matter?

- address issues of power & relevance
- increase the sustainability of community initiatives
- improve communities' abilities to respond to emerging health issues
- improve overall health of the community

Why measure it?

- Act of measurement can contribute to change efforts
- It is an outcome
- Proxy measure of community health
- Advancement of practice
- Credibility

Your perspective:

- What are some key elements of community capacity?
- What should be tracked?
- What can we measure?

Domains Identified by Various Authors

	Thompson et al. (1999)	Laverack (2001)	Goodman et al. (1998)	Bush et al. (2002)	Hawe et al. (2000)	Labonte and Laverack (2001)
Participation	Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participation ● Program management 	Citizen participation			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participation ● Program management
Leadership	Leadership	Leadership	Leadership		Leadership	Leadership
Community Structures	Organizational structures				Organizational development	Organizational structures
Asking Why	Critical learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Problem assessment ● Asking why 	Critical reflection	Problem solving		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Problem assessment ● Asking why
Resource Mobilization	Resources	Resource mobilization	Resources	Infrastructure	Resource allocation	Resource mobilization
Links with Others		Links with other people and organizations	Social and inter-organizational networks	Network partnerships	Partnerships	Links with others
Role of External Supports		Role of outside agents				Role of outside agents
Skills, Knowledge and Learning	Knowledge and skill		Skills	Knowledge transfer	Workforce learning	
Sense of Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shared vision ● Experience of community 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sense of community ● Community power ● Understanding of community history ● Community values 			

**BC Healthy Living Alliance Community
Capacity Building Strategy (Sept 2007)
Capacity Building Functions, Community Level**

How has it been measured?

- Workshop format – generation of indicators
- Focus group
- Checklists
- Survey

Development of the Community Capacity Building Tool

- Community capacity a key strategy that is common across many Health Canada/PHAC funding programs, yet this has proven difficult to measure
- Calls from within the government to measure the results of community-based funding programs
- Calls from funded organizations for tools that help them track this elusive but important work

Research Team

Brenda Cantin – Health Canada

Mary Frances MacLellan-Wright – Health
Canada

Sarah Barber – Health Canada

Roxanne Felix – Health Canada

Donna Anderson – University of Montreal

Kim Raine – University of Alberta

Neale Smith – David Thompson Health Region

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- Ethical approval was obtained by the Health Canada Research Ethics Review Board
- Community-based organizations and practitioners participated in each stage of the study

Purpose

- To develop a valid and reliable tool that measures the contribution of community-based funding programs to building community capacity to improve health

Community Capacity Defined

“An approach to the development of sustainable skills, organizational structures, resources and commitment to health improvement in health and other sectors, to prolong and multiply health gains many times over.”

- Hawe et al., 2000, p.i

The Tool Development Process

1. Literature review
2. Think Tank
3. Tool Development
4. Focus test
5. Pilot test

For detail see: The development of measures of community capacity for community-based funding programs in Canada. Health Promotion International 22(4):229-306.

Some comments:

- “Tool was helpful in helping us to reflect on the project and clarify our next steps.”
- “The question stimulated reflection - either to remind me to focus more on an area...or to celebrate what we have done.”
- “Tool served as a refresher, as it raises many issues which ultimately enhance a project’s success.”

Qualitative Results Continued

Usage suggestions:

- project planning and evaluation
- application in a group setting
- use at various stages of a project

The Tool:

divided into 9 scales to reflect the domains and indicators identified at the think tank

- Participation
- Leadership
- Community Structures
- Asking Why
- Resource Mobilization
- Links With Others
- Role of External Supports
- Skills, Knowledge and Learning
- Sense of Community

Participation

Participation is the active involvement of people in improving their own and their community's health and well-being. Participating in a project means the target population, community members, and other stakeholders are involved in project activities, such as making decisions and evaluation.

1. Have you involved community organizations in your project?

Just started	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On the road	Nearly there	We're there
<i>We have not yet identified what groups we should involve.</i>	<i>We have identified the groups that should be involved.</i>	<i>We have contacted the groups that should be involved.</i>	<i>The groups are involved.</i>
<p>Describe: “As a project team, we have identified that various local church groups, the local beat cops, and the John Howard Society should be invited to become involved in the project. These groups would have a lot to offer the youth we are working with!”</p>			

2. Have you involved a representative range (different sexes, ages, ethnicities, and sectors) of target population members in your project?

Just started	On the road	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nearly there	We're there
<i>We have not yet identified who to involve.</i>	<i>We have identified the range of people who should be involved.</i>	<i>We have contacted representatives from the range of people who should be involved.</i>	<i>We have involved a range of representatives from the target population.</i>
<p>Describe: “Because of the culture of the community we are working with, we have been able to get men out to the project meetings but the women still do not feel comfortable attending. We are currently working with the community on how to overcome this barrier.”</p>			

Participation

- Community organizations
- Target population(s)
- Overcoming participation barriers
- Variety of Communication methods

Leadership

Leadership includes developing and nurturing both formal and informal local leaders during a project. Effective leaders support, direct, deal with conflict, acknowledge and encourage community members' voices, share leadership, and facilitate networks to build on community resources. Leaders bring people with diverse skill sets together and may have both interpersonal and technical skills. Finally, an effective leader has a strategic vision for the future.

Leadership

- Defining roles & responsibilities of project & community leaders in the project
- Reporting guidelines
- Encouraging & supporting informal leaders

Community Structures

Community structures refers to smaller or less formal community groups and committees that foster belonging and give the community a chance to express views and exchange information. Examples of community structures include church groups, youth groups, and self-help groups.

Community structures

- Developing links with pre-existing structures
- Efforts to improve community structures
- Creating new community structure(s)

External Supports

External supports (funding bodies) such as government departments, foundations, and regional health authorities can link communities and external resources. At the beginning of a project, early external support may nurture community momentum.

External Supports

- Seeking project-related information from external supports
- Seeking project-related technical expertise from external supports
- Seeking financial support for org operations/ project
- Do policies of external supports support project work...

Asking Why

Asking why refers to a community process that uncovers the root causes of community health issues and promotes solutions. The community comes together to critically assess the social, political, and economic influences that result in differing health standards and conditions. Exploration through “asking-why” helps refine a project to reflect the community needs.

Asking why

- Exploring root causes
- Involving the target pop in:
 - Asking why
 - Finding solutions

Applications

- teaching tool
- planning tool
- pre and post assessment

Example One

Population Health Fund – Alberta Region

Population Health Fund – Alberta Region

- Regional priorities:
 - creating **social and physical environments** that are accessible, appropriate and supportive for physical activity and healthy eating for school-aged children and youth
 - creating the tools and processes necessary for **healthy policy development and implementation** related to healthy eating and active living for school-aged children and youth
 - **expanding current networks and partnership activity** related to chronic disease prevention in Alberta
 - building capacity and involvement of **Aboriginal communities** in healthy living

PHF Alberta

- \$610K allocated
- 12 projects funded

Data Collection

- Tool completed and the beginning and end of the project

Population Health Fund data analysis

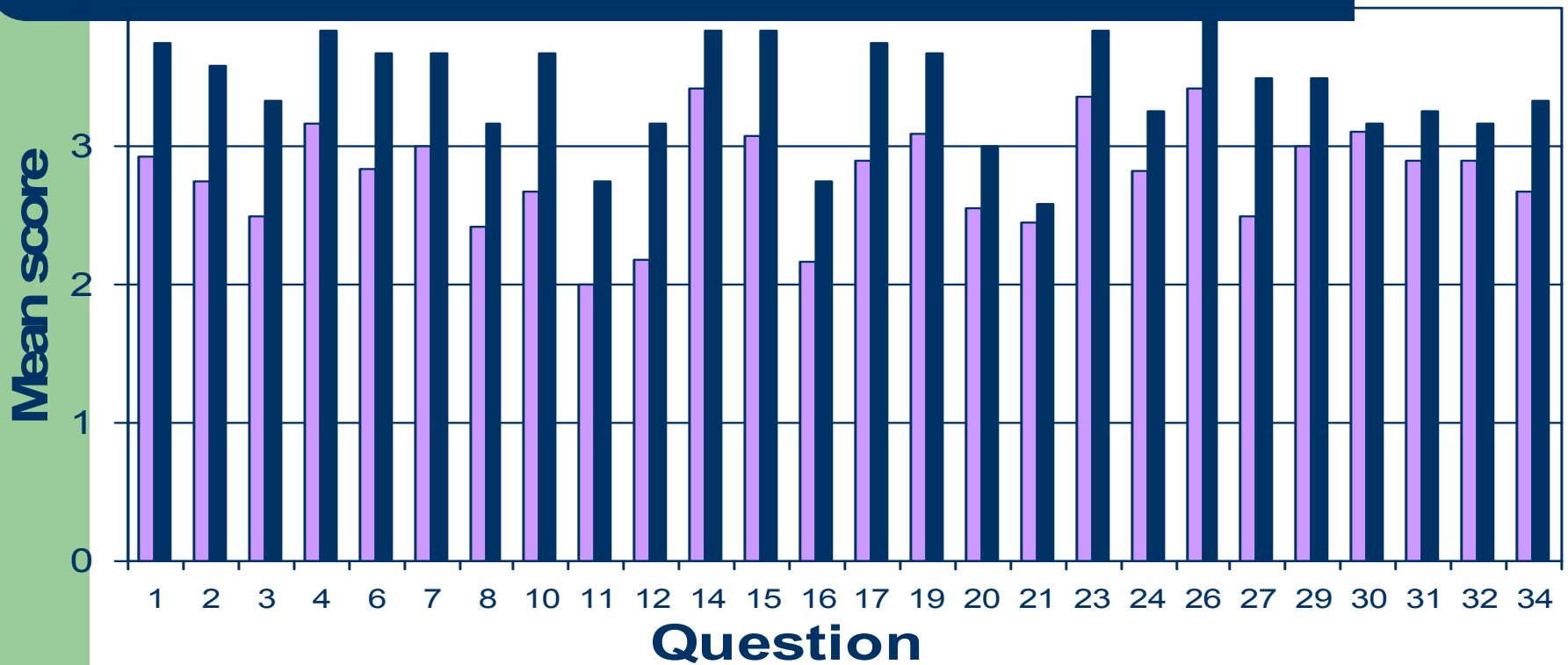
- Qualitative data
 - Responses to each question reviewed for themes and summarized
- Quantitative data
 - Descriptive and non-parametric test statistics
- Trends for each question were described and examples were sought to illustrate

Feature	Questions	Significant Change
Participation	<p>Actively involved community organizations in project</p> <p>Actively involved representative range of target pop</p> <p>Overcome barriers to participation of target pop</p> <p>Using different methods to inform everyone about project</p>	<p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p>
Leadership	<p>Defined key roles & responsibilities of project and community leaders involved in project</p> <p>Reporting guidelines to ensure project leader(s) are accountable to project team & target population</p> <p>Encouraged and supported involvement of informal leaders in the community</p>	<p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p>
Community Structures	<p>Developed links with pre-existing community structures</p> <p>Identified areas for improvement in pre-existing community structures that project could work on</p> <p>Created new community structures that help community members</p>	<p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p>

Feature	Questions	Significant Change
External Supports: Funding Bodies	Seeking project-related information from external supports Seeking project-related technical expertise from external supports Seeking financial support for org operations/ project Do policies of external supports support project work...	X ✓ X ✓
Asking Why	Exploring root causes of issues targeted by project Involving target pop in process of asking why Involving target pop in finding solutions to root causes	✓ ✓ X
Obtaining Resources	Accessing internal resources needed for project's success Accessing external resources needed for project's success	X X

Feature	Questions	Significant Change
Skills, Knowledge & Learning	Project team developing the skills and knowledge, or accessing the skills and knowledge, needed for the project's success Providing target population and community members with opportunities for learning	X ✓
Linking with Others	Networking with diverse sectors to gain support for the project Providing information to project links Receiving information from project links Working with project links to take action on community issues	X X ✓ X
Sense of Community	Does the project contribute to a sense of community among community members	✓

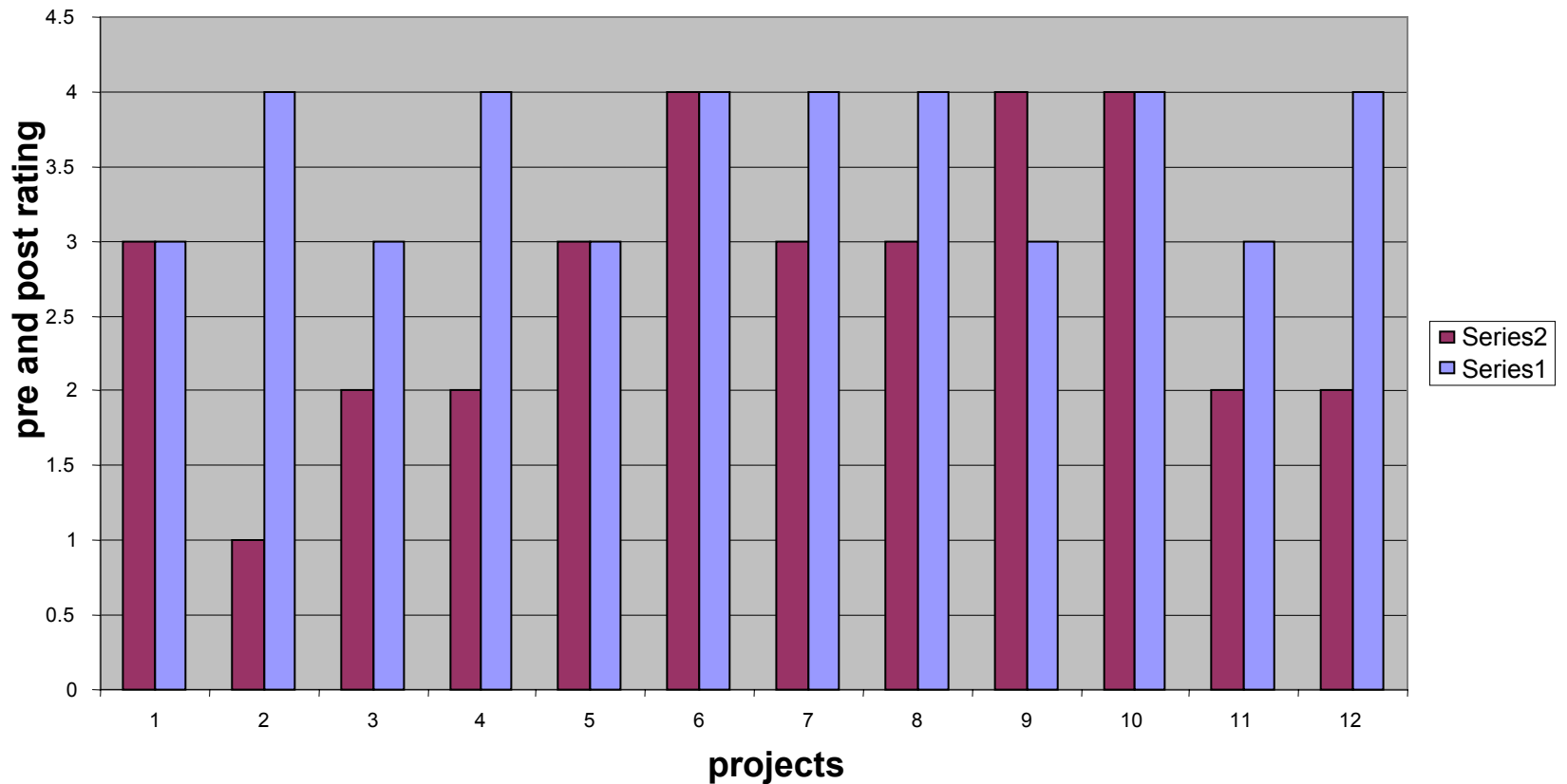
Results: Mean scores of CCBT Responses (N=12)



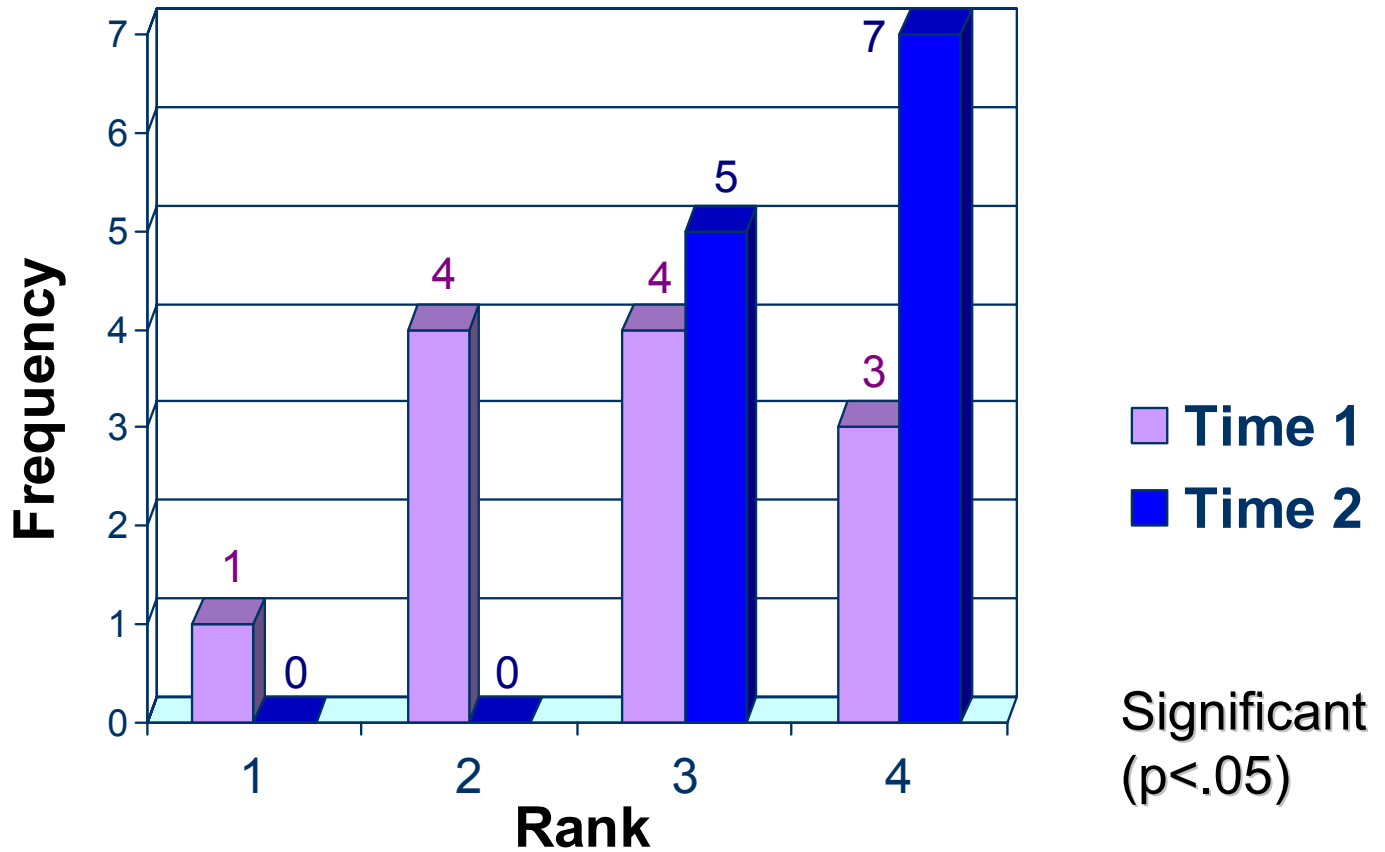
■ Time 1 - Pre ■ Time 2 - Post

Target population involvement

Q2. Target population involvement



Target pop. involvement con't



Q2

Example of communication methods used by one school-based project (Q.4)

- Time one: “Some ideas that we used successfully in the past and plan to continue are media and school newsletters. We will also consider additional ideas.”
- (rating: 2)
- Time two methods used: “...pamphlets and posters in the schools, invitations before each session, bulletin boards promoting the ... events and regular newsletters to parents, ... several articles in the media,... presentations to 3 school boards.”
- (rating: 4)

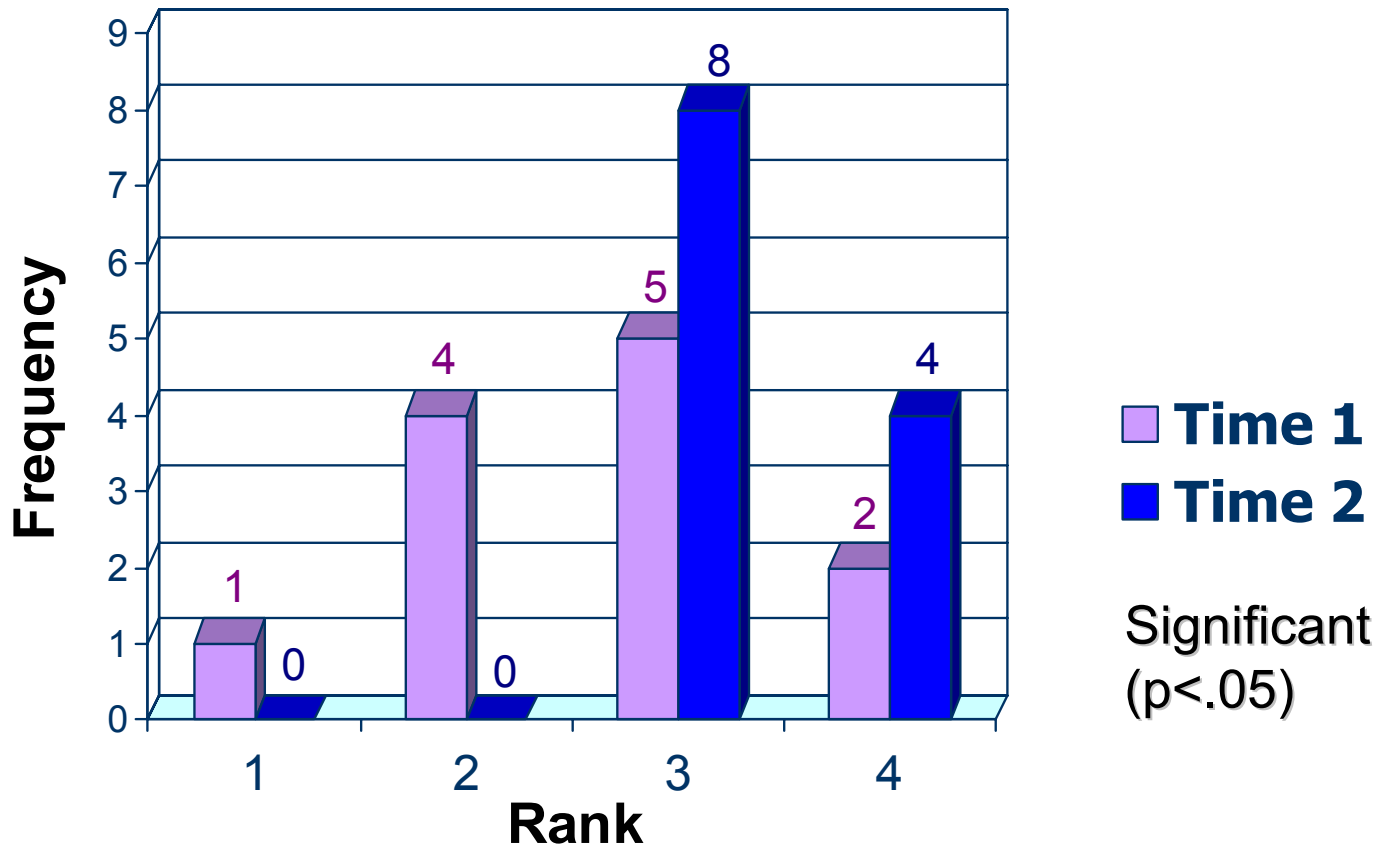
Root causes of issues identified:

- Cost of accessing active living activities
- Awareness and cultural norms
- Poverty/Low family income: cost of healthy meals, parents working multiple jobs (availability issues)
- Lack of social supports
- Food systems and social policies
- Physical environments (e.g. icy sidewalks)
- Education levels

Example of learning

- “As a result of our learnings from coordinating events the group has learned much more about root causes of issues... It is one thing to offer variety in terms of healthy eating choices but our group is refocusing to incorporate affordable healthy choices in all their work.” (rating: 4)

Contribute to sense of community among community members

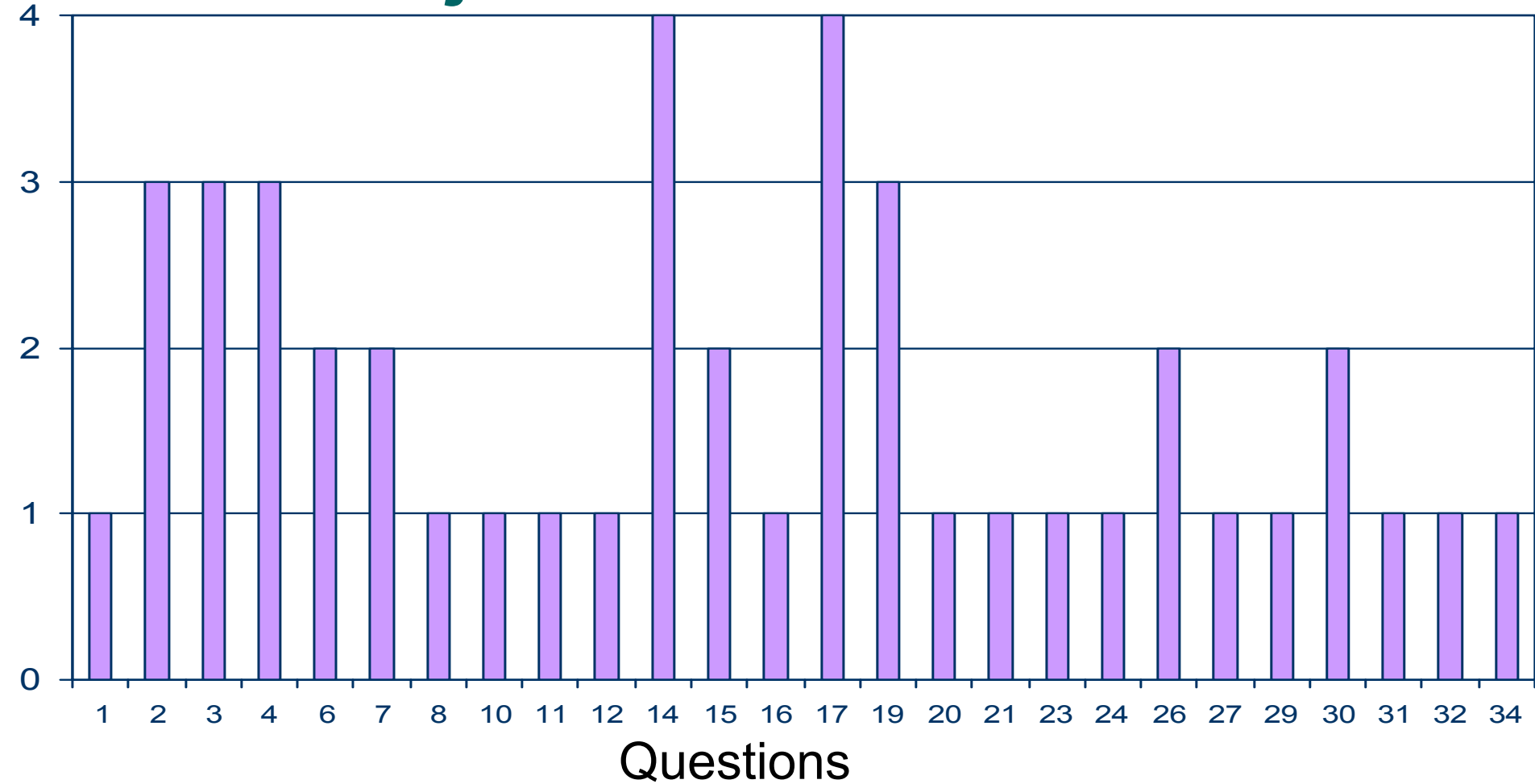


Q34

Commonly identified areas for project improvement

- Increasing participation, particularly among people with low incomes
- Engaging community members in “asking why”
- Linking with community structures

Project that withdrew



Insights from data analysis

- Provides a picture of where a project is at, including potential growth areas
- Explains how work was done
- Clearly separates groups that start off with higher capacity in project context
- Many projects used this as an evaluation tool
- Recommend for one-year (or longer) projects

Conclusions

- The Tool proved useful for project planning and evaluation.
- Enabled PHAC to document the aspects of community capacity that were strengthened through the one-year projects.

Unsolicited feedback from projects

- “Working through the Tool a second time has indeed provided the steering committee with a snapshot of their progress on the project. No question the project has progressed towards meeting its objectives. The document helped identify areas of strength (Participation, Leadership) as well as those area where growth has occurred but more is possible.

Unsolicited feedback from projects

Using the Community Capacity Building Tool to plan this project was excellent strategy. It provided a framework for success and then by working through it again when the project was near completion, you had a self-evaluation document. This self-evaluation document will be valuable as the project continues to grow.”

Project Evaluation prepared by external evaluation consultant.

Example Two

Alexis Nakota Sioux nation and the University of Alberta collaboration to address increasing prevalence of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder in their community

Source: Fletcher, F., McKennitt, D., & Baydala, L. (2007) Community Capacity Building: An Aboriginal Exploratory Case Study. *Pimatisiwin: A Journal of Aboriginal and Indigenous Community Health* 5(2).

Example two, con't

- Two focus groups with community members (mid-point and end)
- CCBT was used to facilitate and record discussion on community-capacity building
- Final mapping points determined by consensus
- CCBT documented growth in all 9 domains
- Used results to show short-term success

Limitations of the tool

- “Although the focus group prompted valuable discussion that would otherwise not have taken place, the need for consensus demanded a significant amount of time” p.28
- “Aspects of culture could be explored and measured as indicators of the “sense of community” feature.” p. 28

Examples of Focus Group Findings

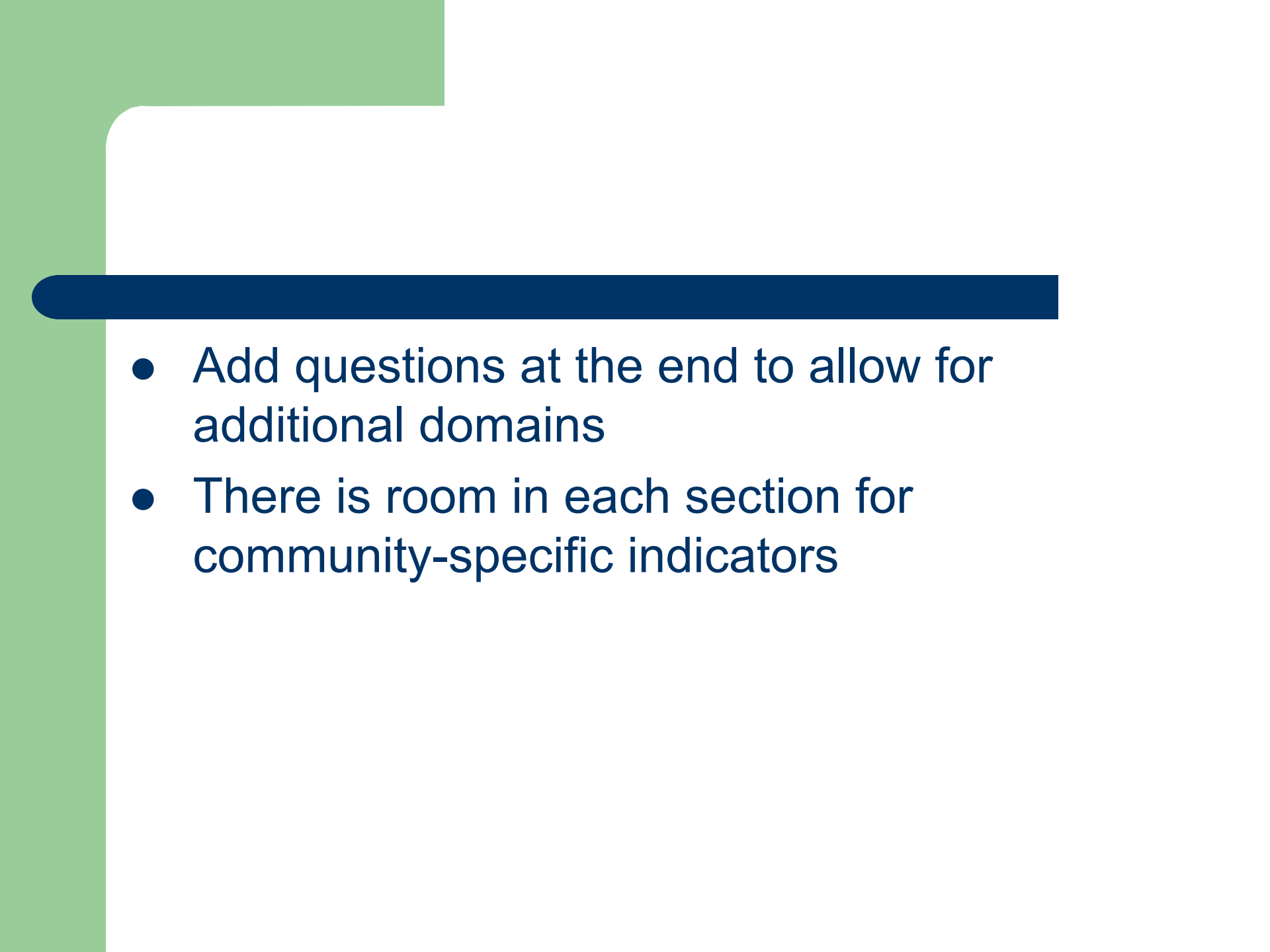
Asking Why: “I have been in informal discussions with the chief and council and they really believe that this project can be a starting ground for exploring more of the underlying issues such as housing and water that many of our members face.” p.20

Skills, Knowledge & Learning:

“I am having an opportunity to present; that develops my skills. I also got invited [to another workshop]. I asked if I could participate in the training – who knew? I want to learn about this stuff so someday we can do it ourselves.... Three years ago I would not have believed I would be going to Chicago next week to give a keynote address and have given two presentations to doctors.” p.23.

Final thoughts on adapting the tool



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- Add questions at the end to allow for additional domains
 - There is room in each section for community-specific indicators

Tool and Analysis Manual Downloads:

- <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/canada/regions/ab-nwt/downloads.html>
- Contact info for Mary Frances MacLellan-Wright: mfran1971@yahoo.ca

