



# **Inspiring Communities Evaluation Framework**

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## **Introduction**

Inspiring Communities is a network of communities in Nova Scotia. It uses a collective impact approach to bring residents, government, community organizations, and business together, to foster innovative, collaborative, community-driven approaches to addressing complex social issues.

The purpose of the Inspiring Communities evaluation is to help the stewards of the initiative – at both provincial and community levels - with real-time learning cycles that help them to adjust strategies. The Framework also looks at the way that communities organize and support their work, and helps assess how this may be strengthened. It can help assess the extent to which the conditions needed for success have developed, and how this compares with similar initiatives.

Another purpose of the evaluation is to understand and guide the systems level changes that Inspiring Communities seeks to stimulate. The premise of system change is that if underlying conditions can be different, scalable impacts will develop. The role of the evaluation is to monitor the system to see where there are early signs of change, and provide feedback that can reinforce these positive changes, identify unintended consequences, and showcase progress on what is inevitably a very long-term effort.

## **Theory of Change**

A Theory of Change is a comprehensive description and illustration of theory-informed expectations of change in a particular context. The working version of the Theory of Change (attached in Appendix B) is based on discussions and a workshop with Inspiring Communities stakeholders. It is in the process of being updated and completed.

Inspiring Communities was created as a new way to address persistent and longstanding complex social issues in Nova Scotia; old ways have not worked.

The first step in the Inspiring Communities change process is creating strong backbone teams who have community trust and connections, as well as time and capacity to support this work. Their first job is bringing residents, government, community organizations, and business together – including all the voices and perspectives in a community. There is a focus on supporting everyone in showing up for each other – this is done by intentionally creating a culture of trust and relationships. While they are making and strengthening connections, partners will look at research information about issues in the community, explore stories and lived experience to help them develop a shared understanding of the complex issues, and identify priority areas for focus and action. Communication is ongoing among partners, across communities, and with key stakeholders and champions. This is key to showing up for each other, building relationships, creating a culture of innovation and learning, and building buy-in to the process.

Drawing on data, evidence, and community input, community partners will create a vision and processes for moving forward together to address the priority community issues. Partners are interested in taking risks and trying new and innovative strategies to address issues. With support from

the provincial team and by connecting with each other, the communities will keep track of their work, reflect on it, and create shared systems for measuring changes. They will adapt their approaches as needed – their learnings will inform the overall initiative, and spill over to other initiatives in Nova Scotia. Through this process, government will learn to show up differently in communities, practices and policies will improve, and partners will share power and resources in more effective ways. At this point, systems will be working differently. In the long term, we will see a positive impact on the complex social issues being addressed, which will be reflected in changes to the health and well-being of the population.

## Evaluating Complexity

Inspiring Communities is a complex initiative operating in complex environments across the province, working on bringing about systems change to enable communities to more effectively tackle socially complex issues. Progress is not and will not be predictable, controllable, or linear.

The Collective Impact Forum suggests that in these contexts, evaluations should *'remain iterative, consider all aspects of the system, support learning across the system, adapt to the local context, search for effective principles, identify sources of influence across the system, focus on relationships and interdependencies, explain variations in an initiative's outcomes, and watch for emerging patterns'*<sup>1</sup>.

Developmental Evaluation (DE) is suitable in complex contexts because it acknowledges that both the path and the destination are evolving, and it supports the process of innovation by enabling exploration and development<sup>2</sup>. It identifies what is being developed; what information is required for decision-making; and based on what has happened so far and what has emerged, what happens next. It provides real-time accountability and reporting for 'just in time' decision-making (Innoweave, 2018)<sup>3</sup>. Inspiring Communities will utilize DE throughout all phases of the work, particularly in the early and middle phases (where strategies and approaches are still in development) at both provincial and community levels.

Developmental Evaluation does not replace traditional forms of evaluation, and both formative and summative evaluation methods (generally used in more traditional contexts) are also incorporated into this evaluation framework. The table below<sup>4</sup> provides a comparison of the different types of evaluation.

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<sup>1</sup> Please see <https://www.fsg.org/publications/evaluating-complexity>

<sup>2</sup> Gamble (2008). A Developmental Evaluation Primer  
[http://vibrantcanada.ca/files/developmental\\_evaluation\\_primer\\_1.pdf](http://vibrantcanada.ca/files/developmental_evaluation_primer_1.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Innoweave Developmental Evaluation Workshop (2018).

<sup>4</sup> Innoweave Developmental Evaluation Workshop (2018).

**Comparison of Developmental, Formative, and Summative Evaluation Approaches**

	Type of Evaluation		
	Developmental	Formative	Summative
<b>Purpose</b>	Evaluation is used to provide feedback on the creation of the initiative, and inform the evolution of a theory of change	Evaluation is used to help improve the initiative	Evaluation is used to judge the merit or worth of the initiative
<b>Level of Stability</b>	Initiative is innovating and in development	Initiative is stabilizing and is being refined	Initiative is stabilized and well-established
<b>Evaluation Design</b>	Evaluation designs change as the innovation unfolds and changes	Evaluation designs are fixed and implemented as planned	Evaluation designs are fixed and implemented as planned

The provincial and community Inspiring Communities teams will each develop a DE ‘Learning Framework’. Each Learning Framework will identify four or five key principles, values, questions, or learning goals that are important to the teams, that they would like to revisit and discuss regularly to reflect on whether they are being true to what is important to them as the work unfolds, and/or whether the key points need to be adapted.

**Collective Impact Framework<sup>5</sup>**

According to the Collective Impact Forum’s *Guide to Evaluating Collective Impact 01*, *Collective impact occurs when a group of actors from different sectors commit to a common agenda for solving a complex social or environmental problem. More than simply new way of collaborating, collective impact is a structured approach to problem solving that includes five core conditions:*

- **Shared agenda:** All participants have a shared vision for change, including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions.
- **Continuous communication:** Consistent and open communication is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and create common motivation.
- **Backbone function:** Creating and managing collective impact requires dedicated staff with specific skills to coordinate participating organizations and agencies, and to design and support good process and a learning culture.
- **Mutually reinforcing activities:** Participant activities must be differentiated while still being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.

<sup>5</sup> Information about the collective impact approach for framing this document is drawn from: [https://www.fsg.org/tools-and-resources/system?sort\\_by=count&field\\_related\\_approach\\_areas\\_target\\_id=81&field\\_tool\\_type\\_value=All](https://www.fsg.org/tools-and-resources/system?sort_by=count&field_related_approach_areas_target_id=81&field_tool_type_value=All)

- **Shared measurement system:** Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants ensures that efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable (p. 4).

Since its inception, Inspiring Communities has implicitly drawn on the collective impact approach to inform its structure and path. Collective impact aligns well with the vision Inspiring Communities has for its work. Even before Inspiring Communities officially began, the first community, Between the Bridges in Dartmouth North, formally adopted collective impact. In March 2018, after many discussions about collective impact allowing for the integration of multiple conceptual approaches important to communities, the Inspiring Communities core team decided to explicitly use collective impact language to describe its work.

Inspiring Communities has a provincial backbone team that supports the work of community backbone teams, who are each working on building and nurturing the collective impact conditions locally.

Each Inspiring Communities location is unique in terms of community characteristics, strengths, and needs, and the starting places and times for beginning this work vary; therefore communities are not necessarily in the same phase of development. This evaluation framework is designed with flexibility to ask questions appropriate to the reality of each community (see Evaluation Implementation for further detail).

### **Tracking Progress**

The evaluation team is tracking the key work in the communities using an activity log (attached in Appendix B). It includes indicators such as the nature of activities in the communities, who is involved, the kinds of supports provided by the backbones, data collected and utilized, knowledge exchange activities, new understandings and agreements reached, decisions made, new/adapted policies and practices, funding flow, and capacity building. Having this information will help us observe patterns/trends and differences across communities as the work progresses, and it will help us observe potential gaps that may require focused attention.

### **Evaluation Framework**

The evaluation framework for Inspiring Communities considers the complexity of the work, and looks beyond the simplistic explanations of causation and attribution found in traditional evaluations. Complex initiatives like Inspiring Communities need to be resilient and adaptable; and the evaluation of such initiatives must be able to provide feedback and learning to those implementing the work in real time. As already discussed, Developmental Evaluation is a technique that achieves this. This evaluation will use an approach that blends elements of Developmental Evaluation with elements of a more traditional approach to evaluation.

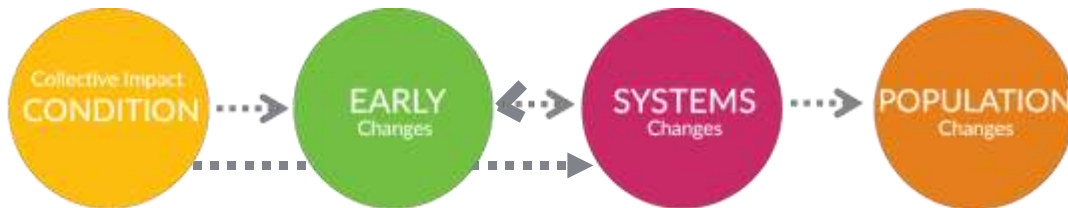
The evaluation framework will be applied consistently across all Inspiring Communities locations to allow the evaluation team to identify patterns, unique differences, and learnings in the big picture, while having flexibility in implementation to meet each community where it's at.

The evaluation framework will explore changes over time, beginning with looking at the extent to which the core *Collective Impact conditions* (common agenda, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, shared measurement, and backbone support) are in place, and/or require strengthening or adaptation. This work of a Collective Impact initiative happens in the early phases of the initiative.

Next, the evaluation team will look for *early changes*, defined by ORS Impact and SPARK Policy Institute<sup>6</sup> as changes to the environment that lay the foundation for systems and policy changes (both of which we look for in the middle phases of an initiative. These changes could include increased partnership quality, collaboration, and awareness of the issue. Early changes should create opportunities for *systems changes* - changes to core institutions within the initiative's geographic area, which may be formal or informal, and may happen in single or multiple organizations. Systems changes lay the groundwork for population changes, which we will explore in the mature phases of the initiative.

*Population changes* show changes in the target population of the initiative, which may be specific people in specific systems, geographic areas, or with specific needs.

This diagram from ORS Impact and SPARK Policy Institute illustrates the interrelationships of these phased changes.



The evaluation questions and indicators are grouped according to the phases of Collective Impact initiatives: early, middle, and mature. The potential indicators, data sources, and data collection methods are outlined for each phase.

Because the process is emergent, iterant, and innovative, and because shared measurement systems have yet to be developed, not all of these components can be known at this time. It is highly likely that additional questions, indicators, data sources, and data collection methods will be identified as the work unfolds. New information will be incorporated into future iterations of this evaluation framework.

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<sup>6</sup> ORS Impact and SPARK Policy Institute (2018). When Collective Impact has an Impact: A Cross-Site Study of 25 Collective Impact Initiatives. [http://orsimpact.com/DirectoryAttachments/542018\\_95838\\_731\\_CI\\_Study\\_Report\\_May\\_2018.pdf](http://orsimpact.com/DirectoryAttachments/542018_95838_731_CI_Study_Report_May_2018.pdf)

**Stage of Development: Early Phase - Social Political Economic Context, CI Design and Implementation**

- CI partners are assembling the key elements of their initiative, developing action plans, and exploring different strategies and activities
- There is a degree of uncertainty about what will work and how
- New questions, challenges, and opportunities are emerging

**Performance Measures: Agreement on early performance indicators**

**Evaluation Approach: Developmental Evaluation**

<b>Collective Impact Action Focus</b>	<b>What We Are Evaluating at this Stage</b>
<p>Context</p> <p>Designing the overall approach</p> <p>Implementing early stage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of urgency around the issue; are there champions to advance the issue? Stakeholder perceptions regarding the need for change and the level of support for change?</li> <li>• What are the socio-economic, cultural, political factors influencing design and implementation?</li> <li>• Which core collective impact (CI) conditions are present and/or gaining momentum vs. experiencing challenges; what merits more attention?</li> <li>• How should the initiative adapt to changing circumstances? To what extent is the initiative evolving in response to progress/challenges in achieving outcomes?</li> <li>• To what extent are learning processes and feedback loops embedded?</li> <li>• How are relationships developing among partners?</li> </ul>
<b>CI Element</b>	<b>Sample Early Performance Indicators</b>
<p>Backbone Infrastructure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The leadership structure/Steering Committee (SC) includes a diverse set of voices and perspectives from multiple, relevant sectors and constituencies</li> <li>• Backbone (BB) staff are respected by important partners and external stakeholders</li> <li>• Partners look to the BB and Steering Committee for initiative support, strategic guidance, and leadership</li> <li>• Adequate resources for backbone infrastructure</li> <li>• BB provides project management support, including monitoring progress toward goals and connecting partners to discuss opportunities, challenges, gaps, and overlaps</li> <li>• BB convenes partners and key external stakeholders to ensure the alignment of activities and pursue new opportunities</li> <li>• SC regularly reviews SMS data on progress toward goals and uses it to inform strategic decision making</li> </ul>
<p>Continuous Communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working groups (or other collaborative structures) have regular meetings</li> <li>• Members of working groups or other collaborative structures attend and participate actively in meetings</li> <li>• Partners communicate and coordinate efforts regularly (with and independently of backbone staff)</li> <li>• The initiative engages external stakeholders in regular meetings and integrates their feedback into the overall strategy</li> </ul>



CI Element	Sample Early Performance Indicators
Common Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The SC (or other leadership structure) includes voices from all relevant sectors and constituencies</li> <li>• An equity lens is explicit</li> <li>• Members of the target population help shape the common agenda</li> <li>• Partners and the broader community understand and can articulate the problem</li> <li>• Partners agree on an Equity Framework for conducting, implementing, and evaluating the work</li> <li>• Geographical boundaries and population targets are clear for all partners</li> <li>• Partners use local data to inform the selection of priorities, strategies and actions</li> <li>• Commitment from leaders of multiple sectors has been made to work together on the shared issue</li> <li>• Partners endorse a collective responsibility for the issue and generating results around it</li> </ul>
Mutually Reinforcing Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An action plan clearly specifies the activities that will address disparities and indicates what each partner has committed to implementing</li> <li>• Working groups (or other collaborative structures) coordinate activities in alignment with the plan of action</li> <li>• Partners have clear approaches/goals for their own contribution to their working group</li> <li>• Partners understand the roles of other working groups and how these support the common agenda</li> <li>• Partners' activities (e.g., in budgets, priorities, decisions) change to better align with the plan of action</li> </ul>
Shared Measurement System (SMS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partners understand the value of the shared measurement system</li> <li>• Partner use an equity lens for measurement practices</li> <li>• Partners understand how they will participate in the shared measurement system</li> <li>• Partners use feedback from the shared measurement to calibrate their own activities and decisions</li> <li>• A participatory process is used to determine a common set of indicators and data collection methods</li> <li>• Partners agree to a data sharing agreement that supports ongoing collaboration</li> <li>• The system includes a common set of indicators and data collection methods that can provide timely evidence of (or lack of) progress toward the initiative's outcomes</li> <li>• Partners commit to collecting the data as defined in the data plan</li> <li>• Partners know how to use the SMS</li> <li>• Partners contribute high-quality data on a common set of indicators in a timely and consistent manner</li> </ul>
Initiative Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficient operating support is available to enable the initiative's BB to fulfill its responsibilities</li> <li>• Initiative has influencers and champions that command the respect of a broader set of stakeholders and can bring stakeholders to the table</li> <li>• Initiative partners have a shared definition and approach to equity</li> <li>• Initiative has supporters who can champion the strategy with the broader community</li> <li>• Leadership of the initiative comes from multiple sectors that are able to shift both public and private funding</li> <li>• Individuals with relevant expertise leading the work</li> </ul>

CI Element	Sample Early Performance Indicators		
Culture of Trust and Relationship Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principles and practices guiding how to work together have been endorsed and are reinforced in practice</li> <li>Partners feel included in major decision-making processes</li> <li>Partners regularly seek feedback and advice from one another</li> <li>Partners trust each other</li> <li>People of different cultures, identities, and backgrounds feel respected and heard within the initiative</li> </ul>		
Learning and Evaluation Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning and evaluation structures and processes are embedded in the work of the initiative</li> <li>Decision-making processes are open and transparent</li> <li>Partners have a shared agreement on how progress will be monitored and assessed</li> <li>Partners share insights and lessons about assumptions, successes, failures and promising practices</li> <li>Community input and feedback is sought and used to inform the initiative's ongoing work</li> <li>The initiative applies an equity lens</li> </ul>		
Inventory of Possible Questions		Potential Data Sources	Possible Data Collection Methods
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How were communities identified to become part of IC?</li> <li>What contextual factors are influencing the design and implementation of IC at the community and provincial levels?</li> <li>Are these issues prevalent across communities (what is the current context IC is aiming to address across communities)? Why?</li> <li>How are the Backbones structured?</li> <li>What kinds of support are the Backbones providing?</li> <li>What is the representation of people with lived experience? How are they being supported to participate in the initiative? How is an equity lens being applied?</li> <li>Are the working groups meeting regularly?</li> <li>Do working group members participate fully?</li> <li>How are stakeholders communicating with each other (formally and informally)?</li> <li>Are stakeholders able to have the conflicted conversations and work through differences, and share substantive details with each other?</li> <li>Who else is engaged in regular meetings, and what do they contribute?</li> <li>How (and who) are the communities coming together to co-create a shared understanding of issues?</li> <li>What types of community level research information is available and being used to inform planning and decision making?</li> <li>What issues communities are addressing? What is the background on these issues (what has been done in the past to address these issues)?</li> <li>If certain groups or populations are more affected by the issues (e.g., historically or systemically marginalized), how is that being addressed?</li> </ol>		<p>IC Documents/ Databases</p> <p>IC Core Team</p> <p>Provincial Backbone</p> <p>Local Backbones</p> <p>Local Partners</p>	<p>Document Review</p> <p>Database Review</p> <p>Focus Groups</p> <p>Key Informant Interviews</p>

Inventory of Possible Questions	Potential Data Sources	Possible Data Collection Methods
<p>16) What is the common (shared) agenda? Is there a documented collaborative agreement? Which Boards/leadership teams from participating organizations have endorsed the agreement?</p> <p>17) What do the action plans look like?</p> <p>18) What does the shared measurement system look like? How was it developed?</p> <p>19) Do partners value the shared measurement system? Do they understand how they will participate in it? What are they contributing to it?</p> <p>20) What are the collectively agreed upon principles and practices guiding the work? How are they being reinforced through the process?</p> <p>21) How are partners engaged in mutually reinforcing activities to move the plan forward? Are any partners not involved, and why?</p> <p>22) Why did partners say yes when they were invited to be part of IC?</p> <p>23) How is the convening process being evaluated and shared for continuous learning?</p> <p>24) How are resources being utilized to support the operation of IC? Are any other resources required?</p> <p>25) How are IC champions building support for the work (e.g., with stakeholders and the public)?</p> <p>26) How are findings and lessons learned used to inform decision-making and make adaptations to IC and the local initiatives?</p> <p>27) What are the exciting stories that show promise?</p>		

**Stage of Development: Middle Phase – Behavioural Changes, Systems Changes & Implementation**

- The initiative's key elements are in place and partners are implementing agreed upon strategies and activities
- Outcomes are becoming more predictable
- The initiative's context is increasingly well-known and understood

**Performance Measures: Data from shared measurement system informs progress and continuous improvement**

**Evaluation Approach: Formative Evaluation, Developmental Evaluation**

<b>Collective Impact Action Focus</b>	<b>What We Are Evaluating at this Stage</b>
Implementation Changing Behaviour Changes in way system operates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are any early changes in individual behaviour, awareness, and practices among members of target population?</li> <li>• To what extent are social and cultural norms evolving in ways that support the initiative’s goals?</li> <li>• Which systems are making different decisions about policies, programs, resource use, and funding flow as they relate to the initiative’s goals?</li> <li>• Are there more resources available in the system towards the common agenda?</li> </ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Sample Early Performance Indicators</b>
Implementation	<p>See Early Year Implementation Questions (above – which apply in mid-years as well) for: Common Agenda; Backbone Infrastructure; Professional Practice; Shared Measurement System; Mutually Reinforcing Activities; Continuous Communication; Initiative Capacity; Learning Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed interventions, made key decisions, and set policies using an analysis of structural inequities that drive disparities (identifying the root causes of inequity).</li> </ul>
Professional Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal actors/organizations better understand the population they serve and are better able to address their needs</li> <li>• The population or issue(s) targeted by the CI initiative are viewed as a priority among system actors</li> <li>• The population or issue(s) targeted by the CI initiative receive greater attention from system actors</li> </ul>
Individual Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals report increased awareness of the issues surrounding the desired behaviour change</li> <li>• Individuals report improved knowledge of the desired behaviour change</li> </ul>
Cultural Norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media messages support desired behaviour targeted by the CI initiative (PSAs, television/radio/newspaper messages, blogs)</li> <li>• Social media messages support desired behaviour targeted by the CI initiative (e.g. messages, conversations, or campaigns on social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, or Pinterest)</li> <li>• The public narrative surrounding the targeted issue area/system includes language and messaging that support the goals of the CI initiative; formal actors/organizations better understand the population they serve and are better able to address their needs</li> </ul>
Funding Flows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall public funding (federal, provincial, or local government) for the targeted issue area or system has increased</li> <li>• Existing public resources are directed toward evidence-based strategies in the targeted issue area/system</li> <li>• New public resources are committed to evidence-based strategies in the target issue area/system</li> <li>• Public funding is increasingly designed to allow for program innovation and experimentation in the targeted issue area/system</li> </ul>

Public Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased public involvement in an issue</li> <li>• Increased action taken by champions of an issue</li> <li>• Increased awareness of issue and will to act by decision makers and influencers</li> <li>• Increased breadth of partners in support of an issue</li> <li>• Increased media coverage</li> <li>• Increased awareness of the CI’s messages among public and key policy stakeholders</li> <li>• Public opinion changes to support of CI messages/goals</li> </ul>
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Inventory of Possible Questions	Potential Data Sources	Possible Data Collection Methods
<p><i>See Early Phase Implementation Questions (above – which apply in mid-years as well) for: Common Agenda; Backbone Infrastructure; Professional Practice; Shared Measurement System; Mutually Reinforcing Activities; Continuous Communication; Initiative Capacity; Learning Culture</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Are government/others developing a better understanding of the population they serve and how to better address their needs?</li> <li>2) Are government and other partners responding differently to community issues?</li> <li>3) How is government’s response impacting communities’ ability to tackle social issues?</li> <li>4) What factors enable innovation and risk-taking?</li> <li>5) Do current policies and practices help or hinder efforts to address issues?</li> <li>6) How has individual awareness and behaviour changed in relation to the community issues?</li> <li>7) Has the public narrative shifted to support the goals of IC?</li> <li>8) How is information about community issues and contexts being translated to government? What is the nature of engagement among communities and government?</li> <li>9) To what extent are the IC principles (diverse voices, trust-based relationships, innovative ways of working, community-led, evidence-driven decisions, systems-focused) reflected in the work of the community initiatives? In the work of the provincial initiative? In the IC model?</li> <li>10) What changes/additions have been made to resource allocation, flow, and source? Are resources being aligned to targeted issues?</li> <li>11) Have there been any shifts in who holds power to make decisions around addressing complex community issues?</li> <li>12) Have there been any changes to policy and/or practices around addressing complex community issues?</li> <li>13) Are communities more engaged in tackling the identified problems? What are the challenges and opportunities (and variations) in tackling identified social problems? What are the implications?</li> <li>14) What role has new/strengthened relationships/networks played in addressing identified issues?</li> <li>15) What role have champions played in building support for/addressing identified issues?</li> <li>16) Are residents more engaged in addressing community issues?</li> <li>17) Has public awareness/narrative of the community issues changed?</li> <li>18) What are the exciting stories that show promise?</li> </ol>	<p style="text-align: center;">IC Documents/ Databases</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IC Core Team</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Provincial Backbone</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Local Backbones</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Local Partners</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Community Alignment Table Members</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Resident Narratives/ Videos</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Government Officials</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Media/social media</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Document Review</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Database Review</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Focus Groups</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Key Informant Interviews</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Media scan</p>

<b>Stage of Development: Mature Phase – CI Goals</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The initiative's activities are well established and are not changing</li> <li>• Implementers have significant experience and an increasing amount of certainty about "what works"</li> <li>• The initiative is ready for a determination of impact, merit, value, or significance</li> </ul>			
<b>Performance Measures: Data from shared measurement system informs progress and continuous improvement (if measurement systems are strong)</b>			
<b>Evaluation Approach: Summative Evaluation</b>			
<b>Collective Impact Action Focus</b>	<b>What We Are Evaluating at this Stage</b>		
Meaningful and measurable changes related to initiatives' goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What about the CI process has been most effective, for whom, and why?</li> <li>• To what extent has the CI initiative achieved its ultimate outcomes?</li> <li>• How has the work of the CI Initiative contributed to improving its targeted outcome(s)?</li> <li>• What ripple effects did the CI initiative have on other parts of the community/system?</li> <li>• What difference did the CI initiative make?</li> </ul>		
	<b>Sample Early Performance Indicators</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goal(s) achievement/Improvement in targeted outcomes</li> <li>• Ripple effect to other parts of community/unintended consequences</li> <li>• Impact on stakeholders</li> </ul>		
	<b>Inventory of Possible Questions</b>	<b>Potential Data Sources</b>	<b>Possible Data Collection Methods</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) How has capacity (knowledge, skills, leadership) for addressing complex social issues changed?</li> <li>2) To what extent has the community initiative progressed towards sustainability (alternative funding)?</li> <li>3) What progress has been made on the community identified targeted priorities?</li> <li>4) Are there changes to relevant indicators based on implementation of the strategies communities use to address complex social issues?</li> <li>5) In the long term, are there changes to population indicators (including Canadian Index of Well-Being indicators)?</li> <li>6) Were there any unintended (positive or negative) outcomes from the community the initiative?</li> <li>7) How have the IC principles and approach changed over time? What was the rationale for the changes?</li> <li>8) What are the community initiatives telling us about the challenges and opportunities in tackling identified social problems?</li> <li>9) In what ways (if any) has IC contributed to systems (beginning with government) working differently together?</li> <li>10) What are the exciting stories that show promise?</li> </ol>	IC Documents/Databases  IC Core Team  Provincial Backbone  Local Backbones  Local Partners  Community Alignment Table Members  Residents  Government Officials	Document Review  Database Review  Focus Groups  Key Informant Interviews

## Participatory Evaluation

Participatory evaluation is a collaborative approach that builds on strengths and that values the contribution of everyone involved. There are several core principles of a participatory approach. The following are adapted from “A Guide to Project Evaluation: A Participatory Approach”<sup>7</sup> and have been used to inform the development of this evaluation framework:

- Participatory evaluation focuses on learning, success and action.
- The evaluation must be useful to the people who are doing the work that is being evaluated.
- The evaluator works closely with the people involved in an initiative to define the specific evaluation questions, the indicators of success and realistic timeframes.
- Participatory evaluation makes it possible to recognize shared interests among those doing the work, the people the work is designed to reach, the project funders and other stakeholders.

## Evaluation Implementation

Generally, key data collection activities are planned for September and March each year, for each phase of the initiative. Some data collection activities, such as document and database review, are ongoing. Interviews, focus groups, and other methods (e.g., videos, storytelling sessions) will be implemented at key data collection points, to be determined with communities at the time. As evaluation questions, indicators, data sources, and data collection methods emerge, the implementation and timelines will be adapted.

### *Early Phase*

In the first years of Inspiring Communities, the work of the initiative is focusing on bringing partners (residents, community organizations, government, and business) together to develop an understanding about the social-political-economic context in which complex social issues are embedded in communities, gathering community input to identify priority areas of focus, supporting partners in designing the approaches for addressing the issues in each community, and then on supporting them in starting to implement the strategies they decide to adopt.

During this phase of the work, partners in the communities are building the key elements of the initiative: backbone infrastructure, continuous communication, common agenda, mutually reinforcing activities, and a shared measurement system.

As communities identify priority focus areas to address, the evaluation team will compile relevant baseline measures specific to the issues, and potentially develop context papers to support partners in discussing and developing a shared understanding of the issues.

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<sup>7</sup> Health Canada; <http://www.atlantique.phac.gc.ca/ph-sp/resources-ressources/guide/index-eng.php>

In this stage of the initiative, the primary approach to the evaluation is developmental. In the context of the broad factors that influence the design and implementation of the initiative, the evaluation team will be exploring how partners are coming together, whether champions are in place to advance the issues, whether the core elements for the initiative are in place and where strengthening and/or adaptations are needed, and how learning processes are structured and utilized.

Developmental evaluation processes will be implemented on an ongoing basis. Through observation and reflective questioning, the evaluation team will support Inspiring Communities stakeholders in paying attention to opportunities for learning and adapting.

Additionally, with input from the Evaluation Committee, and depending on the phase of the initiative in communities, the evaluation team will select the questions to be asked from the inventory of potential questions, and implement the data collection processes as follows:

<b>Early Phase Evaluation Implementation</b>			
<b>Data Collection Method</b>	<b>Data Source(s)</b>	<b>Timelines<sup>8</sup></b>	<b>Lead</b>
Document Review	IC Documents	September/March	Evaluation Team
Database Review	IC Tracking System	Monthly	Evaluation Team
Focus Groups	IC Core Team	September/March	External Evaluator
	Provincial Backbone	September/March	External Evaluator
	Local Backbones	September/March	Evaluation Team
	Local Partners	September/March	Evaluation Team
	Residents	September/March	Evaluation Team
Key Informant Interviews	Government members of Core Team	March	Evaluation Team
	Executive Director	March	External Evaluator

### *Middle Phase*

In the middle years of the community initiatives, the key elements (backbone infrastructure, continuous communication, common agenda, mutually reinforcing activities, and a shared measurement system) will be in place, and partners will be implementing and testing agreed-on strategies and activities. At this point, the initiative’s context will be more well-known and understood, and the outcomes of the strategies will be more predictable.

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<sup>8</sup> Before the data collection methods are implemented, the Research & Evaluation Team will have to assess which phase of the work is underway in each community, and ask the appropriate phase of questions.



At this point the evaluation team will continue the developmental evaluation approach from the early years, and begin to incorporate a formative evaluation approach as well. The formative evaluation will examine which systems are adapting practices and making different decisions about policies, programs, resource use, and funding flow, as they relate to the community agendas and goals. We will also be looking for early impacts, such as changes of behaviour, awareness, and practices among people with direct lived experience of the issues being addressed.

Developmental evaluation processes will continue through the middle years. Through observation and reflective questioning, the evaluation team will support Inspiring Communities stakeholders in paying attention to opportunities for learning and adapting as the work unfolds.

During this phase of the work in communities, and with input from the Evaluation Committee, the evaluation team will select the questions to be asked from the inventory of potential questions, and implement the data collection processes as follows:

<b>Middle Phase Evaluation Implementation</b>			
<b>Data Collection Method</b>	<b>Data Source(s)</b>	<b>Timelines</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Document Review	IC Documents	September/March	Evaluation Team
	Resident Narratives/ Videos	September/March	Evaluation Team
Media Scan	Media/Social Media	September/March	Evaluation Team
Database Review	IC Tracking System	Monthly	Evaluation Team
Focus Groups	IC Core Team	September/March	External Evaluator
	Provincial Backbone	September/March	External Evaluator
	Local Backbones	September/March	Evaluation Team
	Local Partners	September/March	Evaluation Team
	Residents	September/March	Evaluation Team
	Community A-Table Members	March	Evaluation Team
Key Informant Interviews	Government Officials	March	Evaluation Team
	Executive Director	March	External Evaluator

### *Mature Phase*

In the mature years of the initiative, the activities will be well established, and partners will have gained a sense of what is working. The evaluation team will be incorporating a summative evaluation approach (in addition to the ongoing developmental evaluation approach), and looking for impacts and merits of the work. We will examine what processes have been

effective and why, the extent to which outcomes have been achieved in the communities, how Inspiring Communities will have contributed to improving the targeted outcomes, and what difference the work will have made by then.

<b>Mature Phase Evaluation Implementation</b>			
<b>Data Collection Method</b>	<b>Data Source(s)</b>	<b>Timelines</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Document Review	IC Documents	September/March	Evaluation Team
	Resident Narratives/ Videos	September/March	Evaluation Team
Media Scan	Media/Social Media	September/March	Evaluation Team
Database Review	IC Tracking System	Monthly	Evaluation Team
Focus Groups	IC Core Team	September/March	External Evaluator
	Provincial Backbone	September/March	External Evaluator
	Local Backbones	September/March	Evaluation Team
	Local Partners	September/March	Evaluation Team
	Residents	September/March	Evaluation Team
	Community A-Table Members	March	Evaluation Team
Key Informant Interviews	Government Officials	March	Evaluation Team
	Executive Director	March	External Evaluator