Assessing Performance:

Evaluation Practices & Perspectives in Canada's Voluntary Sector

Michael H. Hall

Susan D. Phillips

Claudia Meillat

Donna Pickering

Editor: Norah McClintock

Une version française de ce document est aussi disponible.

PREFACE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PREFACE

This report is the product of the multi-year Voluntary Sector Evaluation Research Project (VSERP) that has been developed to improve the capacity of voluntary organizations to evaluate their work and communicate their effectiveness to their funders, stakeholders, and the public. VSERP is co-directed by the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy and Carleton University (through the Centre for Voluntary Sector Research and Development) who work in partnership with YMCA Canada, Volunteer Canada, United Way of Canada - Centraide Canada, the Max Bell Foundation, the CCAF-FCVI (formerly known as the Canadian Comprehensive Auditing Foundation), Community Foundations of Canada, and Philanthropic Foundations Canada.

The five key goals of the project are to:
• assess the evaluation capacity and needs of voluntary organizations;
• develop recommendations on how to build evaluation capacity and resources;
• create joint voluntary sector-university teams to implement these recommendations;
• create local demonstration projects to develop best practices for the application of resources and for connecting community organizations to resource tools and expertise; and,
• disseminate evaluation resources and build capacity in ways that will promote the use of the evaluation resources developed as part of the project.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

iii

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures

List of Tables

ASSESSING PERFORMANCE: EVALUATION PRACTICES & PERSPECTIVES IN CANADA'S VOLUNTARY SECTOR

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Voluntary organizations perform a critical role in Canadian life providing a variety of programs and services that address people's individual and social needs. Their effectiveness in doing so depends, in no small part, on their ability to adequately assess the performance of these programs and services. This report presents results from a national survey of the evaluation practices of Canadian voluntary organizations and of funders of voluntary organizations. The research was conducted as part of the multi-year Voluntary Sector Evaluation Research Project (VSERP), which is designed to improve the capacity of voluntary organizations to evaluate their work and communicate their effectiveness to funders, stakeholders, and the public.

A total of 1,965 voluntary organizations and 322 funders were surveyed by telephone in May and June 2001. Participants were asked to report on a variety of aspects of evaluation including their evaluation practices, changing expectations for evaluation information, satisfaction with evaluation, and perceived problems and needs for assistance. For the purposes of the research, evaluation was defined broadly to include activities such as program evaluation, client or member satisfaction studies, impact analysis, outcome measurement, organizational assessment, and any other activities that help funders and voluntary organizations assess performance.

Our research shows that evaluation and performance assessment are common features of organizational life in the voluntary sector and that expectations for evaluation have been increasing. More than three quarters of voluntary organizations reported that they had done some type of evaluation in the previous year. Close to three quarters said they evaluated as a matter of routine and not merely in response to funder demands. Most voluntary organizations report using a variety of means to evaluate their work, ranging from staff and volunteer meetings to focus groups, interviews and surveys. And, there appears to be a substantial level of board involvement in the performance assessment process in most organizations.

Voluntary organizations are facing increasing demands for evaluation from their funders. Almost half of the voluntary organizations surveyed reported that funder expectations had increased over the previous three years. Our survey of funders reveals that nearly half require the organizations they fund to do evaluations. Another 40% suggest that they do so. Funders report that they expect more evaluation information than they did in the past and are increasingly looking for evaluations that report on the outcomes of the programs and projects they fund rather than those that report on outputs. Although funders are increasingly expecting outcome evaluations, it appears that voluntary organizations may not fully understand what this entails.

Funders' increased expectations do not appear to have been accompanied by increased financial support. Only about one in five report increasing their funding support for evaluation over the previous three years.

Less than half of funders reported providing funding for evaluation or allowing project funds to be used for evaluation purposes. Funders do provide non-financial support, to a limited extent. About six in ten reported offering advice on evaluation and about half provide voluntary organizations with evaluation tools and resources. Less than one fifth offer training.

The vast majority of voluntary organizations are satisfied with the quality of their evaluations and believe that they use the results effectively. Satisfaction and the perceived accuracy of evaluation results appear highest when voluntary organizations use external evaluators to conduct their evaluations and when evaluations are done in response to funder requirements.

Funders have a somewhat different perspective. They are less satisfied with voluntary organization evaluations than are voluntary organizations and less than half reported making effective use of evaluation information. More than one quarter reported that they lacked the capacity to do so, which may help to explain our finding that almost one in five voluntary organizations believe that funders collect evaluation information simply for administrative purposes.

Both voluntary organizations and funders agree that voluntary organizations have many strengths that they bring to the process of evaluation. The ability of voluntary organizations to understand program and project activities and their ability to understand community needs is a principal strength. However, voluntary organizations generally tend to have a more positive view about the strengths they possess than do their funders.

Despite these strengths, voluntary organizations report having problems in a number of areas. They point to the lack of internal capacity, such as staff or time, and a lack of money as being particularly big problems. Unclear direction from funders about what is expected in an evaluation and lack of skills and knowledge in conducting evaluations are also requently-reported problem areas. Funders share the perspectives of voluntary organizations about the problems organizations face, but perceive the magnitude of the problems to be greater.

Voluntary organizations identify a need for more financial resources, better access to technology, and for greater consistency on the part of funders in their use of terminology. Funders also identify these as needs for voluntary organizations but tend to perceive the need for assistance to be greater. The top three needs that funders identified were: the need to have funders ask for similar evaluation information in cases where there are multiple funders, the need for more financial resources, and the need for greater consistency on the part of funders in their use of evaluation terminology.

As a final step in the research, consultations were held with voluntary organizations and funders to discuss the survey findings and develop recommendations for improving evaluation within voluntary organizations. Participants recommended the following:
• Creation of resources, such as an "Evaluation for Dummies" handbook and evaluation templates that would help to simplify and de-mystify evaluation.
• More financial resources to allow voluntary organizations to do evaluation.
• Greater communication and coordination among funders on evaluation requirements and terminology.
• Greater access to technology that could allow voluntary organizations to use software to compile and analyse evaluation information.
• Access to training and education on evaluation for voluntary organizations and funders, especially on outcome evaluation.
• Creating a campaign to educate the sector about the value of evaluation and how it can be used to improve programs and services, and to guide strategic planning.
• Developing a clearinghouse or resource centre that could offer online access to evaluation resources.
• Building a partnership approach to evaluation where funder and voluntary organizations work together to determine appropriate evaluation measures.

These recommendations, if implemented, will help to ensure that voluntary organizations have the capacity to properly design and deliver the many important services and programs Canadians have come to rely on.

CHAPTER 1   INTRODUCTION

Voluntary organizations understand the need to assess their programs, services, and products to ensure that they are meeting their objectives are being delivered as efficiently and effectively as possible. They also understand the need to communicate this information to their stakeholders – funders, donors, clients, and the public. Anecdotal evidence over the past few years suggests that stakeholders are increasingly demanding information about what voluntary organizations are doing and how well they are achieving their goals with the resources made available to them (Hall, Greenberg, & McKeown, 2000). Recognizing some of these pressures and the importance to the sector of maintaining public trust, the 1999 report of the Panel on Accountability and Governance in the Voluntary Sector called for increased accountability by voluntary organizations (PAGVS, 1999). However, we know little about what voluntary organizations are currently doing to evaluate or assess their performance, nor do we have a firm understanding of the types of challenges that organizations may be facing as they attempt to respond to calls for increased accountability.

This report presents the findings of the first national survey of the evaluation practices, strengths, limitations, and needs of Canadian voluntary organizations and their funders. It is part of the Voluntary Sector Evaluation Research Project (VSERP), which is designed to improve the capacity of Canadian voluntary organizations to evaluate their work and communicate their effectiveness to their stakeholders.

There are many challenges associated with voluntary sector evaluation. First, the task of evaluation has become more complex. As part of a general trend on the part of governments and other funders toward results-based management, there has been a shift away from input and output measurement to outcome measurement (Dinsdale, Cutt, & Murray, 1998; Forbes, 1998; Newcomer, 1997). Such measurement poses significant challenges in collecting and assessing information. Contributing to this complexity is the need to measure organization effectiveness as well as program effectiveness (Gray, 1997; Kagan, 1996); the desire to involve stakeholders in the evaluation process (Fetterman, Kaftarian & Wandersman, 1996; Green,

1998; Mathie & Green, 1997; Whitmore, 1998); and the difficulties of measurement, such as trying to measure long-term effects in the short timeframes available for evaluation (Fine, Thayer, & Coghlan, 1998; Kanter & Summers, 1987; W. K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998).

Second, evaluation requires an investment of time, money and staff expertise that many organizations are unable to make (Murray & Tassie, 1994). Although many large, sophisticated organizations have the resources to undertake evaluation, almost half of Canadian charities operate on revenues of under $50,000 per year, and two thirds on less than $100,000. Only 2% have annual revenues in the millions of dollars (Banting & Hall, 2000; Sharpe, 1994).

Third, the evaluation techniques that are available are largely designed for business and government (Herman & Renz, 1999). Voluntary organizations have different and more complex concerns, particularly when it comes to assessing those aspects of performance that are tied to their social missions. They also often have to demonstrate their effectiveness to a variety of stakeholders including beneficiaries, funders, partners, volunteers, and employees, all of who may have somewhat different criteria for evaluating performance.

Fourth, the current policy and political environment, which is highly risk-averse and does not appreciate mistakes or failures, creates considerable pressure to "look good to avoid blame" (Murray & Balfour, 1999; Murray & Tassie, 1994). In this context, it is difficult to report bad results, so voluntary organizations have to square sound evaluation with political imperatives. Given their missions aimed at serving community needs, voluntary organizations may face a natural tendency to equate program needs with program effectiveness, thus limiting how well they make use of evaluation.

Finally, voluntary organizations are often expected to respond to sometimes unrealistic evaluation demands by funders. The literature suggests that funders who demand evaluation may do so without recognizing the need to provide financial support or to work with organizations to build their evaluation capacity and expertise. A study prepared for United Way of America

notes that the risks of ill-conceived demands for performance assessment may be quite destructive: "Done badly, linking outcomes to funding can shift resources from service delivery to measurement with no offsetting benefit to programs, penalize prevention and development programs and others with harder-to-measure outcomes, promote 'creaming' (selecting participants who are more likely to succeed), inhibit innovation, punish risk taking and discourage interprogram cooperation" (Hatry, van Houten, Plantz, & Greenway, 1996, p.12).

Our research confirms a rise in expectations with respect to voluntary sector evaluation and shows that, although voluntary organizations understand the need for increased performance assessment, they may not be well equipped to meet these demands.

1.1   THE RESEARCH APPROACH

The study was intended to answer the following research questions:
- To what extent are voluntary organizations attempting to evaluate their performance?
- What methods are organizations using to evaluate their performance?
- What are funders' expectations regarding evaluation and what support do they provide for evaluation activities?
- What do organizations perceive to be their strengths and their weaknesses in evaluation?
- What are the perceived needs for resources to assist with evaluation?
- What resources are needed to assist with better evaluation?

There were three components to the research:
- An initial set of focus groups was conducted with representatives of voluntary organizations and funders in 12 communities across Canada.
- A national survey was conducted of 1,965 voluntary organizations and 322 funders to validate the initial focus group findings and determine the extent to which they represented the views of voluntary organizations and funders in Canada.

- A final set of consultations was conducted in the fall of 2001 with representatives of voluntary organizations and funders to discuss the survey findings and to develop recommendations for developing tools and strategies to assist voluntary organizations with their evaluation activities.

The Initial Focus Groups

The first phase of the project involved a series of focus groups that were conducted in the spring of 2000 in 12 communities (St. John's, Halifax, Quebec City, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Red Deer, Calgary, Whitehorse, and Victoria). In each community we conducted separate focus groups with voluntary organization representatives and with funders. In the focus groups we explored the views of voluntary organizations and funders about the types of evaluations that are being done, and how and why they are performed. We also examined perceptions about organizational strengths and weaknesses with regard to evaluation, as well as perceptions about the role that funders are playing. Finally, we assessed participants' views about what might be done to help organizations prepare more effective evaluations (see Hall, Phillips, Pickering, & Greenberg, 2000).

Summary of Focus Group Findings

The focus groups revealed that many voluntary organization participants were engaged in evaluation activities and that they often undertook parallel sets of evaluation in response to funders' requests. Many reported that they conducted their own internal evaluations as a means of better understanding the strengths and weaknesses of their programs and services. However, externally funder-driven evaluations appeared, in the main, to be conducted separately from the organization's own internal evaluations. Many voluntary organizations expressed a positive attitude about the role of evaluation; however, they also identified a number of problems. These included: the need to respond to the differing evaluation expectations of multiple funders; the lack of capacity to undertake evaluation (especially the lack of financial resources and training); and the lack of clear direction from funders regarding the evaluation information they expect.

The extent to which organizations reported that they were undertaking or were considering undertaking outcome-oriented evaluation varied and appeared to reflect the different expectations of funders in the various communities. There appeared to be some backlash to increasing pressure for outcome evaluation, partly because the information needed is difficult to collect and partly because organizations have a sense that what can be collected may not be particularly meaningful.

In some groups, participants expressed suspicion that the information they provide to funders is not being used for any purpose other than to fulfill mandated reporting requirements. Because of the real costs associated with evaluation, this sense that funders do not really use the information has resulted in considerable cynicism about the evaluation process. Participants also expressed a fear that evaluations that do not show positive results could lead to a loss of funding. As a result, some organizations may tend to "accentuate the positive." Nevertheless, voluntary organizations appeared to recognize the value of doing evaluation for purposes of their own strategic decision making.

Participants in the funder focus groups identified several concerns regarding their demands for and use of evaluation. Some number indicated that they are struggling to determine what evaluation approaches are most appropriate for their needs, particularly in the area of outcomes research. Many reported that they lacked the capacity to act on the evaluation information that they collect from organizations. Funders also recognized a number of barriers that voluntary organizations face in conducting evaluations, notably a lack of resources and training, and the challenges inherent in measuring the outcomes of programs and services whose impacts may be felt only in the longer term. Some funders were also aware that organizations are faced with differing evaluation demands from multiple funders, and that funders, as a group, lack the coordination to address this issue.

The results of the focus group consultations pointed to a need for better communication between both parties and clarification of expectations on the part of funders. They also suggested that there is a serious lack of capacity among both voluntary organizations and

funders. As a result, neither party may be using evaluation very effectively, if at all, to improve programs or to make allocation decisions.

The focus group findings provided a preliminary qualitative picture of the range of evaluation practices and of the issues that voluntary organizations were experiencing. They helped to guide the design of a national survey of voluntary organizations and funders that would provide a quantitative assessment of evaluation practices and issues, and of the need for evaluation assistance.

The Survey

Two parallel national surveys were conducted by telephone in May and June of 2001 by Ekos Research Associates Inc. A total of 1,965 surveys were completed with voluntary organizations; a total of 322 were completed with funders. A brief overview of the survey methodology is provided below. For further details please see Appendix A.

Survey Sample

The sample for the study of voluntary organizations mostly comprised registered charities for which information was readily available from the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA). This was supplemented by drawing a small sample of voluntary organizations that are not registered charities in order to assess the extent to which responses to the survey questions might depend upon whether or not an organization had charitable status.[1] The sample was stratified by region of the country, size of organization, type of organization, and whether or not the organization was a registered charity, to facilitate the analysis of possible variation in responses according to these characteristics. For analytical purposes, the data have been weighted to reflect the known distribution of voluntary organizations along these four dimensions (see Appendix A).

The survey sample of funders was derived from CCRA's databases on registered charities and from a list that was compiled of municipal/regional, provincial and federal government funders by identifying and contacting individual government departments. The sample of funders was stratified by region and type of funder. In the analyses presented in this report,

---

[1] A total of 1,665 surveys were completed by registered charities; 300 were completed by organizations that were not registered charities.

the data have been weighted to reflect the known distribution of organizations along these two dimensions (see Appendix A).

Key Characteristics of the Voluntary Organizations Surveyed

Voluntary organizations are extremely diverse in nature. The analyses done for this report examined variations in evaluation practices and needs according to three main organizational characteristics: type of organization, as defined by an organization's major purpose or activity (e.g., Health, Recreation, Arts and Culture, Social Services); size, as defined by annual revenues; and geographic location. The distributions of these characteristics among the organizations we surveyed are presented below.

TYPE OF ORGANIZATION. Organizations are grouped into six categories based on their self-reported major purpose or activity: Arts and Culture, Education, Health, Social Services, Community Benefits and Other.[2] Social Services organizations are the largest category, comprising 25% of the organizations surveyed (see Figure 1.1), followed by Community Benefits (e.g., protection of animals, protection of the environment, etc.), which made up 20% of the total. Health was the smallest category, accounting for 11% of the sample.

SIZE OF REVENUES. Organizations were grouped into four revenue categories, according to the size of their annual revenues. Approximately one tenth (9%) of the sample had annual revenues of more than $1.5 million (see Figure 1.2), and more than one half (58%) had revenues of less than $125,000. We were unable to determine the annual revenues of 5% of the organizations included in the survey sample. Any analysis or discussion of organizations by revenue size does not include these organizations.

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION. One third (34%) of the voluntary organizations surveyed were located in Ontario (see Figure 1.3); 21% were in Quebec; 14% were in British Columbia; 11% were in the Prairies (Manitoba and Saskatchewan); 10% were in Atlantic Canada and 10% were in Alberta.

Figure 1.1. Distribution by Organizational Type
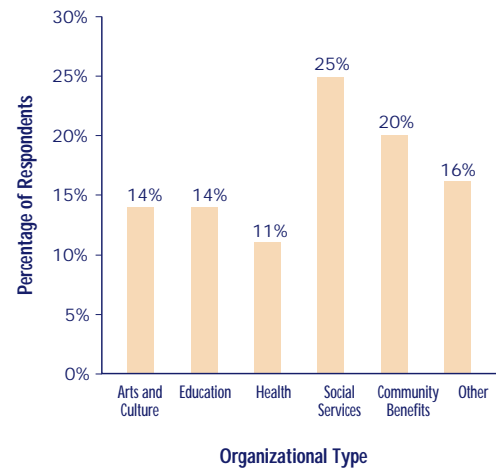
Figure 1.2. Distribution by Size of Annual Revenues
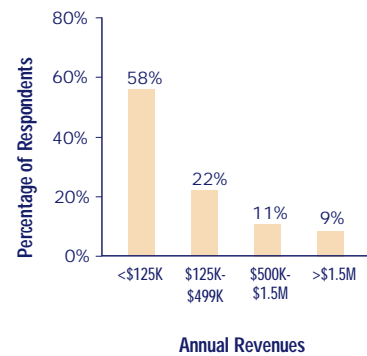
Figure 1.3. Distribution by Province/Region - Organizations

---
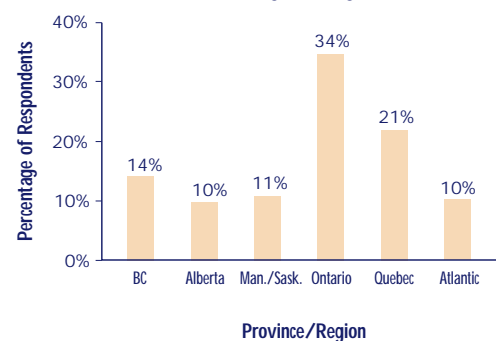
[2] Organizations were asked which of these six categories best reflected the work of their organization.

A cross-tabulation of voluntary organizations by type, annual revenue, and geographic location shows that larger organizations with annual revenues of more than $1.5 million are more likely to be Health and Social Services organizations (see Table 1.1). They are also more likely to be found in Ontario and British Columbia (see Table 1.2). On the other hand, smaller organizations with annual revenues of less than $125,000 are more likely to be Arts and Culture and Education organizations, and to be located in Atlantic Canada.

Table 1.1. Organizational Type by Annual Revenue						
	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
<$125K	66%	67%	46%	52%	59%	60%
$125K-$499K	23%	22%	23%	19%	25%	22%
$500K-$1.5million	6%	5%	12%	17%	12%	9%
>$1.5million	5%	6%	19%	13%	4%	8%
Unweighted n	336	238	319	458	345	269

Table 1.2. Province/Region by Annual Revenue						
	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
<$125K	51%	64%	65%	45%	67%	76%
$125K-$499K	26%	25%	24%	23%	19%	16%
$500K-$1.5million	13%	5%	5%	17%	9%	4%
>$1.5million	10%	6%	5%	15%	5%	4%
Unweighted n	259	275	238	638	273	282

Key Characteristics of the Funders Surveyed

The analyses done for this report examined variations in funders' views of evaluation according to two organizational characteristics: type of funder and geographic location. The distribution of these characteristics among the funders we surveyed is presented below.

TYPE OF FUNDER. We surveyed two types of funders: government, and public and private foundations. Fifty-four percent of the funders surveyed were government departments or agencies; 46% were foundations. Most of the government funders operated at the municipal level (see Figure 1.4). Most of the foundations were public rather than private foundations.[3]

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION. More than one in every three funders surveyed (37%) were located in Ontario (see Figure 1.5). The second largest group of funders (25%) was located in Quebec. Atlantic Canada, Alberta and Manitoba/Saskatchewan had the smallest percentage of funders.

Figure 1.4. Distribution by Funder Type - Funders
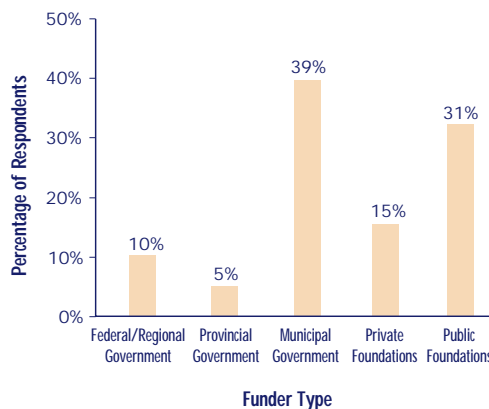
Figure 1.5. Distribution by Province/Region - Funders
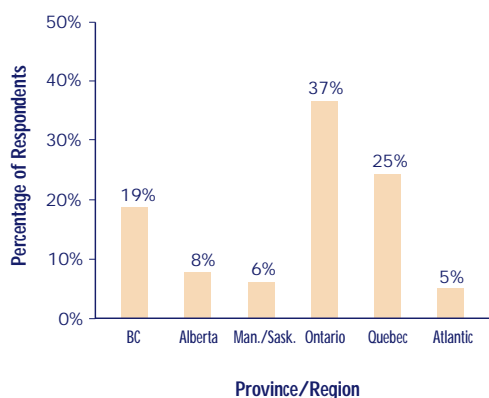
The Follow-Up Consultations

Follow-up consultations were held in 10 of the 12 communities where the initial focus groups for the study were conducted (St. John's, Halifax, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Red Deer, Calgary, Whitehorse, and Victoria). In each community, the original participants in our focus groups were invited to attend a briefing on the results of the survey and

---

[3] Public foundations are charitable foundations for which 50% or more of the directors or trustees deal with each other at arm's length and for those who do not deal with each other at arm's length have not contributed more than 50% of the capital. Such a person does not include a government, a municipality, another registered charity that is not a private foundation or a nonprofit organization (Sharpe, 1994). They include community foundations and United Ways.

to provide recommendations, based on the findings to date, about steps that should be taken to help improve the evaluation capacity of voluntary organizations.

1.2 THE ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

This report presents the results of our survey of voluntary organizations and their funders. We begin by examining how expectations regarding evaluation have changed over the past three years. Next, we review the evaluation practices of voluntary organizations, and how voluntary organizations and funders are using evaluation results. We then identify the evaluation strengths of voluntary organizations, the barriers that hinder effective evaluation, and potential improvements to the evaluation process. We conclude by offering recommendations that could help to improve the evaluation capacity of voluntary organizations.

Analysis Strategy

The voluntary organization survey data were analyzed to determine if there were variations in the responses of organizational respondents according to the type of organization, size of revenues, and geographic location. The funder survey data were analyzed to determine if there were variations in responses according to type or geographic location only.[4] We have highlighted those variations that appear substantial and that are significant in the main body of the report and provide tables outlining all variations in Appendix B (for voluntary organization survey results) and in Appendix D (for the funder survey results).

[4] Sample size limitations did not enable us to examine variations according to size of revenue.

CHAPTER 2   EVALUATION EXPECTATIONS

Many participants in the study's initial focus groups reported that funders are putting increasing pressure on voluntary organizations to evaluate their performance, and that more emphasis is being placed on outcome evaluation. As will be seen, our initial impressions were confirmed, for the most part, by the survey results.

In the survey we asked voluntary organizations whether, over the past three years, funder expectations had increased, decreased, or remained the same with regard to:
• the amount of evaluation information that voluntary organizations should provide;
• whether voluntary organizations should provide information about the outcomes or impacts of their programs or services; and,
• the amount of outcome or impact information that voluntary organizations should provide.

Funders were asked a parallel set of questions about how their own expectations had changed. We begin by reporting the findings from our survey of voluntary organizations. Next, we turn to the results from the survey of funders.

Increasing Expectations
Expectations do appear to be on the rise. Almost half of the respondents from voluntary organizations reported that funder expectations had increased over the past three years (see Figure 2.1). Forty-four percent indicated that funders expected more evaluation information than they had three years previously. Forty-nine percent reported that funders now expectedorganizations to provide information about the outcomes or impacts of their programs or services (e.g., the changes that programs produce in their clients or users) rather than outputs (e.g., the number of programs provided or the number of clients served). Forty-five percent indicated that funders also expect more of this type of outcome information than they have previously.

Voluntary organizations' assessment of funder expectations parallels that of funders themselves. Forty-one percent of funders reported that they expected more

evaluation information than they had three years previously (see Figure 2.1). Half reported that they now expected voluntary organizations to provide outcome information, and 43% reported that they expected more of this type of information than they had previously.

Although funders appear to be expecting more evaluation information, not all funders make evaluation mandatory. Less than half (48%) of funders who responded to the survey required the organizations they funded to do evaluations. Another 40% reported that they merely encouraged evaluation.

Figure 2.1. Increasing Funder Evaluation Expectations over the Past Three Years
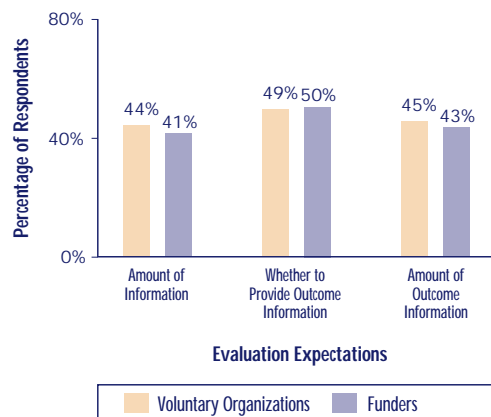
Base for Voluntary Organizations: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).
Base for Funders: Total Funders (unweighted n: 322).

Variations in Expectations Among Voluntary Organizations
The responses of voluntary organizations varied according to type of organization and size of revenues.

Health and Community Benefits organizations were more likely than others to report that funders expected more evaluation information (in both cases, 54% reported increased expectations; see Figure 2.2). Health organizations were most likely to report that funders expected to be provided with outcome information (60%) and that they wanted more of this type of information (54%).

7

Figure 2.2. Increasing Funder Evaluation Expectations over the Past Three Years - By Organizational Type

Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

Variations in Expectations Among Funders

Government funders were more likely to report increased expectations (see Figure 2.4) than were foundations over the past three years. Although both types of funders reported an increase in their expectation to be provided with outcome information (53% of government funders and 49% of foundations), government funders were significantly more likely to report that they expected more evaluation information (48% versus 35% of foundations), particularly more outcome information (50% versus 37% of foundations). The increase in government expectations may have been driven by a number of factors, including the trend for governments to scrutinize their spending carefully, by the broad movement within the public sector to results-based management, and by a risk-averse political environment.

Generally speaking, the larger an organization's annual revenues, the more likely it was to report increased expectations. About 60% of organizations with revenues of over $1.5 million reported an increase in expectations (see Figure 2.3), compared to less than 40% of organizations with annual revenues of less than $125,000. This may reflect the tendency of larger organizations to be accountable to multiple funders and for larger amounts of money.

Figure 2.4. Increasing Funder Evaluation Expectations over the Past Three Years - By Funder Type

Base: Government Funders (unweighted n: 193).
Foundations (unweighted n: 129).

Figure 2.3. Increasing Funder Evaluation Expectations over the Past Three Years - By Annual Revenue

Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).
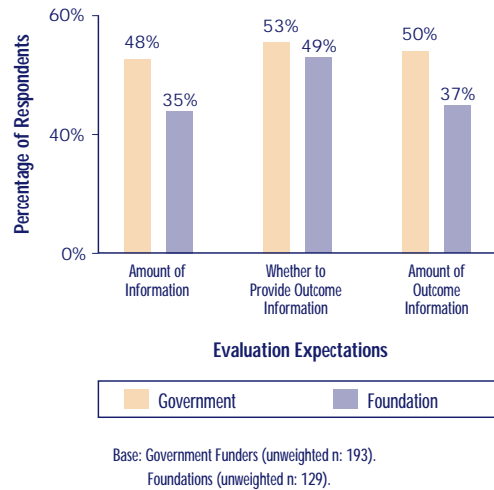
2.1 THE TYPES OF INFORMATION FUNDERS WANT

The evaluation expectations of many funders vary from project to project. Of the 48% of funders who reported requiring evaluations, over half (58%) reported that they have the same evaluation requirements for all of the projects, programs, or services they fund. Of the 40% who merely encourage evaluation, slightly less than half (48%) reported that they have the same expectations for all evaluations.

Whether they require or merely encourage evaluation, most funders appear to value the same types of evaluation information to a similar extent. The vast majority (91%) reported that they wanted evaluations of project/program activities/outputs (see Table 2.1). Both groups of funders – those who require evaluations and those who encourage them – share a high interest in obtaining information about outcomes and impacts (89% of those who require evaluations and 88% of those who encourage them) and have the least interest in client or user satisfaction information. Funders who require evaluations reported somewhat more interest in information relating to financial costs.

Most funders (65%) reported having no specific expectations about how voluntary organizations should undertake their evaluations or who should be responsible for conducting the evaluation. Only a small minority (6%) reported that they expected funded organizations to use an external evaluator. A smaller number (5%) reported that they hired an external evaluator to undertake the evaluation for the voluntary organizations they funded.

Conclusion

Both voluntary organizations and funders report an increase in expectations with regard to evaluation. Funders expect more evaluation information than they did in the past and appear to be increasingly looking for evaluations that report on the outcomes of the programs and projects they fund rather than those that report on outputs. Among voluntary organizations, these increased expectations are reported more frequently by larger organizations and among Health and Community Benefits organizations. Among funders, government funders reported increasing expectations more frequently than did foundations.

Table 2.1 Type of Information Required/Expected by Funders		
	Evaluation Required	Evaluation Encouraged
Project or program activities or outputs	91%	91%
Client or user satisfaction	57%	58%
Outcomes or impacts	89%	88%
Financial costs	95%	86%
Unweighted n	113	94

Note. Based on funded organizations that conducted evaluations in the past year.

EVALUATION PRACTICES

Although voluntary organizations appear to be under increasing pressure to provide information about their performance, to date there has been little understanding of how organizations approach evaluation. This chapter examines what voluntary organizations evaluate, what drives their evaluations, how many evaluations they do, the extent to which evaluations are imposed on them by funders, the evaluation methods they use, and who is involved in the process.

In our focus groups, when we asked how organizations carried out their evaluations, participants were quick to identify a number of informal evaluation methods. In fact, it was evident that most, if not all, of the voluntary organizations represented in our focus groups engaged in a wide variety of evaluation activities, ranging from informal and reactive to more strategic and proactive. It became apparent that participants took a broad view of evaluation, and that many considered informal and ongoing approaches to assessing performance to be as important as more formal and scientifically rigorous approaches. Consequently, when we designed the national survey, we believed it was important to define evaluation in a way that captured the activities of voluntary sector practitioners rather than to adhere to the definition found in the more formal field of evaluation research, which relies on social research methodologies (Rossi & Freeman, 1993).

Respondents to the national survey were given the following definition of evaluation to guide their responses: "For the purposes of our survey, the term evaluation is used quite broadly. It includes a variety of activities such as program evaluation, client or member satisfaction studies, impact analysis, outcome measurement, organizational assessment, and any other activities that help funders and voluntary organizations assess performance."

What Is Evaluated

In the national survey, we asked voluntary organization respondents if they had conducted any evaluation in the past year, and if so, what, specifically, they had evaluated. We focused on the evaluation activities of respondents during the previous year so that the information we gathered related to their actual practice and not to their views of evaluation in general.

More than three quarters (77%) of the voluntary organizations that responded to the survey reported that they had conducted some type of evaluation over the previous year. One third (66%) reported that they had evaluated ongoing programs and services (see Figure 3.1). Over half had evaluated projects (56%) or the overall effectiveness of their organization (54%). Fewer had evaluated their fundraising activities, the experiences of their volunteers, the performance of their boards of directors, or their products. Less than one quarter (23%) of respondents reported that they had conducted no evaluation at all over the previous year.

Figure 3.1. What was Evaluated in the Past Year
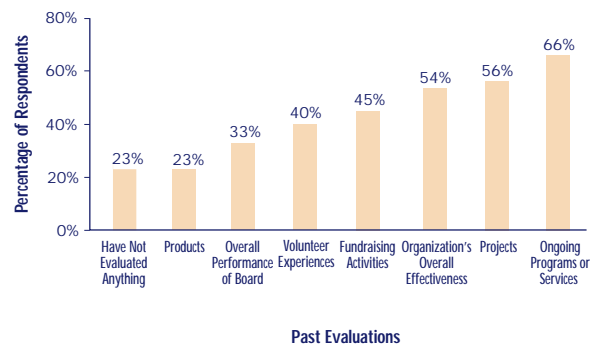
Base: Full Sample (unweighted n: 1965).

Health and Social Services organizations were more likely than other types of organizations to have done evaluations in each of these areas, except products, and were least likely to have done no evaluation at all (see Appendix B). Organizations with annual revenues of between $500,000 and $1.5 million were more likely to have evaluated each area, with the exception of volunteer experiences.

What Drives Evaluation

In an effort to determine the extent to which organizations employ evaluations as a regular part of their activities, we asked participants to indicate which of the following statements best described their organization's general approach to evaluation:

- "Our evaluations are performed routinely and are a regular part of our organization's activities."
- "We perform evaluations only if we need to address specific issues (e.g., problems with a project or program)."
- "We perform evaluations only when required to do so by funders."

Most voluntary organizations appeared to do evaluation as a matter of course and not in response to external pressure. Almost three quarters (73%) of the organizations that reported doing evaluations over the past year indicated that evaluations are performed routinely and are a part of their organization's activities (see Figure 3.2). About one out of five organizations (21%) conducted evaluations on an ad hoc basis, to address specific issues. Only four percent reported performing evaluations only when required to by funders.

Figure 3.2. When Evaluations are Conducted
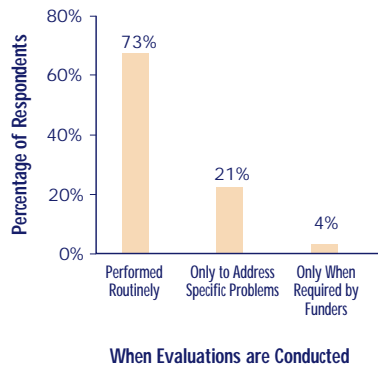
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

Generally speaking, Health and Social Services organizations were more likely than other types of organizations to perform evaluation routinely (see Figure 3.3), as were organizations with annual revenues of more than $500,000.

Figure 3.3. Performing Evaluations Routinely by Organizational Type
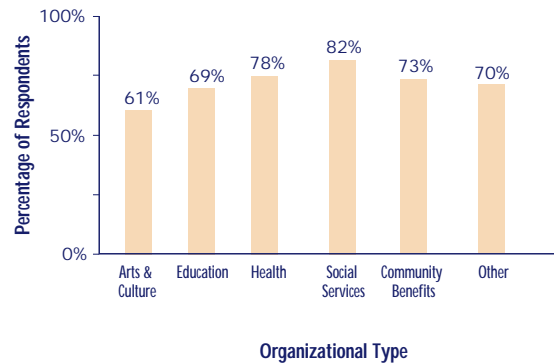
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

Figure 3.4. Performing Evaluations Routinely by Annual Revenue
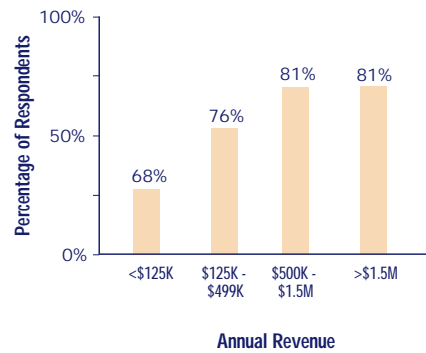
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

Number of Evaluations

For most organizations, evaluation is more than a once-a-year activity. Nearly half (49%) of voluntary organizations reported that they had done between one and five evaluations in the previous year (see Figure 3.4). More than half (51%) reported that they had done six or more evaluations during that period.

Figure 3.5. Number of Evaluations in Past Year
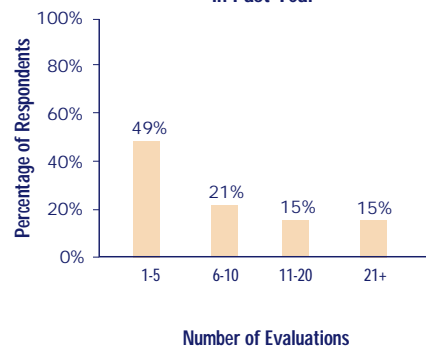
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

Internal Impetus versus External Pressure

The survey asked voluntary organizations whether the decision to undertake their most recent evaluation had come from within the organization or from an external source. Findings indicate that most evaluations appear to be internally driven. Almost three quarters (73%) of respondents agreed that the main reason their organization conducted its most recent evaluation was because "it was a decision of our staff or board, taken primarily for internal reasons" (see Figure 3.6). Only 11% agreed that the main reason was because "it was required by funders." Five percent agreed that "it was encouraged by funders." A small number agreed that evaluation was done for accreditation purposes (4%) or to comply with new funding requirements (4%).

Figure 3.6. Key Motivation for Last Evaluation
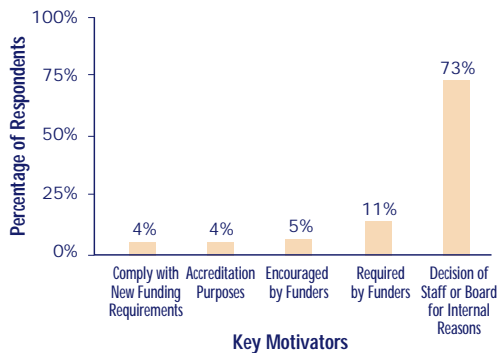
Bases: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

It is interesting to note that among the 16% of voluntary organizations that reported that they had conducted their last evaluation because they were required or encouraged to do so by their funders, the vast majority (91%) perceived the evaluation expectations of funders as being either reasonable (64%) or very reasonable (27%). Fewer than one in ten (7%) said that funder expectations were unreasonable or very unreasonable.

Social Services and Community Benefits organizations were more likely to do at least some of their evaluations because they were required to by funders (see Figure 3.8), as were organizations with annual revenues of $1.5 million or more (see Figure 3.9).

Extent of Evaluations Imposed by Funders

Although voluntary organizations appear to perceive increased pressure to evaluate from funders, most evaluations are not done to fulfill funder requirements. Nearly two thirds (64%) of voluntary organization respondents reported that none of the evaluations they had carried out in the previous year were done in response to funder requirements (see Figure 3.7). One quarter (24%) reported that up to half of their evaluations were done because funders demanded them, and only 12% said that more than half of their evaluations were done for this reason.

Figure 3.7. Percentage of Evaluations Required by Funder
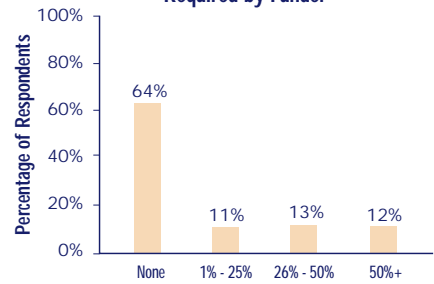
Percentage of Evaluations Required by Funder

Base: Conducted at least one evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1419).

Social Services and Community Benefits organizations were more likely to do at least some of their evaluations because they were required to by funders (see Figure 3.8), as were organizations with annual revenues of $1.5 million or more (see Figure 3.9).

Figure 3.8. Percentage of Evaluations Required by Funder - By Organizational Type
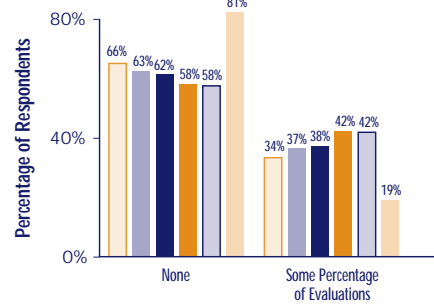
Arts & Culture   Social Services
Education   Community Benefits
Health   Other

Base: Conducted at least one evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1419).

Figure 3.9. Percentage of Evaluations Required by Funder - By Annual Revenue
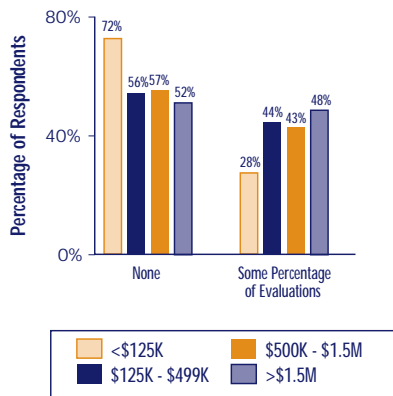
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 419).

Figure 3.10. Methods of Evaluation Used in the Past Year

Methods of Evaluation Used in the Past
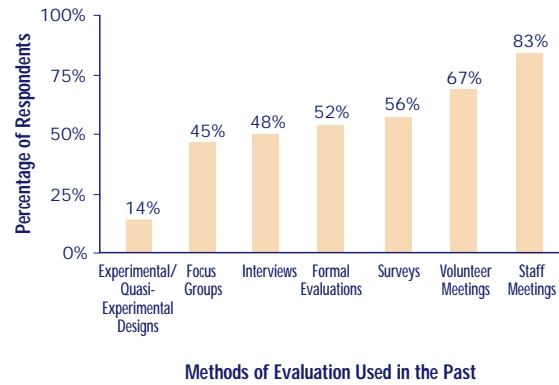
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

Question - 1 In the past year, what methods has your organization used in order to evaluate these activities?

Methods of Evaluation

Voluntary organizations have a variety of evaluation methods available to them. These range from relatively informal staff and volunteer meetings to more formal methods such as focus groups, surveys, interviews, and formal evaluations.

When asked about their evaluations over the previous year, respondents most frequently reported using staff (83%) and volunteer (67%) meetings (see Figure 3.10). Other methods, such as surveys, formal evaluations, interviews, and focus groups, were employed by approximately half of the organizations surveyed (between 45% and 56%). Only 14% reported using experimental or quasi-experimental designs.

Most organizations use more than one evaluation method. The vast majority of survey respondents (84%) reported that they used both staff and volunteer meetings and more formal methods. Only 9% of respondents who conducted an evaluation in the past year used solely staff and volunteer meetings, and only 6% used solely other more formal methods of evaluation. Of the 93% that used staff or volunteer meetings to conduct an evaluation, 57% also reported using surveys, 53% used formal evaluations, 50% used interviews, and 47% used focus groups.

Generally, Health and Social Services organizations were more likely than other types of organizations to use more formal methods in addition to staff or volunteer meetings (see Figure 3.11), as were organizations with annual revenues of $1.5 million or more (see Figure 3.12).

13

Figure 3.11. Methods of Evaluation Used in the Past Year - By Organizational Type
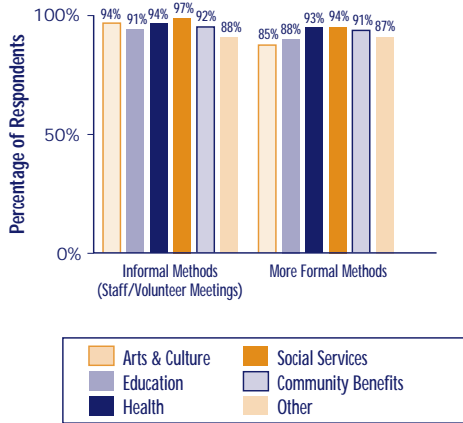
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

Figure 3.12. Methods of Evaluation Used in the Past Year - By Annual Revenue
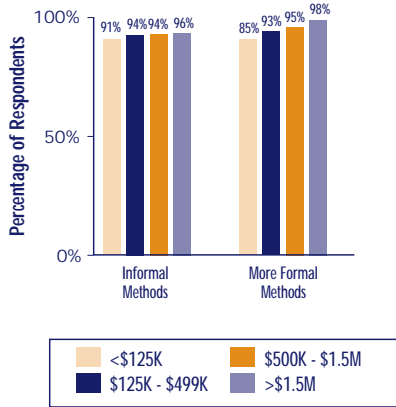
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

3.1 RECENT PRACTICES OF VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS

Board Involvement

Boards of directors bear the ultimate responsibility for voluntary organizations and are charged with their oversight. Understanding how well the organization, its programs and services, and indeed, its board are performing is critical to good governance. The survey asked voluntary organizations about the extent of board involvement in their most recent evaluation.

Respondents could choose from four possible answers:
• "The board was not involved."

• "The board requested the evaluation information."
• "The board reviewed the evaluation information."
• "The board reviewed and requested evaluation information."

The results suggest a healthy level of board involvement in the evaluation process. About two thirds (68%) of the voluntary organizations reported that their board had reviewed the evaluation information gathered - 33% reported that their board had reviewed the information (see Figure 3.13) and 35% reported that their board had both requested and reviewed the information. Only 8% said that their board had only requested the evaluation information. One in five (20%) organizations stated that the board had had no involvement at all in their most recent evaluation.

Figure 3.13. Degree of Board Involvement in Evaluation
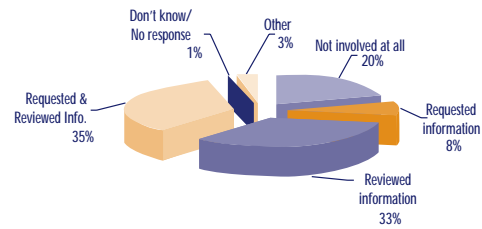
Bases: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

The boards of Arts and Culture and of Other organizations were more likely to both request and review evaluation information (see Figure 3.14), as were the boards of small organizations with annual revenues of less than $250,000 (see Figure 3.15).

Figure 3.14. Degree of Board Involvement in Evaluation - By Organizational Type
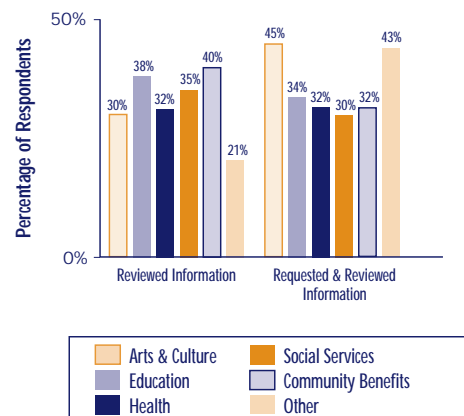
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

Figure 3.15. Degree of Board Involvement in Evaluation - By Annual Revenue

Reviewed Information: 28%, 37%, 38%, 38%
Requested & Reviewed Information: 41%, 29%, 31%, 26%

Legend:
<$125K
$125K - $499K
$500K - 1.5M
>$1.5M
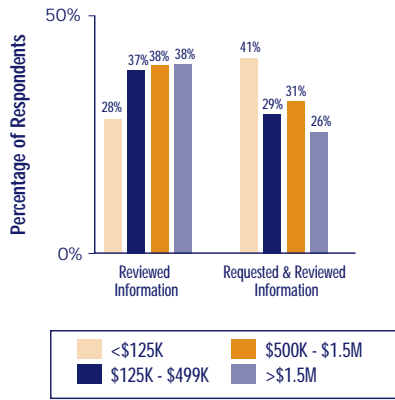
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

Responsibility for Conducting Voluntary Organization Evaluations

The survey asked respondents to identify who had actually carried out their organization's most recent evaluation. In the majority of cases, the responsibility for conducting and managing the evaluation fell to staff. Three-quarters (75%) of respondents reported that internal staff had conducted their organization's most recent evaluation (see Figure 3.16). Fifteen percent reported that volunteers had conducted their most recent evaluation. External evaluators had been used in only 8% of organizations. This suggests that the expertise and training of staff in evaluation approaches and the time that they have to dedicate to evaluation activities is vitally important in voluntary organizations.

Figure 3.16. Responsibility for Conducting Evaluation

Internal Staff 75%
Volunteers 15%
External Evalutor 8%
Student or Student Intern 1%
Don't know 1%
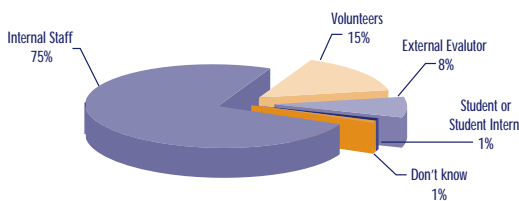
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

What was Evaluated

We asked respondents to tell us what they had assessed in their most recent evaluation. We did not prompt respondents with possible answers, but relied on top-of-mind responses.

Programs and projects, mentioned by 24% of respondents, was the most frequently given answer (see Figure 3.17), followed by organizational goals and objectives (18%) and staff and volunteers (15%).

Figure 3.17. What was Assessed in Last Evaluation
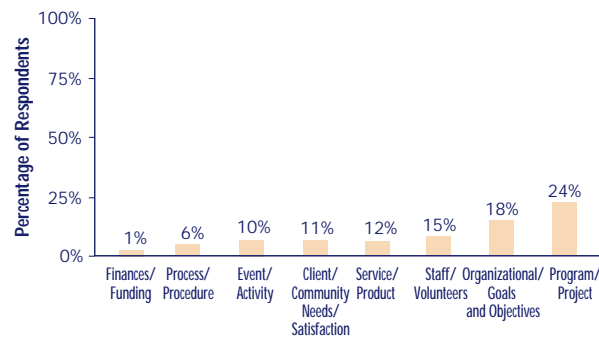
Finances/Funding 1%
Process/Procedure 6%
Event/Activity 10%
Client/Community Needs/Satisfaction 11%
Service/Product 12%
Staff/Volunteers 15%
Organizational Goals and Objectives 18%
Program/Project 24%

What was Assessed in Last Evaluation

Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

There were few differences among the various types of organizations or among organizations of different sizes. However, Arts and Culture organizations were more likely to have evaluated events/activities (e.g., fundraising, shows) and larger organizations were more likely to have evaluated client/community needs/satisfaction (see Appendix B).

Usefulness of Funder-Mandated Evaluation Information

Focus group findings suggested that voluntary organizations often engage in parallel sets of evaluation activities. Many voluntary organization representatives in our focus groups reported that they conducted their own internal evaluations as a means of better understanding the strengths and weaknesses of their programs and services, and undertook separate evaluations to fulfill funder requirements.

The survey asked the following question of the 11% of respondents who reported funder requirements as the main reason for their last evaluation: "To what extent did funders ask you to collect evaluation information that you would otherwise have not collected?" Nearly half of respondents reported that, to a moderate (35%) or great (13%) extent, they gathered information in funder-mandated evaluations that they would not have otherwise gathered (see Figure 3.18). More than one quarter (27%) reported that they would have collected this information anyway.

Figure 3.18. Extent to Which Information was Collected That Would not Otherwise Have Been Collected
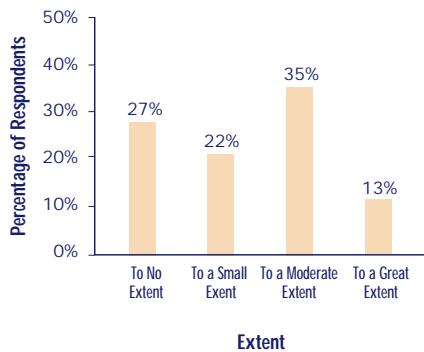
Base: Conducted required evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 204).

We then asked these respondents whether they had made use of the evaluation information that funders had required. About three quarters (76%) of those organizations that conducted their last evaluation because it was required, reported that they had used funder-mandated evaluation information, either to a moderate (44%) or a great (32%) extent for purposes other than reporting to the funder (see Figure 3.19). Of those organizations that used the information to at least some extent for purposes other than reporting to a funder, about two thirds (66%) indicated that they used the information to modify their programs or services. Only 13% stated that the information they collected was used for no other purpose than to report to the funder.

Figure 3.19. Use of Evaluation Information That Funder Required
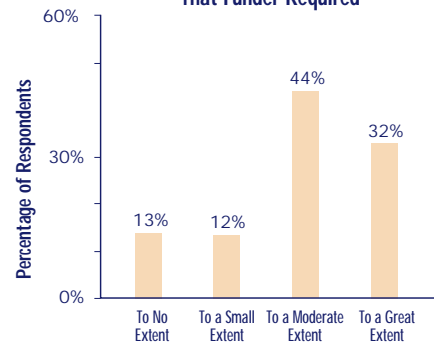
To What Extent Information was Used for Other Purposes

Base: Conducted required evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 204).

Conclusion

Most organizations use a variety of appproaches to evaluation, ranging from staff and volunteer meetings to focus groups, interviews, and surveys to evaluate their programs, services, overall effectiveness and other aspects of their work. Most do so routinely, as part of their regular activities, and not merely because they are required to by funders. There also appears to be a healthy level of board involvement in the process, which suggests that boards are taking care to oversee the direction of their organizations. Finally, in those instances when evaluation has been mandated by funders, many organizations report that they end up with additional useful information.

CHALLENGES OF EVALUATION

The evaluation process can present a number of challenges to organizations in terms of its design and execution. These challenges increase as an organization moves from evaluating the outputs of an organization to evaluating its outcomes. As a result, organizations that are attempting to undertake outcome evaluation can expect to confront a number of new challenges.

Output evaluation typically relates to organizational activity, such as the number of programs provided, the number of volunteers involved, and the number of clients served. The information required to do output evaluation is relatively easy for organizations to collect. Outcome evaluation relates to the impact on clients or service-users of their participation in an organization's programs or use of an organization's services. This type of evaluation is often seen as more difficult to do because it requires organizations to find some way to measure behaviours that occur after a service has been provided. This implies defining the desired consequences for clients, finding a way to measure these consequences, and maintaining contact with clients or service-users who may no longer be actively involved with the organization in order to monitor impacts.

As we have seen, funders report that they increasingly expect the voluntary organizations they fund to provide them with outcome evaluations. In our focus groups with voluntary organizations, however, there appeared to be some backlash against increasing funder interest in outcome evaluation, partly because the information required to do this type of evaluation was perceived as more difficult and time-consuming to collect, and partly because voluntary organizations questioned the usefulness of the information.

To confirm our initial impressions based on the focus group findings, we surveyed voluntary organizations about the types of information they collect for their evaluations, and the extent to which conducting outcome evaluation is easy or difficult for them.

We also asked about the adequacy of funding available to voluntary organizations for evaluation, and the types of resource and financial support they receive from funders. Funders, in turn, were asked about the types of support they provide to the organizations they fund.

4.1 TYPE OF EVALUATION INFORMATION COLLECTED

The national survey asked the voluntary organizations that reported that they perform evaluation (77% of the sample) to indicate all of the types of evaluation information they collected for their most recent evaluation. The findings revealed that many organizations collect several different types of information (see Figure 4.1).

- 76% reported collecting evaluation information on a project, program activities or outputs;[1]
- 66% reported collecting outcome or impact information;[2]
- 65% reported collecting information on client or user satisfaction; and,
- 54% reported collecting information on financial costs.

Figure 4.1. Type of Evaluation Information Collected

Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

CHALLENGES OF EVALUATION

CHAPTER 4
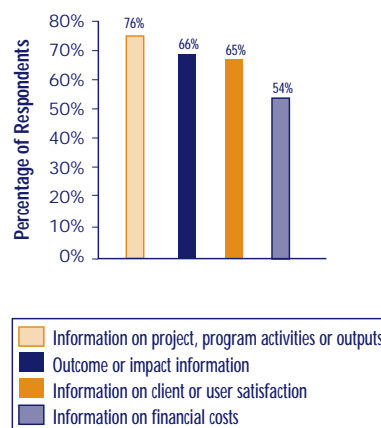
[1] Respondents were asked if they collected information about "Project or program activities or outputs. For example, information about the number of clients served, products produced, or volunteer hours used."
[2] Respondents were asked if they collected information about "Outcomes or impacts. For example, information about the changes the program or service produced in its clients or users."

We were surprised, given the focus group findings about the difficulty in gathering outcome information, that two thirds of respondents reported collecting this type of information.

4.2 EASE VERSUS DIFFICULTY IN OUTCOME EVALUATION

Participants in our initial focus groups reported that outcome evaluation is very difficult to do. Based on this, we expected that the voluntary organizations that responded to our survey would report difficulty in undertaking outcome evaluation. It turned out that this was not the case.

Ease/Difficulty in Identifying Outcome Measures

We asked voluntary organizations that reported collecting outcome information to indicate how easy or difficult it was for them to identify outcome measures for their most recent evaluation. A majority of respondents (70%) reported that they found it either very easy (21%) or somewhat easy (49%) to identify outcome measures (see Figure 4.2). Only about one in four organizations (26%) reported any difficulty.

Ease/Difficulty in Collecting Outcome Information

Voluntary organizations reported similar results with regard to the ease or difficulty in collecting outcome information once they had decided what to measure (see Figure 4.2). The majority (73%) of voluntary organizations reported that collecting outcome information was either very easy (23%) or somewhat easy (50%). About one quarter (26%) said that collecting this information was either somewhat difficult (23%) or very difficult (3%).

Figure 4.2. Ease/Difficulty in Identification and Collection of Outcome Information
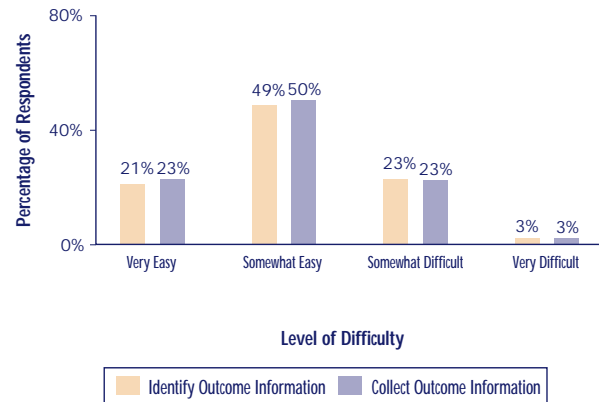
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year and collected outcome information (unweighted n: 1104).

Ease/Difficulty in Analyzing Outcome Information

The analysis of outcome information does not appear to pose a major challenge to voluntary organizations either. The majority (77%) of voluntary organizations that collected outcome information reported that it was either very easy (27%) or somewhat easy (50%) to analyze the outcome information from their last evaluation (see Figure 4.3). Fewer than one in five (19%) reported difficulty with this task.

Easy/Difficulty in Interpreting Outcome Information

Voluntary organizations that collected outcome information in their last evaluation also reported that it was relatively easy to interpret outcome results (See Figure 4.3). Almost 80% reported finding it either very easy (26%) or somewhat easy (53%) to interpret the information. Fewer than one in five (19%) reported difficulty with this task.

Figure 4.3. Ease/Difficulty in Analyzing and Interpreting Outcome Information

Base: Conducted evaluation in past year and collected outcome information (unweighted n: 1104).

base, number of people who saw their ads, participant and/or funder satisfaction assessment, or number of clients served. These are all measures that are typically used for output evaluation, not outcome evaluation.

These post-survey interviews led us to believe that many survey respondents had confused 'outcomes' and 'outputs,' and that this may help to explain why respondents did not appear to find outcome evaluation difficult to conduct. This confusion on the part of voluntary organizations has the potential to lead to frustration on the part of funders who are increasingly expecting to be provided with outcome evaluation information. As we will see later, both funders and voluntary organizations reported that clarity and consistency in evaluation terminology are important issues that need to be addressed.

Probing Deeper About Outcome Evaluation

We were surprised by these survey results, as were many participants in consultations we held to discuss the survey results. Our results appeared to be so at odds with the findings from our initial focus groups that we began to wonder if there was some confusion on the part of survey respondents about outcome versus output evaluation, even though we provided respondents with examples of each type of evaluation.[3]

We decided to probe the issue by conducting post-survey interviews with six voluntary organizations to determine how they understood the terms 'outcomes' and 'impacts.' The results clearly indicate confusion. In these post-survey interviews, we asked respondents the following questions:
• "Could you describe for me the type of outcome or impact information that was collected?"
• "When we use the term 'outcomes,' what do you understand that to mean?"

Most respondents indicated that outcome information enabled them to address questions such as: "how did our program benefit others?"; "did we meet expectations?"; "how effective were our programs?"; "were our goals met?"; and, "did we make a difference?" But when we asked how they actually measured outcomes, many said that they measured such things as number of visits, level of usage of programs and services, increases to donor

4.3 RESOURCE SUPPORT FROM FUNDERS

In our initial focus groups, voluntary organizations identified the lack of evaluation resources as a major challenge. Focus group participants also reported a lack of clear direction from funders about the type of evaluation they should conduct and the type of information funders expected. In the survey, we asked funders about the type of evaluation support they provide to voluntary organizations, and we asked voluntary organizations what support they had received.

Type of Evaluation Support

We assessed the type of evaluation support provided to voluntary organizations in two ways. We asked funders whether they provided:
• evaluation training for staff;
• evaluation tools and resources, such as manuals or evaluation guidelines;
• advice about how to do evaluation; or,
• other types of support.

We also asked voluntary organizations that had conducted their most recent evaluation in response to funder requirements whether they had received any of these types of support from funders.

---

[3] Examples of outcome or impacts provided in the survey: "For example, information about the changes the program or service produced in its clients or users."

The two most frequently mentioned forms of evaluation support were tools and resources (provided by 50% of funders and received by 50% of voluntary organizations; see Figure 4.4) and advice on evaluation, although funders were more likely to report providing this type of support than voluntary organizations were to report receiving it (60% of funders reported providing this support, while only 38% of voluntary organizations reported receiving it). Only a small percentage of funders (17%) reported that they provided training on evaluation and somewhat fewer (16%) voluntary organizations reported receiving this type of support.

Figure 4.4. Types of Evaluation Support
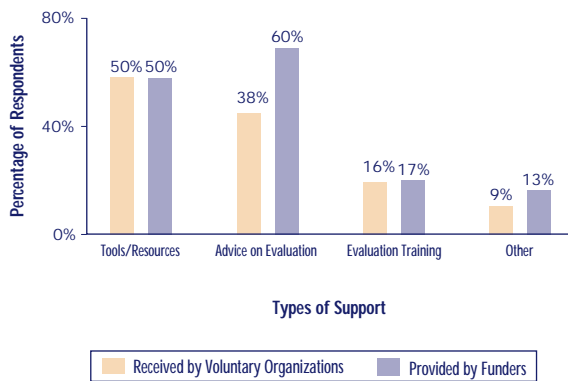
Base for Voluntary Organizations: Conducted evaluation in past year that was required/encouraged by funder (unweighted n: 267).

Base for Funders: Povided funding to organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year (unweighted n: 218).

Government funders were more likely than foundation funders to provide all types of support (see Figure 4.5). More than half (54%) of government funders provided tools and resources, compared with less than half (47%) of foundations. Nearly three quarters (73%) of government funders provided evaluation advice, compared with less than half (48%) of foundations. This may be because governments have more resources to devote to this type of support, have higher expectations with regard to evaluation, and feel a sense of accountability to taxpayers.

Figure 4.5. Types of Evaluation Support by Funder Type
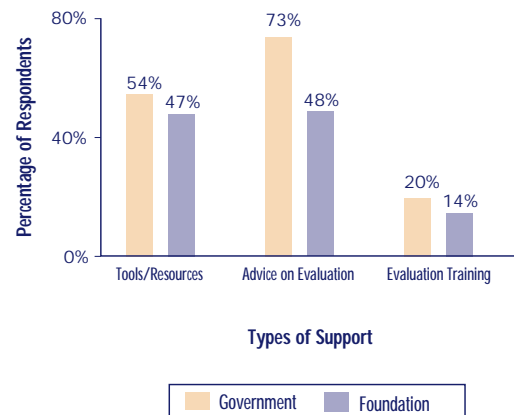
Base: Provided funding to organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.
Government Funders (unweighted n: 126). Foundations (unweighted n: 92).

Financial Support for Evaluation

Support in the form of evaluation advice, tools and resources, and evaluation training are important to effective and constructive evaluation. But so too is adequate financial support, particularly in light of increasing evaluation expectations. The survey asked voluntary organizations about how they fund their evaluations and whether the funding available for their evaluations is adequate. It also asked funders about the financial support they provide to voluntary organizations for evaluation.

Voluntary Organization Sources of Funding for Evaluation

Voluntary organizations that had conducted an evaluation in the past year and incurred evaluation costs for doing so were asked whether they had funded this evaluation from internal sources (e.g., from their own general revenues or from a special evaluation fund), external sources (e.g., a government or foundation funder), or from both internal and external sources. More than half (57%) of organizations that had spent money on an evaluation in the past year reported that they had funded that evaluation from their own internal sources (see Figure 4.6). Fewer than one in five (19%) relied exclusively on external sources. Eighteen percent reported that they had funded their evaluation from a combination of internal and external sources.

Figure 4.6. Sources of Funding for Evaluation
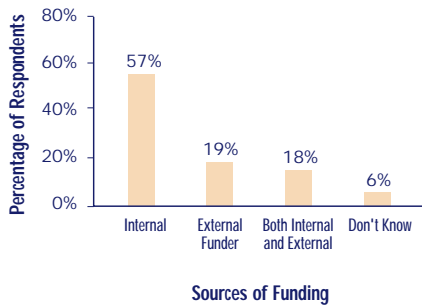
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year, with cost incurred
for last evaluation (unweighted n: 998).

**Figure 4.8. Sources of Funding for Evaluation -
By Annual Revenue**
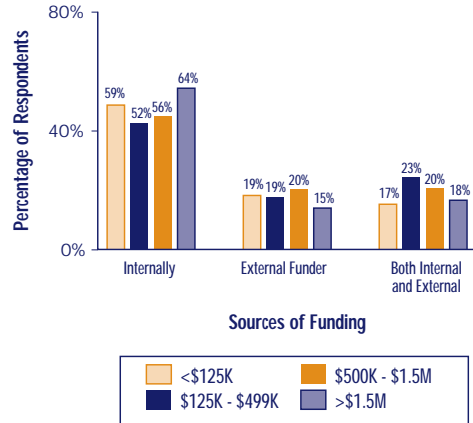
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year, with cost incurred for last evaluation (unweighted n: 998).

Health organizations were more likely than other types
of organizations to report using external sources to fund
their evaluation (see Figure 4.7). Organizations with
annual revenues of $1.5 million or more were more
likely to report using internal sources (see Figure 4.8).

**Figure 4.7. Sources of Funding for Evaluation -
By Organizational Type**
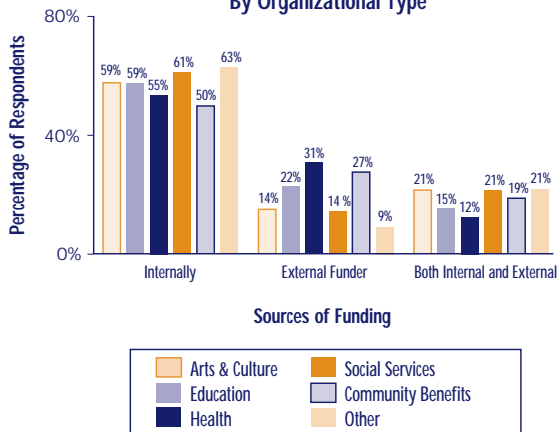
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year, with cost incurred for last evaluation (unweighted n: 998).

Adequacy of Funding Provided for Evaluation

We also assessed the adequacy of the funding that
organizations (those which incurred costs for an
evaluation over the previous year) had available for
evaluation. Half (50%) of voluntary organizations
reported that the funds available for evaluation were
adequate, either to a great extent (22%) or a moderate
extent (28%; see Figure 4.9). Only 11% reported that
the funds available were not at all sufficient. Nearly
one third (31%) had no opinion or did not answer
the question.

Figure 4.9. Adequacy of Funding
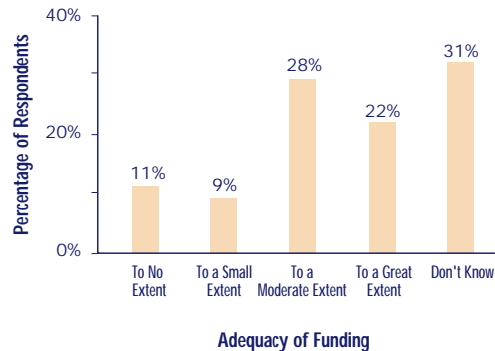
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

Organizations that relied on evaluation funding from a variety of sources or from their own internal sources expressed greater satisfaction with the adequacy of funding (see Table 4.1). Nearly three quarters (73%) of organizations that relied on both internal and external sources of funds said that the funds were adequate to a great (30%) or moderate (43%) extent, as did more than two thirds (68%) of organizations that relied solely on their own internal resources. By contrast, fewer than six in ten (59%) organizations that received evaluation funding from external sources reported that these funds were adequate, either to a great (21%) or moderate (38%) extent.

Clearly, from the perspective of voluntary organizations, there is room for improvement in the area of funding for evaluation.

Figure 4.10. Percentage of Funders Providing Funding or Allowing Project Funds to be Used for Evaluation

Base: Provided funding to organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table 4.1. Adequacy of Funding by Source of Funding

	Internally	Externally	Internally & Externally	Don't Know / No Response
To a great extent	26%	21%	30%	5%
To a moderate extent	42%	38%	43%	5%
To a small extent	9%	16%	14%	3%
To no extent	8%	5%	3%	18%
Don't Know/No Response	15%	21%	10%	70%
Unweighted Base	569	184	195	50

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year, and costs incurred.

Financial Support Provided by Funders for Evaluation

Given that funders' expectations with regard to evaluation have increased, one might expect to see an increase in the financial support that funders make available for this activity. The survey asked funders whether they provide financial support for evaluation to the organizations they fund, and; if so, the form of support they provide and the extent to which their funding for evaluation had increased or decreased over the past three years.

More than half (52%) of the funders surveyed reported that they did not provide funding to support evaluation activities or did not allow project funding to be used for evaluation purposes (see Figure 4.10). Government funders were more likely to provide some type of financial support (57% versus 39% of foundation funders). This may reflect the finding that government expectations for evaluation have increased more than have foundation expectations.

Of the 47% of funders who reported that they either provided funding to support evaluation activities or allowed project funding to be used for evaluation purposes, more than half (57%) said that they did not know how much of the funding budget was allocated to evaluations. Twenty-four percent estimated that 5% or less of the funding budget was allocated to that purpose, and 19% estimated that more than 5% was spent on evaluation.

Has financial support for evaluation increased with expectations? We asked funders whether the funding that they made available for evaluation had increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past three years. Only one in five funders (21%) reported that they had increased their funding support for evaluation (see Figure 4.11). Nearly two thirds (61%) reported that their funding for evaluation had remained the same and 4% reported that it had decreased. There were no significant differences based on funder type.

Figure 4.11. Has the proportion of funding that your organization provides to support evaluation increased, decreased, or remained the same in the past three years?

Percentage of Respondents

- Increased: 21%
- Decreased: 4%
- Stayed the Same: 61%
- Don't Know/No Response: 14%

Proportion of Funding Provided
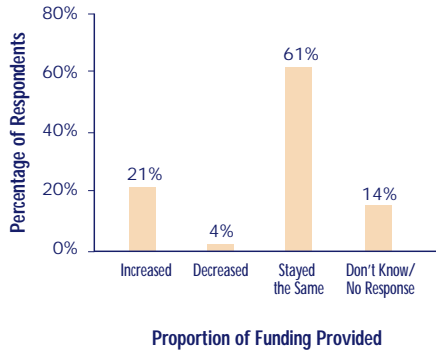
Base: Total unweighted base: 322.

Figure 4.12. Methods of Funding

Percentage of Respondents

- Additional "Top-Up" Funding: 24%
- Apply for Additional Separate Funding: 41%
- Allowing a Portion of Project Funding: 77%
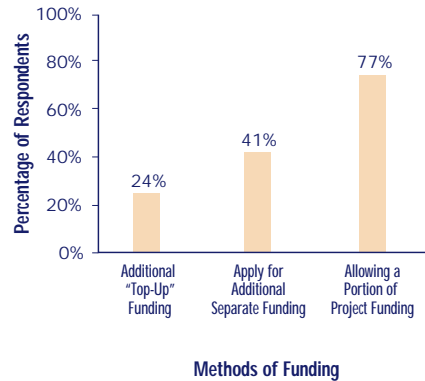
Methods of Funding

Base: Provide funding to support evaluation or allow project funding to be used for evaluation (unweighted n: 112).

Methods of Funding

There are various ways that funders can provide financial support for evaluation. They can automatically include additional "top-up" funding specifically to allow organizations to evaluate the program or project funded; they can allow organizations to use a portion of the project funding for evaluation purposes; or, they can give organizations the opportunity to apply for additional separate funding to be used for evaluation. We asked the 47% of funders who reported that they provided financial support for evaluation what kind of support they offered. More than three quarters (77%) reported that they allow a portion of the project funding to be used for evaluation purposes (see Figure 4.12). Forty-one percent reported that they provide an opportunity for the organizations to apply for additional separate funding. Only one quarter (24%) reported that they automatically provide additional "top-up" funding for evaluation. It appears, then, that in most cases voluntary organizations must either include evaluation costs as part of their funding requests or must prepare a supplementary funding proposal in order to cover the cost of providing these funders with an evaluation of the funded program or project.

Conclusion

Although funders are increasingly expecting outcome evaluations, voluntary organizations appear to be confused about the type of information they need to collect in order to do this type of evaluation. This has the potential to lead to frustrated expectations on the part of both funders and voluntary organizations. A majority of funders report providing advice or tools and resources to voluntary organizations, however, relatively few provide evaluation training. Most of the funding for evaluation appears to come from within voluntary organizations. Funder expectations with respect to evaluation do not appear to have been accompanied by a corresponding increase in financial support and such support, when provided, may not be adequate for many organizations.

Despite the challenges associated with evaluation, both the focus group and the survey findings show that most voluntary organizations understand the value of evaluation and most undertake evaluation on their own initiative so that they can assess and make improvements to various aspects of their operations. But how satisfied are voluntary organizations and their funders with the information they receive from evaluations? To what extent do they actually make use of this information? We asked respondents about the perceived accuracy and usefulness of the information they collected during evaluations, and about what they do with this information.

5.1 SATISFACTION WITH EVALUATION

The vast majority (95%) of voluntary organizations reported that they were either satisfied (56%) or very satisfied (39%) with the quality of their last evaluation (see Figure 5.1).   However, funders reported somewhat less satisfaction with the general quality of voluntary organization evaluations. Although 67% said that they were satisfied, only nine percent reported being very satisfied. There were no significant differences between government funders and foundations.

5.2 FACTORS AFFECTING EVALUATION SATISFACTION

A number of factors appear to contribute to the level of satisfaction reported by voluntary organizations. This section focuses on three factors: who held primary responsibility for the evaluation, whether the evaluation was conducted because of internal impetus versus external pressure, and the source of funding for the evaluation.

Holder of Primary Responsibility
Organizations that used an external evaluator to conduct their last evaluation were more likely to be satisfied with the results than were organizations that assigned primary responsibility for the evaluation to their own staff or volunteers. More than six in ten voluntary organizations (61%) that used an external evaluator reported that they were very satisfied, compared to 41% of those that assigned primary responsibility for the evaluation to volunteers and 37% of those that assigned primary responsibility to staff (see Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.1. Amount of Satisfaction with Last Evaluation

Base for Voluntary Organizations: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

Base for Funders: Provided funding to organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year (unweighted n: 218).

Figure 5.2. Level of Evaluation Satisfaction by Who Had Primary Responsibility for Last Evaluation
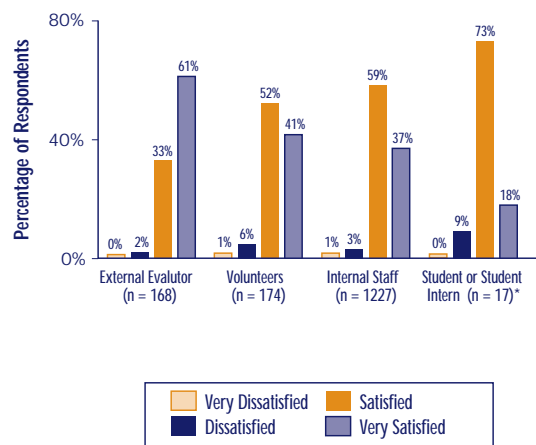
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year

*Caution: small sample size

Internal Impetus versus External Pressure

Organizations that conducted their last evaluation because of funder demands were more likely to report satisfaction with the quality of the evaluation than were those that did the evaluation on their own initiative. Nearly half (47%) of voluntary organizations that did their last evaluation in response to funder requirements reported that they were very satisfied with the quality, compared to only 37% of organizations that did their evaluation as a result of a decision by their board or staff (see Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.4. Level of Evaluation Satisfaction by Source of Funding

Base: Conducted evaluation in past year.

Figure 5.3. Level of Evaluation Satisfaction by Main Reason for Last Evaluation

Base: Conducted evaluation in past year.
*Caution: small sample size
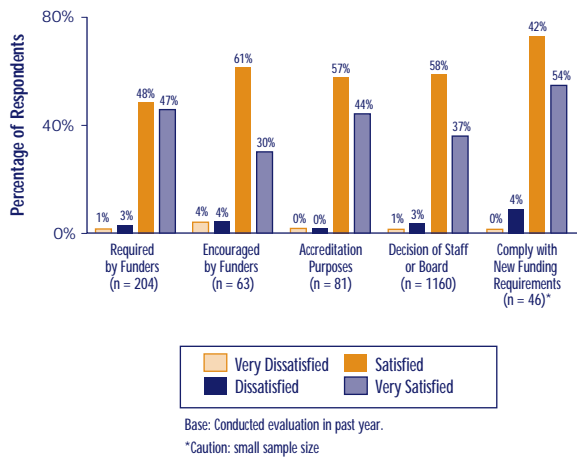
Source of Funding for Evaluation

Although satisfaction was higher when the evaluation was externally motivated and externally managed, it appears to be lower when the funding for evaluation derives from purely external sources. Forty percent of organizations that used external funding to finance their evaluations reported that they were very satisfied with the quality, compared to 45% for organizations that relied on funding from internal sources and 46% for organizations who relied on both internal and external funding (see Figure 5.4).

Effective Use of Evaluation Information by Voluntary Organizations

Most voluntary organizations appear satisfied with the accuracy of their evaluations. In the survey, voluntary organizations that had performed an evaluation in the past year were asked to indicate how effectively their organization had used the evaluation information that they collected. Almost three quarters (73%) reported that they had made effective (50%) or very effective (23%) use of the information (see Figure 5.5). Only one percent said that the information was not used effectively at all.

Figure 5.5. How Effectively Evaluation Information is Used by Organizations

Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

The survey results also indicate that the greater the board's involvement in the evaluation process, the more likely it is that evaluation information will be used effectively. Twenty-eight percent of organizations whose boards reviewed evaluation information and 24% of those whose boards had requested and reviewed the information reported making very effective use of the information collected (see Figure 5.6). In contrast, only 15% of organizations whose boards had only requested the information and 19% of those whose boards were not involved at all reported making very effective use of evaluation information.

Figure 5.7. How Effectively Evaluation Information is Used by Funders
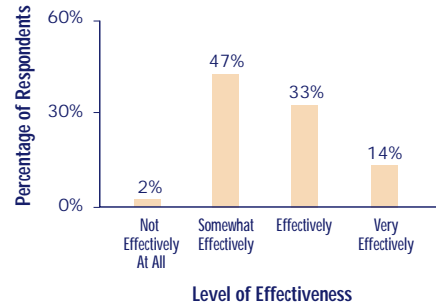
Base for Funders: Provided funding to organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year (unweighted n: 218).

Figure 5.6. Percentage Reporting "Very Effective" Use of Evaluation Information by Level of Board Involvement

Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

Figure 5.8. How Effectively Evaluation Information is Used by Funder Type

Base for Funders: Provided funding to organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year; Government Funders (unweighted n: 126). Foundations (unweighted n: 92).

Effective Use of Evaluation Information by Funders

In the survey, funders were asked to report how effectively they used the evaluation information provided to them. Less than half (47%) of funders said that they made either effective (33%) or very effective (14%) use of the information (see Figure 5.7). This compares with almost three quarters (73%) of voluntary organizations that reported making effective or very effective use of the information they collected. Government funders were less likely to report making very effective use of the information they received – only 10% of government funders responded in this way, compared to 18% of foundations (see Figure 5.8).

The effective use of information, however, depends to a large extent on the adequacy of the information provided. It is worth noting that a little over one third of funders agreed (32%) or strongly agreed (4%) that the information they receive is often not what they had asked for. This may be due to voluntary organizations' confusion about outcome evaluation and to their lack of clarity about funder expectations (see Chapter Six).

Funders' lack of internal capacity – time and resources – seems to also have an effect on the use of information. In the initial focus groups, funders voiced some concerns about their ability to review and act on evaluation information. It appears that more than one quarter (26%) of funders either agree (24%) or strongly agree (2%) that they lack the capacity to review the evaluation information they receive.

These findings appear to validate the suspicion voluntary organizations voiced in the initial focus groups about whether funders actually use the evaluation information provided to them, or whether funders expect voluntary organizations to engage in the process of evaluation simply for evaluation's sake. However, when funders were asked about this, almost two thirds (63%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that they were more interested in having voluntary organizations engage in the process of evaluation than they were in the actual results. The extent to which funders make effective use of evaluation information appears to be due to the type of information received and their capacity to review it, rather than to a lack of interest in the information.

5.3 SPECIFIC APPLICATIONS OF INFORMATION COLLECTED

How Evaluation Information is Used by Voluntary Organizations

Voluntary organizations reported they make effective use of the evaluation information they collect, but to what end? In the survey, voluntary organizations were asked to what extent (great, moderate, small, or to no extent) they used evaluation information for the following purposes:

• to improve programs and services;
• to increase awareness of the organization or its cause;
• to report to the funder;
• for strategic planning purposes (e.g., program development, planning the next cycle of activity);
• to share information with other similar organizations; and,
• for fundraising purposes.

More than half of the survey respondents reported that they used evaluation information to a great extent to improve programs and services (68%) and for strategic

planning purposes (55%; see Table 5.1). Evaluation information was also used frequently to increase awareness of the cause (39%) and to report to funders (33%). It was least likely to be used for fundraising purposes or information sharing.

Table 5.1. Extent that Evaluation Information was Used for the Following Purposes		
	To a moderate extent	To a great extent
Improve programs and services	23%	68%
Strategic planning	32%	55%
Increase awareness	35%	39%
Report to the funder	23%	33%
Fundraising purposes	29%	23%
Share information	32%	15%

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year, unweighted n = 1607.

Education and Social Services organizations were more likely to use evaluation information to a great extent to improve their programs and services, and Social Services and Arts and Culture organizations were more likely than others to use evaluation information to increase awareness of their cause (see Figure 5.9). Larger organizations with annual revenues of $1.5 million or more were more likely than other organizations to use evaluation information to improve programs and services, and for strategic planning purposes (see Figure 5.10).

Figure 5.9. Top Three Applications of Evaluation Information Used to a Great Extent - By Organizational Type
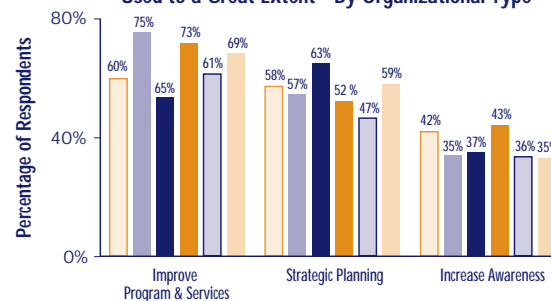
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted: n 1607).

Figure 5.10. Top Three Applications of Evaluation Information Used to a Great Extent - By Annual Revenue

Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted: n 1607).
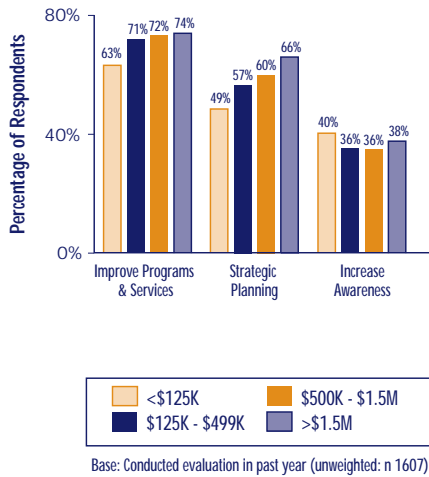
How Evaluation Information is Used by Funders

In the initial focus groups, many participants reported that they feared that a less-than-positive evaluation would result in discontinuation or non-renewal of their funding. To what extent do funders use evaluation information to make decisions about future funding? What other uses do they make of the information?

In the survey, funders were asked to indicate to what extent (great, moderate, small, or to no extent) their organization uses the evaluation information that it receives to:
• help funded organizations improve what they do, for example, by compiling information and sharing lessons learned;
• help their own organization plan for future funding; and,
• make decisions regarding the future funding of organizations that provided the information.

Funders reported that they used evaluation information primarily to make decisions about future funding of the voluntary organizations that provided the evaluation information. More than three-quarters (78%) of funders indicated that they used evaluation information in this manner either to a great (48%) or moderate (30%) extent (see Figure 5.11). Slightly less than two thirds (73%) reported that they used the information to help with their own strategic planning about future funding, either to a great (35%) or moderate (38%) extent. Just over

60% said they used the information to help the organizations they funded, either to a great (25%) or moderate (38%) extent.

Figure 5.11. Funders' Use of Evaluation Information

Base: Provided funding to organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year (unweighted n: 218).
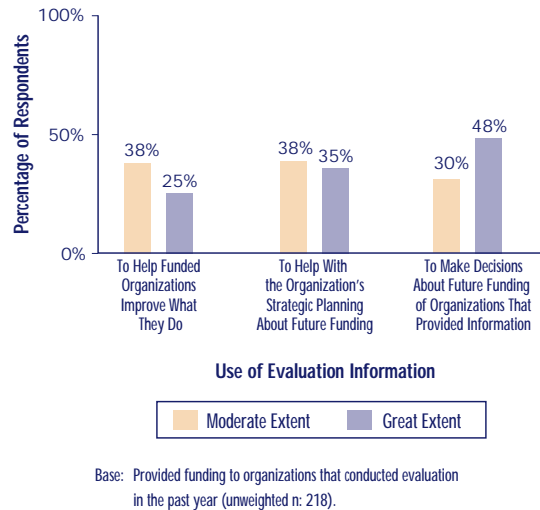
Foundations were more likely to use evaluation information for all of these purposes than were government funders (see Figure 5.12). Over half of foundations (54%) used information to a great extent to make decisions about the future funding of organizations, compared to 42% of government funders. Nearly half (45%) of foundation funders used the information to a great extent for their own strategic planning, compared to 28% of government funders.

Figure 5.12. Funders' Use of Evaluation Information - By Funder Type

Base for Funders: Government Funders (unweighted n: 126).
Foundations (unweighted n: 92).
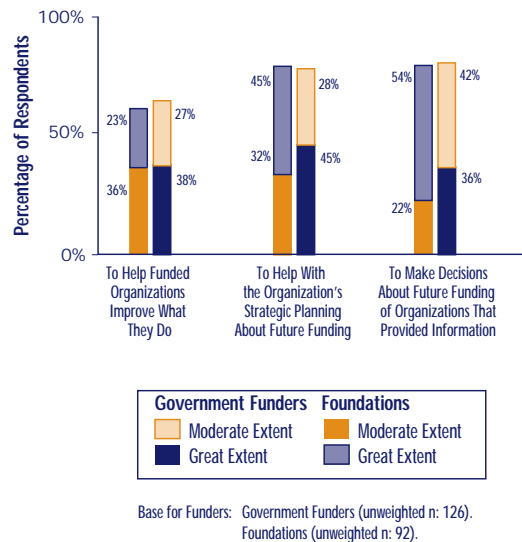
Voluntary Organizations' Perceptions of How Funders Use Evaluation Information

The voluntary organizations that participated in the initial focus groups had their own ideas and suspicions about how funders use the evaluation information that is provided to them. The survey results show that voluntary organizations' perceptions are fairly close to the actual practice reported by funders.

In the survey, voluntary organizations that had conducted their last evaluation because of funder requirements were asked to select which of the following responses best described how they believed funders had used their evaluation information:
- to help funded organizations improve what they do, for example, through compiling information and sharing lessons learned;
- to help their organization plan for future funding;
- to make decisions regarding the future funding of your organization; or,
- for administrative purposes only, for example, to complete the file on the project.

The response that was cited most frequently, by 34% of voluntary organizations, was that funders used the information to make decisions about the future funding of their organization (see Table 5.2). About one in five organizations responded that they believe that the evaluation information they provided was being used by funders to help improve the voluntary organization's performance (22%) and to help funders with their own strategic planning about future funding (21%). Another 19% responded that they believed that their funders used evaluation information for administrative purposes only. The fact that almost one in five voluntary organizations do not think that funders are making use of evaluation other than perhaps to 'close the file' suggests that there is an issue of communication on the part of funders as to what actually happens with the evaluations they receive.

Table 5.2. How Voluntary Organizations Think Funders Use Evaluation Information	Percent of Respondents
To make decisions regarding the future funding of your organization	34%
To help funded organizations improve what they do	22%
To help their strategic planning about future funding	21%
For administrative purposes only	19%
Don't know/No response	5%
Unweighted n	267

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year that was required/encouraged by funders.

Conclusion

Overall, voluntary organizations appear satisfied with the quality of their evaluations and believe that they use the results effectively to improve their programs and services, and to guide their strategic planning. Both accuracy of information and overall satisfaction appear highest when voluntary organizations use external evaluators to conduct their evaluations and when evaluations are done in response to funder requirements. This may be because parties external to voluntary organizations bring a measure of perceived objectivity to the evaluation that inspires greater confidence in the results.

The picture is different for funders. They reported somewhat less satisfaction with voluntary organizations evaluation and, in a significant number of cases, reported that they did not receive the information they had asked for. More than one quarter of funders reported that they lacked the capacity to make effective use of the evaluation information provided to them. Funders that did use evaluation information used it primarily to make decisions about their future funding of the organizations that provided the information and to guide the overall strategic directions of their funding. Almost one in five voluntary organizations believe that funders collect evaluation information simply for administrative purposes.

STRENGTHS, BARRIERS, AND IMPROVEMENTS IN EVALUATION

Evaluation appears to be a fact of life in the voluntary sector. Whether required by funders or not, most voluntary organizations routinely evaluate many aspects of their operations in order to ensure that they are achieving their objectives. This chapter examines the strengths that voluntary organizations bring to the evaluation process and the barriers that voluntary organizations face with regard to evaluation. It concludes by examining what needs to be done to help build the evaluation capacity of voluntary organizations in Canada.

6.1   STRENGTHS

Strengths as Perceived by Voluntary Organizations

Voluntary organizations bring many strengths to the process of evaluation. The survey asked voluntary organizations that had performed an evaluation in the past year to indicate to what extent (great, moderate, small, or to no extent) they believed that their organization brings each of the following strengths to its evaluations:
• a positive attitude towards evaluation;
• evaluation skills and knowledge;
• an understanding of its project or program activities;
• the ability to effectively communicate the results of evaluations; and,
• an understanding of the needs of the community.

The greatest strengths that voluntary organizations believe they bring to their evaluations are their understanding of project and program activities, and their understanding of community need. More than six in ten (62%) said that they possessed an understanding of project and program activities to a great extent (see Figure 6.1). About the same number (59%) said that they possessed an understanding of community needs to a great extent. Over half (53%) reported that they brought a positive attitude to evaluation to a great extent.

Voluntary organizations were less likely to report effective communication of results as well as evaluation skills and knowledge, as great strengths. Only 36% of respondents said that they had a great ability to communicate evaluation results effectively and only 25% said that they possessed evaluation skills and knowledge to a great extent (See Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1. Evaluation Strengths of Voluntary Organizations
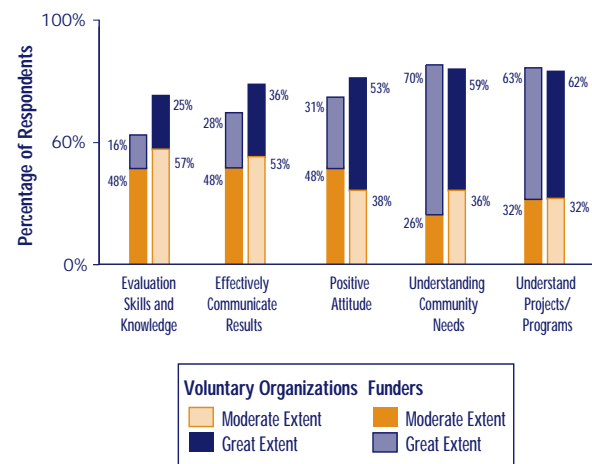
Base for Voluntary Organizations: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).
Base for Funders: Provided funding to organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year (unweighted n: 218).

Education organizations were more likely than any other type of organization to report that they understood project and program activities to a great extent (73%; see Figure 6.2), while Social Services organizations were more likely to say that they possessed an understanding of community needs to a great extent (67%). Larger organizations were generally more likely than smaller organizations to report possessing each strength to a great extent (see Figure 6.3).

Figure 6.2. Evaluation Strengths Possessed to a Great Extent - By Organizational Type

Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).
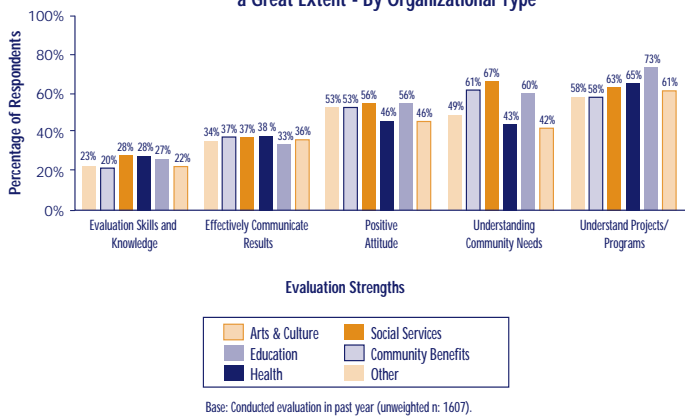
Strengths as Perceived by Funders

We also asked funders to assess the strengths of voluntary organizations with respect to evaluation. Their responses were very similar to those of voluntary organizations themselves (see Figure 6.1). More than two thirds (70%) identified the ability to understand community needs, and nearly two thirds (63%) identified the ability to understand project and program activities as the key strengths of voluntary organizations. Funders were less likely to believe that voluntary organizations had strengths with respect to the ability to effectively communicate evaluation results (only 28% of funders reported that voluntary organizations possessed this strength to a great extent), as well as evaluation skills and knowledge (only 16% of funders reported that organizations possessed this strength to a great extent).

There were some differences in the assessments of voluntary organizations and their funders. Funders were more likely to recognize voluntary organizations' understanding of the needs of the community. Seventy percent of funders reported that voluntary organizations have this strength to a great extent, compared to 59% of voluntary organizations. Voluntary organizations were more likely to report their positive attitude towards evaluation as a strength that they possess to a great extent. Over half (53%) of organizations reported this, compared to less than one third (31%) of funders. Finally, voluntary organizations appear to have greater confidence in their communication and evaluation abilities than do funders. More than one third (36%) of organizations said that they possessed an ability to effectively communicate evaluation results to a great extent, compared to only 28% of funders.

One quarter (25%) of voluntary organizations reported that they possessed evaluation skills and knowledge to a great extent, compared to only 16% of funders.

Foundations appear to have a more positive view of voluntary organizations than did government funders. A higher percentage of foundations reported that voluntary organizations possess each strength to a great extent (see Figure 6.4). For example, nearly three quarters (73%) of foundations reported that voluntary organizations possess an understanding of project and program activities to a great extent, compared to just over half (53%) of government funders. Foundations were twice as likely as government funders to report that voluntary organizations have the ability to effectively communicate evaluation results (36% of foundations and 19% of government funders).

Figure 6.3. Evaluation Strengths Possessed to a Great Extent - By Annual Revenue

Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).
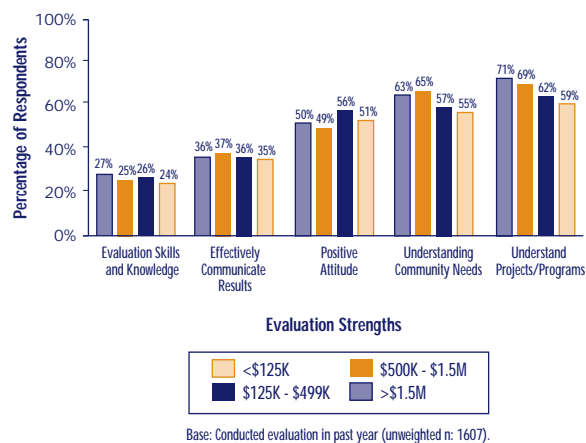
6.2   EVALUATION CHALLENGES

Problems Reported by Voluntary Organizations

Despite the considerable strengths that voluntary organizations bring to the table, they nevertheless face some serious challenges to their ability to carry out evaluations. We asked organizations that had conducted an evaluation in the past year to indicate whether each of the following posed "no problem," "a small problem," a moderate problem," or " a great problem" for their organization in terms of conducting evaluations:

• lack of money;

- unclear expectations from funders about what is expected in an evaluation;
- lack of confidence in their ability to perform evaluations;
- lack of skills and knowledge in conducting evaluations;
- lack of internal capacity such as lack of staff or lack of time;
- the need to present their activities in a good light;
- lack of understanding of the value of evaluation; and,
- difficulty working with evaluation consultants.

Lack of internal capacity, such as staff or time and lack of money were identified as posing the biggest problems. As Figure 6.5 shows, more than one third (37%) of voluntary organizations identified lack of internal capacity as a big problem and 34% identified lack of money as a big problem. Other areas that voluntary organizations reported most frequently as posing either a moderate or big problem are: unclear expectations from funders about what is expected in an evaluation (31%); and, lack of skills and knowledge in conducting evaluations (31%).

Figure 6.5. Barriers in Evaluation
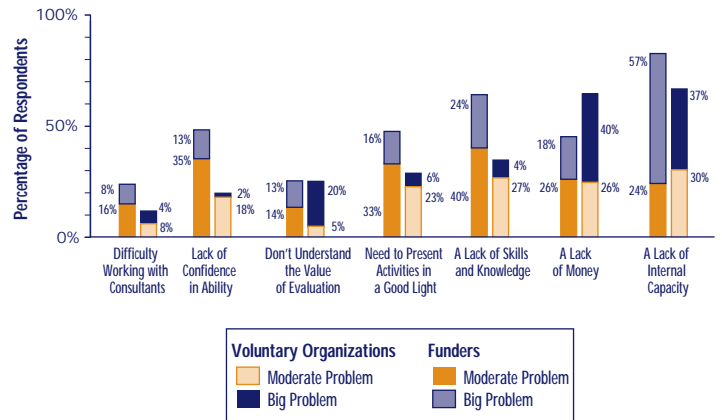
Base for Voluntary Organizations: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).
Base for Funders: Provided funding to organizations that conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 218).

Figure 6.6. Top Three Problems with Evaluation Reported - By Organizational Type

Base: Conducted evaluation in past year

Figure 6.4. Evaluation Strengths of Voluntary Organizations - By Funder Type

Base: Provided funding to organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.
Government Funders (unweighted n: 126). Foundations (unweighted n: 92).

Health, Social Services, and Community Benefits organizations were more likely than other types of organizations to report internal capacity as a big problem (see Figure 6.6). Organizations with annual revenues of more than $500,000 were somewhat more likely than smaller organizations to report lack of money as a big problem (see Figure 6.7).

The Problems that Funders Perceive Voluntary Organizations Have with Evaluation

Funders' generally perceive voluntary organizations to experience bigger problems with evaluation than do voluntary organizations themselves. Funders, like voluntary organizations identified both lack of internal capacity, such as lack of staff and time and lack of money as the biggest problems (see Figure 6.5). However, nearly six in ten (57%) funders reported that lack of internal capacity was a big problem, compared to 37% of voluntary organizations. Four in ten (40%) of funders cited lack of money as a big problem for voluntary organizations, compared to 34% of voluntary

organizations. This pattern was observed for each of the potential problem areas we assessed, but was particularly marked for lack of internal capacity, and a lack of evaluation skills and knowledge. In both cases, funders were 20% more likely to report them as posing a big problem for voluntary organizations.

These results should be considered in combination with our findings that funders' have a generally lower level of satisfaction with evaluation results than do voluntary organizations and are generally less likely than voluntary organizations to believe that voluntary organizations have strengths to bring to their evaluations. Taken all together, they suggest a substantial disconnect between funders and voluntary organizations in their perceptions of voluntary organizations' evaluation activities.

Among funders, government funders generally tended to perceive each problem to be bigger for voluntary organizations than did foundations (see Figure 6.8). While government funders identified voluntary organization strengths to a lesser degree than did foundations, they reported problems to a greater degree. In particular, government funders were more likely to report lack of internal capacity, such as lack of staff or time, lack of understanding of the value of evaluation, and difficulty working with external consultants as big problems. The only barrier that they appeared to have less concern about, relative to foundations, was lack of money for evaluation – 35% of government funders reported this as a big problem, compared to 46% of foundations.

Figure 6.7. Top Three Problems Reported by Voluntary Organizations - By Annual Revenue
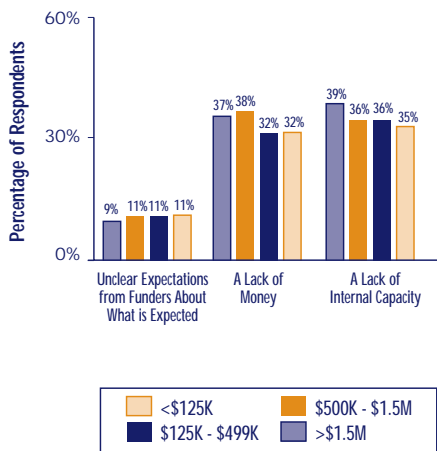
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

6.3   WAYS TO IMPROVE EVALUATION

Voluntary organizations and their funders generally agree on the main barriers of evaluation. Do they identify the same areas for improvement?

Needs that Voluntary Organizations Have to Improve Their Evaluations

One of the main goals of our study is to determine whether voluntary organizations would benefit from assistance with their evaluation activities. We asked voluntary organizations that had performed evaluations whether, as a way to help improve evaluations conducted by their organization, they had a "big need," "moderate need," "small need," or "no need" for each of the following ways to improve evaluations:
• better access to evaluation resource tools such as manuals, books, or workbooks;
• more staff training about evaluation;
• better access to consultants who can be hired to do evaluation;
• better access to university or college students who could help your organization with evaluation;
• better access to information about what other organizations are doing;
• more financial resources for evaluation;
• having funders ask for similar evaluation information when there are multiple funders;
• greater clarity on the part of funders in their use of evaluation terminology;
• greater consistency on the part of funders in their use of evaluation terminology;
• better access to technology like computer software; and,
• more advice from funders about how to do evaluation.

The biggest need identified by voluntary organizations is the need for more financial resources (mentioned by 42% of voluntary organizations), followed by better access to technology (28%), and greater consistency on the part of funders in their use of terminology (25%) (see Figure 6.9). Nearly one quarter of voluntary organizations also mentioned better information on what other organizations are doing (24%), more staff training on evaluation (24%), and better access to evaluation tools (23%) as big needs.

Figure 6.8. Evaluation Barriers by Funder Type
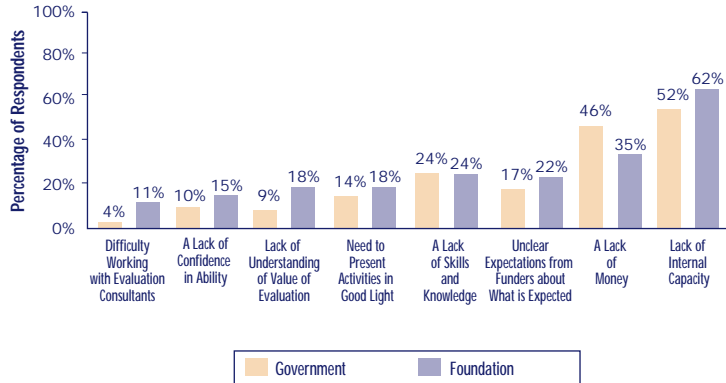
Base: Funded organizations who conducted evaluation in past year.
Government Funders (unweighted n: 126). Foundations (unweighted n: 92).

**Figure 6.10. Top Three Needs of
Voluntary Organization - By Organizational Type**
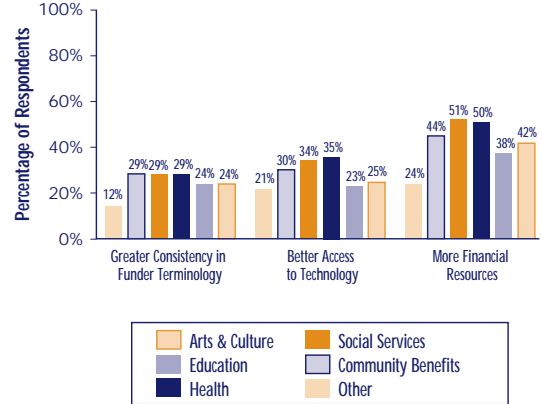
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

Health and Social Services organizations were more likely to report a big need for more financial resources and better access to technology than were other types of organizations (see Figure 6.10). Organizations with annual revenues between $500,000 and $1.5 million were more likely than others to identify a big need for more financial resources, while organizations with annual revenues of more than $1.5 million were more likely to identify a big need for better access to technology (see Figure 6.11).

**Figure 6.9. Needs that Voluntary Organizations
Have to Improve Evaluations**
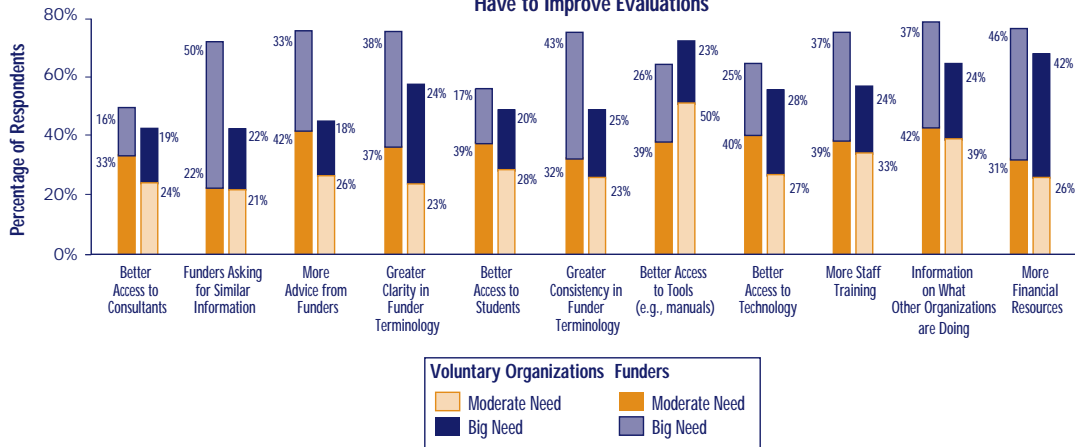
Base for Voluntary Organizations: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).
Base for Funders: Provided funding to organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year (unweighted n: 218).

Figure 6.11. Top Three Needs of Voluntary Organizations - By Annual Revenue
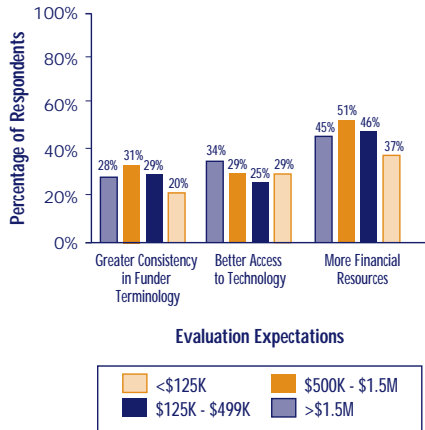
Base: Conducted evaluation in past year (unweighted n: 1607).

Funders' Perceptions of the Needs that Voluntary Organizations Have to Improve Their Evaluations

Funders appear to have a somewhat different view of the top three big needs that voluntary organizations have in the area of evaluation (see Figure 6.9) and are more likely to focus on the role that funders can play in improving evaluation. Funders were more likely to identify the need to have funders ask for the similar evaluation information in cases where there are multiple funders. Exactly half (50%) of funders identified this as a big need. This was followed by the need for more financial resources (46%) and the need for greater consistency on the part of funders in their use of evaluation terminology (43%).

Although funders seem to understand the need to coordinate their evaluation efforts, few report having done so. Of the funders who identified a big need for funders to ask for similar evaluation information when involved in projects or programs together, just over one third (37%) reported that they had attempted to coordinate this (see Table 6.1).

Table 6.1. Extent of Need for Similar Evaluation Information by Funders' Attempt to Coordinate with Other Funders

	No Need	Small Need	Moderate Need	Big Need
Attempt to Coordinate				
Yes	13%	23%	26%	37%
No	88%	77%	72%	59%
Don't Know	0%	0%	2%	4%
Unweighted n	14*	28*	50*	115

Note. Based on funded organizations that conducted evaluations in the past year.
*Caution: small sample size

Government funders reported a bigger need than did foundations for greater consistency on the part of funders in their use of evaluation terminology (identified by 50% of government funders, 39% of foundations), more advice from funders on how to do evaluation (41% of government funders, 24% of foundations), and better financial resources (51% of government funders, 43% of foundations; see Figure 6.9).

Conclusion

Voluntary organizations and funders agree that voluntary organizations bring many strengths to the process of evaluation. Principal among these are the ability of voluntary organizations to understand program and project activities, and their ability to understand community needs. However, voluntary organizations generally tend to have a more positive view about the strengths they possess than do their funders.

Despite these strengths, voluntary organizations report having problems in a number of areas when it comes to evaluation. They point to the lack of internal capacity, such as staff or time and a lack of money as being particularly big problems. Other areas that voluntary organizations reported most frequently as posing either a moderate or big problem are: unclear direction from funders about what is expected in an evaluation and, lack of skills and knowledge in conducting evaluations. Funders share the perspectives of voluntary organizations about problems organizations face, but generally perceive the magnitude of the problems to be greater.

When asked about their need for help with evaluation, voluntary organizations report that their biggest need is for more financial resources, better access to technology, and for greater consistency on the part of funders in their use of terminology. Funders also identify these as needs for voluntary organizations but tend to perceive the need for assistance to be greater. In addition, funders tend to focus more on the role that funders can play in improving evaluation. The top three needs that funders identified were: the need to have funders ask for similar evaluation information in cases where there are multiple funders, the need for more financial resources and the need for greater consistency on the part of funders in their use of evaluation terminology.

CONCLUSION AND
RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings from the first national survey of voluntary sector evaluation in Canada confirm that funders' expectations with regard to evaluation have increased. Nearly half of the funders surveyed require the organizations they fund to do evaluations. Another 40% suggest that they do so. More than four in ten expect more evaluation information than they had three years previously. Exactly half expect that evaluation information be outcome-oriented (reporting on the impact of programs and services on the end user) rather than output-oriented (reporting on the number of programs provided or clients served).

The research also confirms that voluntary organizations understand the value of evaluation and that they view evaluation as a part of their regular activity. More than three quarters of voluntary organizations surveyed had done some type of evaluation in the previous year, primarily to assess their programs and services, and to guide their strategic planning. Nearly three quarters reported that they evaluate as a matter of routine and not merely in response to funder demands. Most voluntary organizations rely on their own staff, volunteers, and financial resources to carry out their evaluations.

However, our survey findings highlight several areas of concern. First, there appears to be a gap between the type of information funders want and the type of information voluntary organizations are providing. Although funders are increasingly asking for outcome evaluation information, many voluntary organizations collect information that, in practice, allows them to measure output rather than outcome. Whatever the cause of this gap – perhaps confusion about the two types of evaluation or difficulty in collecting the appropriate information – this gap has the potential to lead to frustrated expectations on the part of both funders and voluntary organizations.

Second, funder support for evaluation, in the form of funding and resources, has not kept pace with rising funder expectations. Only one fifth of funders increased their funding support for evaluation over the three years prior to the survey. Less than one half provide any funding for evaluation or allow project funds to be used for evaluation purposes. Only half of the funders we surveyed provide voluntary organizations with tools and resources, such as evaluation guidelines or manuals. Although the majority of funders reported that they offer evaluation advice, less than half of voluntary organizations reported receiving this type of support. Less than one fifth of funders offer training on evaluation.

Third, in contrast to voluntary organizations, funders appear to have more difficulty in using the information that is provided to them. Less than half of funders reported that they make effective use of evaluation information. Those that do, use the evaluation results primarily to make decisions about the future funding of the organizations, to help in their strategic planning, and to help the funded organizations improve what they do. More than one third said that the information they received was not what they had asked for and more than one quarter reported that they had no capacity to review the evaluation information they were given.

Fourth, although the vast majority of both voluntary organizations and funders expressed some level of satisfaction with the quality of evaluation information collected, and agreed that voluntary organizations bring many strengths to evaluation, there are, nevertheless, serious barriers to effective evaluation.

Both voluntary organizations and funders identified four specific things that pose large problems for voluntary organizations: lack of internal capacity, such as staff or time; lack of money; unclear expectations from funders about what is expected in an evaluation; and, lack of skills and knowledge in conducting evaluations. Funders identified all barriers as posing problems to a greater extent than did voluntary organizations, which suggests that they may have greater concerns about the evaluation activities of voluntary organizations.

Voluntary organizations and funders are in general agreement on the areas most in need of improvement. These are: more financial resources; better access to information about what other organizations are doing; and more staff training. Funders place a much greater emphasis than do voluntary organizations on the need for funders to ask for similar evaluation information from programs and projects that have multiple funders, and for greater consistency in terminology among funders. This may be because such inconsistency affects the work of funders, as well as those being funded.

What should be done on the basis of these findings? We re-convened our initial focus group participants (both voluntary organizations and funders) and, after presenting the survey results to them, asked for their recommendations about what could be done to strengthen the evaluation capacity of voluntary organizations. These recommendations are outlined below.

Recommendations for Action

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCES AND ADOPTION OF PRACTICES TO SIMPLIFY AND DEMYSTIFY EVALUATION. To help make evaluation more accessible to voluntary sector practitioners, participants recommended the creation of resources such as: an "Evaluation for Dummies" hand-book; easily applied templates that could be customized to the needs of different types of organizations (e.g., an Arts organization template, a Social Services template, etc.); a glossary of evaluation terms; and, "best practices" workbooks, tools, and templates. Participants also recom-mended that voluntary organizations and funders adopt practices that would: encourage the use of clear and con-sistent evaluation terminology; encourage the standardiza-tion of evaluation forms; and, promote the development of broad-based standards for service within sub-sectors.

MORE FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR EVALUATION. Voluntary organizations should consider lobbying funders for more evaluation resources and encourage funders to include funding for evaluation in any grants they provide. They should also consider including requests for evaluation money in their grant applications. Funders and voluntary organizations should be encouraged to work together to develop funding formulas for evaluation activities.

GREATER COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION AMONG FUNDERS. Efforts are needed to promote greater cooperation among funders, to encourage funders to coordinate their evaluation requirements with other funders of the same program or project, and to develop clear and consistent evaluation terminology.

GREATER ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY. Voluntary organizations need greater access to technology, particularly software to aid with evaluation (e.g., software that compiles evaluation information, or software that can be used to design surveys etc.). Measures should be taken to promote greater access to software by voluntary organizations, for example, by creating databases that catalogue the various types of software and identify their possible applications.

ACCESS TO TRAINING AND EDUCATION ON EVALUATION. Funding should be provided to voluntary organizations for training on evaluation, and to provide specific training on outcome evaluation to both voluntary organizations and funders. Evaluation workshops delivered by umbrella organizations would be a benefit. To address the needs of all organizations, training materials should be adaptable to both workshop-based and in-house learning.

A CAMPAIGN TO INCREASE THE PERCEIVED VALUE OF EVALUATION. Finally, participants recommended the creation of a campaign that would communicate to voluntary organizations the value of evaluation for their own internal purposes, show how evaluation can be used for project or program planning, and demonstrate the link between evaluation and organizational performance.

DEVELOPMENT OF AN EVALUATION CLEARINGHOUSE OR RESOURCE CENTRE. This could be made available online and could include: a list of approved consultants; access to evaluation research conducted by other organizations (case studies); a mentorship program; online workshops and e-learning opportunities; a "best practices" workbook; and, templates that could be easily adapted to the needs of individual organizations.

PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS AND FUNDERS. Funders and voluntary organizations should be encouraged to adopt a partnership approach to evaluation in which both parties work together to determine appropri-ate evaluation measures. In order to develop a climate of trust between voluntary organizations and their funders, funders should be encouraged to recognize the particular goals, objectives, and needs of individual voluntary organi-zations and to allow flexibility in their evaluation require-ments. Consideration could be given to developing a pilot or demonstration project to show the value of a partnership approach. Such a project would bring funders and volun-tary organizations together to develop evaluation terminolo-gy, approaches, measures, and reporting mechanisms.

Performance assessment enables organizations to make informed decisions about programs, services, and operations, and to communicate the value of their work. It is an integral part of life in the voluntary sector, but is not without its challenges. Demands for evaluation are increasing, but capacities appear to be stretched to the limit. Funders are expecting more evaluation information, but many have difficulty using it effectively. Voluntary organizations and funders appear to be trapped in an evaluation cul-de-sac.

Is there a better way forward? More money, time, expertise, and better tools are needed. But, there is also a critical need for better dialogue and collaboration among funders to coordinate expectations and require-ments, among voluntary organizations to share knowledge and experience, and between organizations and their funders to develop evaluation strategies that address their particular needs and capacities.

REFERENCES

BOZZO, S. L., & HALL, M. H. (1999). A review of evaluation resources for nonprofit organizations. Toronto: Canadian Centre for Philanthropy.

DINSDALE, G., CUTT, J., & MURRAY, V. (1998). Performance and accountability in non-profit organizations: Concepts and practice. Victoria: Centre for Public Sector Studies, University of Victoria.

FETTERMAN, D. M., KAFTARIAN, S. J., & WANDERSMAN, A. (EDS.). (1996). Empowerment evaluation: Knowledge and tools for self-assessment and accountability. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

FINE, A., THAYER, C. E., & COGHLAN, A. (1998). Program evaluation and practice in the nonprofit sector. Washington, DC: Innovation Network.

FORBES, D. P. (1998). Measuring the unmeasurable: Empirical studies of nonprofit organizational effectiveness from 1977 to 1997. Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 27(2), 183-202.

GRAY, S. T. (1997). Evaluation with power: A new approach to organizational effectiveness, empowerment and excellence. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

GREEN, J. C. (1998). Stakeholder participation in evaluation design: Is it worth the effort? Evaluation Review, 12(1), 91-116.

HALL, M. H., & BANTING, K. G., (2000). Introduction: The nonprofit sector in Canada. In K. G. Banting, (Ed.), The not-for-profit sector in Canada: Roles and Relationships (pp. 1-28). Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

HALL, M. H., GREENBERG, L., & MCKEOWN, L. (2000). Talking about charities: Canadians' opinions on charities and issues affecting charities. Edmonton: Muttart Foundation.

HALL, M. H., PHILLIPS, S. D., PICKERING, D. I., AND GREENBERG, L. (2000). The capacity for accountability: An exploratory study of the needs of nonprofit organizations for evaluation resources. Paper presented at the 2000 Annual Conference of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action, New Orleans, Louisiana.

HATRY, H., VAN HOUTEN, T., PLANTZ, M. C., & GREENWAY, M.T. (1996). Measuring program outcomes: A practical approach. Alexandria, VA: United Way of America.

HERMAN, R. D., & RENZ, D. O. (1999).Theses on nonprofit organizational effectiveness. Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 28(2), 107-26. Kagan, S. L. (1996). Evaluating comprehensive, community-based services: Rethinking purpose and practice. Paper presented at the 1995 Annie E. Casey Foundation Research and Evaluation Conference, Baltimore, Maryland.

KANTER, R. M.,& SUMMERS, D. V. (1987). Doing well while doing good: Dilemmas of performance measurement in nonprofit organizations and the need for a multiple-constituency approach. In W. W. Powell, (Ed.), The nonprofit sector: A research handbook (pp.154-166). New Haven: Yale University Press.

LEGOWSKI, B., & TERRY, A. (1999). A discussion paper on outcomes and measurement in the voluntary health sector in Canada. Ottawa: Voluntary Health Sector Project.

MATHIE, A., & GREEN, J.C. (1997). Stakeholder participation in evaluation: How important is diversity? Evaluation and Program Planning, 20(3), 279-285.

MURRAY, V., & BALFOUR, K. (1999). Evaluating performance improvement in the non-profit sector: Challenges and opportunities. Mississauga: Altruvest .

MURRAY, V., & TASSIE, B. (1994). Evaluating the effectiveness of nonprofit organizations. In R. D. Herman (Ed.), Jossey-Bass handbook of nonprofit leadership and management (pp.303-323). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

NEWCOMER, K. E. (1997). Using performance measurement to improve programs, in K. E. Newcomer (Ed.), Using performance measurement to improve public and nonprofit programs (pp.5-14). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

ROSSI, P.H., & FREEMAN, H. E. (1993). Evaluation: A systematic approach (5th ed). Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

SHARPE, D. (1994). A portrait of Canada's charities: The size, scope and financing of registered charities. Toronto: Canadian Centre for Philanthropy.

WHITMORE, E. (1998). Understanding and practicing participatory evaluation. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

W. K. KELLOGG FOUNDATION. (1998). W. K. Kellogg Foundation evaluation handbook. Battle Creek, MI: W. K. Kellogg Foundation.

APPENDIX A

Survey Method
Two parallel national surveys were conducted by telephone in May and June of 2001. One survey was conducted with 1,965 voluntary organizations, the other with 322 funders.

Sample Design
The sample for the study of voluntary organizations comprised mostly registered charities (1,665 organizations) for which information was readily available from the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency. This was supplemented by drawing a small sample of voluntary organizations that are not registered charities (300 organizations) in order to assess the extent to which responses to the survey questions might depend upon whether or not an organization had charitable status. The survey sample for voluntary organizations was derived from several sources, including:
- A list of registered charitable organizations from the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) 2000 database;
- A list of registered charitable organizations from the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) 1997 database, which was used to provide revenue information for the organizations in the 2000 database*; and,
- A list of non-registered charitable organizations that is produced and updated annually by Micromedia Limited Inc. for Associations Canada.

The survey sample of funders was derived from:
- A list of public and private foundations from the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency's (CCRA) 2000 database;
- A list of public and private foundation from the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) 1997 database, which was used to identify funders with yearly revenues of $300,000 or more*. Only these funders were included in the sample; and,
- A list of municipal/regional, provincial and federal government funders, identified by key funding areas (e.g., social services, health, sports and recreation), from a database that was compiled by identifying and contacting individual government departments.

The sample of voluntary organizations was stratified by region of the country, size and type of organization and, and whether or not the organization was a registered charity. The original sampling plan for the survey of voluntary organizations, as well as the final distribution of the survey sample by each of the three stratification variables, is presented in Tables A.1, A.2 and A.3. Table A.4 presents the original target for the sample distribution, as well as the population distribution and the final survey sample distribution for the funders survey.

Table A.1 Targeted and Final Sample Distribution by Registration Status and Region

Region	Registered charitable organizations			Non-registered charitable organizations			Total		
	Target Sample	Final Sample	Pop	Target Sample	Final Sample	Pop	Target Sample	Final Sample	Pop
Atlantic	250	237	3,881	45	45	1,343	295	282	5,224
BC	250	214	5,579	45	45	1,422	295	259	7,001
ON	400	563	12,826	75	75	4,226	475	638	17,052
QC	300	228	8,870	45	45	1,471	345	273	10,341
Alberta	250	230	3,897	45	45	1,185	295	275	5,082
Prairies	250	193	4,228	45	45	1,187	295	238	5,415
Total	1,700	1,665	39,281*	300	300	10,835	2,000	1,965	50,116

* Six registered charities included in the dataset did not have any regional information (i.e., province, address, postal code were all missing), thus the population totals for this table are slightly different than these same totals for Tables 2.2 and 2.3.

Table A.2 Targeted and Final Sample Distribution by Registration Status and Annual Revenue

Annual Revenue	Registered charitable organizations			Non-registered charitable organizations			Total		
	Target Sample	Final Sample	Pop	Target Sample	Final Sample	Pop	Target Sample	Final Sample	Pop
Less than $125,000	400	443	19,833	NA	76	NA*	NA	519	NA
$125,000 - $499,000	400	402	6,192	NA	71	NA	NA	473	NA
$500,000 - $1,500,000	450	450	2,660	NA	45	NA	NA	495	NA
More than $1,500,000	450	337	2,065	NA	35	NA	NA	372	NA
No Info	0	33**	8,537	NA	73	NA	NA	106	NA
Total	1,700	1,665	39,287	300	300	10,835	2,000	1,965	50,122

* Revenue information was not available for non-registered charities, thus it was not possible to stratify the survey sample for non-registered organizations on the basis of annual revenue. This information was, however, collected during the surveys.

** Despite efforts to exclude from the sample frame all registered charities for which revenue information was missing, the poor quality of the database (i.e., the large number of missing telephone numbers and cases where it was not possible to find a valid telephone number) made it necessary to include some of these cases in the sample frame in order to meet quota targets for other stratification variables.

* Because of Charity Information Return filing deadlines and Canada Customs and Revenue Agency data processing time, the availability of revenue information for registered charities, including public and private foundations, always lags by about two years.

Table A.3 Targeted and Final Sample Distribution by Registration Status and Type of Organization									
Organization Type*	Registered charitable organizations			Non-registered charitable organizations			Total		
	Target Sample	Final Sample	Pop	Target Sample	Final Sample	Pop	Target Sample	Final Sample	Pop
Arts and Culture	275	287	5,425	45	49	1,300	320	336	6,725
Education	275	180	4,824	60	58	2,384	335	238	7,208
Health	275	283	3,600	45	36	1,734	320	319	5,334
Social Services	325	412	11,510	45	46	1,300	370	458	12,810
Community Benefits	275	299	8,986	45	46	1,192	320	345	10,178
Other	275	204	4,942	60	65	2,925	335	269	7,867
Total	1,700	1,665	39,287	300	300	10,835	2,000	1,965	50,122

* For registered charitable organizations, information for organization type was derived from administrative data.
  For non-registered charitable organizations, this information was self-reported.

Table A.4 Funders: Targeted and Final Sample Distribution by Region and Organization Type																		
Region	Public			Private			Municipal			Provincial			Federal			Total		
	Target Smp	Final Smp	Pop	Target Smp	Final Smp	Pop	Target Smp	Final Smp	Pop	Target Smp	Final Smp	Pop	Target Smp	Final Smp	Pop	Target Smp	Final Smp	Pop
Atlantic	5	1	12	1	0	2	11	10	30	3	3	8	9	10	33	29	24	85
BC	15	12	66	15	3	40	32	33	160	2	2	6	8	7	28	72	57	300
Ontario	30	44	209	59	16	126	32	40	214	4	5	11	11	11	43	136	116	603
Quebec	20	14	116	12	8	36	32	21	170	10	10	27	1	10	44	85	63	393
Alberta	15	14	46	8	8	21	12	7	35	6	6	15	2	2	6	43	37	123
Prairies	15	9	46	5	0	12	6	6	16	5	5	13	4	5	12	35	25	99
Total	100	94	495	100	35	237	125	117	625	30	31	80	45	45	166	400	322	1,603

Response Rates

The response rate for the survey is presented separately for voluntary organizations and funders in Tables A.5 and A.6 respectively. The response rate is the proportion of cases from the functional sample that completed the survey or completed the initial screening questions and were determined to be ineligible (i.e., they were representatives of voluntary organizations who indicated they did not conduct evaluations or representatives of organizations who indicated that they did not fund voluntary organizations). The refusal rate represents the proportion of cases from the functional sample that declined to participate in the survey. The functional sample factors out the attrition in the survey, leaving only the sample that resulted in completions or refusals. It also factors out contact that was attempted but not achieved before the completion of fieldwork (e.g., phone numbers that were 'retired' after 10 or more attempts at contact, respondents who were unavailable for the duration of the survey, and respondents who were unable to participate due to illness or some other factor). Attrition includes phone numbers that were not in service, duplicate phone numbers, and phone numbers belonging to respondents who did not speak either French or English. The response rate for the survey was 40.4% for voluntary organizations and 34.9% for funding organizations.

Table A.5 Response Rate – Voluntary Organizations	
Call Classification	**Total**
Initial sample	12,000
(less) Unused sample	3,651*
(less) Attrition	
Number not in service	1,787
Duplicate	87
Language Barrier (not English or French)	48
Functional sample	6,427
Other	
No answer/busy	1,160
Unavailable for duration of survey	991
Retired (called a minimum of 10 times)	201
Other/illness	243
Total "other" numbers	5,896
Total refusals	1,234
Refusal rate	12.7%
Respondents	
Completed Survey	1,965
Ineligible	633
Total Respondents Calls	2,598
Response rate	40.4%

* Represents pre-test cases or cases in cells where quotas had already been reached and the respondent had been called five or fewer times without ever establishing contact.

Table A.6 Response Rate – Funding Organizations	
Call Classification	**Total**
Initial sample	1,600
(less) Unused sample	62*
(less) Attrition	
Number not in service	243
Duplicate	105
Language Barrier (not English or French)	5
Functional sample	1,185
Other	
No answer/busy	371
Unavailable for duration of survey	84
Retired (called a minimum of 10 times)	68
Other/illness	83
Total "other" numbers	668
Total refusals	165
Refusal rate	13.2%
Respondents	
Completed Survey	322
Ineligible	92
Total Respondents Calls	414
Response rate	34.9%

* Represents pre-test cases or cases in cells where quotas had already been reached and the respondent had been called five or fewer times without ever establishing contact.

Weighting

Because of the stratified sampling design that was used, the unweighted data are not representative of the population. Weights were therefore applied to adjust for the effects of stratification.

For each survey, the data were weighted according to the stratification variables. It is important to note that when conducting these sub-group analyses of the data for either survey, the variable that was the focus of the analysis was excluded from the weighting scheme. For example, when the results of the survey of voluntary organizations are presented by region, the data are weighted only by registration status, annual revenue and organization type. We took this approach to avoid distorting any observed differences among the subgroups for the variable. For example, respondents from organizations with annual revenues of more than $1.5 million represent 7% of the population but 17% of the sample. If we were to weight this group by 7%, it would decrease our ability to detect differences between this group and other revenue categories.

It is also important to bear in mind that no population parameters for revenue were available for non-registered voluntary organizations. We therefore assumed that the population distribution of non-registered organizations according to revenue approximated that observed for the final sample, thus weights for revenue did not need to be applied to this sub-group. It was nonetheless necessary to weight non-registered organizations according to the distribution of annual revenue observed in the final sample in order to allow the weights to function properly for registered organizations.

Voluntary Organizations

The data for the survey of voluntary organizations were weighted by region, annual revenue, registration status (i.e., registered and non-registered) and type of organization (i.e., Social Services, Arts and Culture, Community Benefits, etc.). The distributions used to weight the sample were as follows:

Table A.7 Region	
Atlantic	.10
Quebec	.21
Ontario	.34
Prairies	.11
Alberta	.10
British Columbia	.14

Table A.8 Annual Revenue			
Annual Revenue	**Registered**	**Non-registered**	**Combined Weight**
<$125,000	.50	.08	.58
$125,000 to $499,999	.15	.07	.22
$500,000 to $1,500,000	.07	.04	.11
>$1,500,000	.06	.03	.09

Table A.9 Registration Status	
Registered	.78
Non-registered	.22

Table A.10 Type of Organization	
Arts and Culture	.14
Education	.14
Health	.11
Social Services	.25
Community Benefit	.20
Other	.16

Funding Organizations

The data for the survey of funding organizations were weighted by region and organization type (i.e., federal government, private foundation, etc.). The distributions used to weight the sample were as follows:

Table A.11 Region	
Atlantic	.05
Quebec	.25
Ontario	.37
Prairies	.06
Alberta	.08
British Columbia	.19

Table A.12 Type of Organization	
Federal Government	.10
Provincial Government	.05
Municipal Government	.39
Public Foundation	.31
Private Foundation	.15

Confidence Limits for Analysis Variables

Confidence limits calculated for breakdowns of the data by each of the analysis variables are presented in Table A.13. These confidence limits indicate the percentage variation of a sample estimate that one would expect to find in the population 95% of the time. For example, a confidence interval of ± 6% for British Columbia means that a percentage value reported for B.C. charities would be within 6 percentage points of the value in the population, 95% of the time. These confidence limits were calculated using estimations of the population size where applicable.

Table A.13 Confidence Intervals for Analysis Variables			
	Unweighted Sample	**Population**	**Confidence Limit**
Nonprofit and Voluntary Organization			
Type of Organization			
Arts & Culture	336	6725	±5.22%
Education	238	7208	±6.26%
Health	319	5334	±5.33%
Social Services	458	12810	±4.50%
Community Benefits	345	10178	±5.19%
Other	269	7867	±5.88%
Annual Revenue Size		(based on registered charities)	(based on registered charities)
<$125K	519	19833	±4.61%
$125K - $499K	473	6192	±4.73%
$500K - $1.5 million	495	2660	±4.22%
>$1.5 million	372	2065	±4.89%
Province/Region			
Atlantic	282	5224	±5.69%
BC	259	7001	±5.99%
Ontario	638	17052	±3.81%
Quebec	273	10341	±5.86%
Alberta	275	5082	±5.76%
Prairies	238	5415	±6.22%
Funders			
Government	193	871	±6.24%
Foundation	129	732	±7.86%

ADDITIONAL TABLES: VARIATIONS AMONG VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS

Chapter 2 - Tables

Table B2.1. Funder's Evaluation Expectations over the Last Three Years by Organizational Type

	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Organizations Type Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
Amount of Information						
Increased	43%	40%	54%	46%	54%	28%
Remained The Same	38%	35%	33%	41%	29%	38%
Decreased	3%	4%	2%	1%	4%	3%
Don't Know/No Response	17%	21%	12%	13%	14%	31%
Whether to Provide Outcome Information						
Increased	46%	46%	60%	53%	51%	35%
Remained The Same	36%	30%	22%	36%	32%	38%
Decreased	0%	2%	3%	0%	0%	0%
Don't Know/No Response	18%	22%	14%	10%	16%	27%
Amount of Outcome Information						
Increased	42%	45%	54%	49%	45%	34%
Remained The Same	40%	30%	29%	39%	36%	35%
Decreased	1%	2%	3%	0%	3%	2%
Don't Know/No Response	17%	24%	14%	12%	16%	29%
Unweighted n	256	186	284	393	280	208

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B2.2. Funders' Evaluation Expectations over the Last Three Years by Province/Region

	BC	Alberta	Province/Region Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
Amount of Information						
Increased	49%	44%	29%	51%	40%	44%
Remained The Same	31%	37%	49%	32%	39%	35%
Decreased	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%	6%
Don't Know/No Response	19%	15%	20%	15%	19%	16%
Whether to Provide Outcome Information						
Increased	55%	47%	34%	59%	42%	45%
Remained The Same	29%	33%	46%	28%	37%	35%
Decreased	1%	0%	3%	0%	1%	1%
Don't Know/No Response	15%	20%	17%	13%	21%	19%
Amount of Outcome Information						
Increased	49%	44%	32%	52%	42%	44%
Remained The Same	31%	35%	47%	34%	36%	36%
Decreased	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Don't Know/No Response	19%	19%	20%	13%	22%	20%
Unweighted n	211	217	190	547	226	216

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B2.3. Funders' Evaluation Expectations over the Last Three Years by Annual Revenue

	<$125K	Annual Revenue $125K -$499K	$500K -$1.5M	>$1.5M
Amount of Information				
Increased	35%	50%	52%	62%
Remained The Same	39%	35%	34%	23%
Decreased	3%	2%	3%	1%
Don't Know/No Response	22%	13%	11%	15%
Whether to Provide Outcome Information				
Increased	38%	55%	61%	62%
Remained The Same	38%	32%	27%	25%
Decreased	1%	1%	1%	0%
Don't Know/No Response	23%	12%	11%	12%
Amount of Outcome Information				
Increased	37%	51%	53%	58%
Remained The Same	38%	36%	35%	29%
Decreased	2%	1%	2%	0%
Don't Know/No Response	24%	13%	11%	13%
Unweighted n	359	398	456	320

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.1. What was Evaluated in the Past Year by Organizational Type

	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
Ongoing programs or services	59%	57%	75%	78%	63%	61%
Projects	50%	55%	62%	60%	55%	55%
Organization's overall effectiveness or impact	46%	50%	58%	65%	52%	49%
Fundraising activities	48%	35%	50%	52%	45%	37%
Volunteer experiences	32%	32%	46%	51%	39%	35%
Overall performance of the board	30%	32%	40%	36%	32%	29%
Products	25%	29%	21%	21%	18%	25%
Have not evaluated anything in the past year	26%	29%	16%	16%	26%	27%
Unweighted n	336	238	319	458	345	269

Note. Based on total number of organizations that responded.

Table B3.2. What was Evaluated in the Past Year by Province/Region

	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
Ongoing programs or services	67%	62%	68%	72%	65%	58%
Projects	56%	54%	58%	58%	60%	49%
Organization's overall effectiveness or impact	49%	50%	57%	57%	60%	46%
Fundraising activities	48%	39%	46%	51%	39%	43%
Volunteer experiences	9%	39%	38%	39%	40%	41%
Overall performance of the board	28%	31%	36%	37%	34%	30%
Products	19%	18%	24%	28%	23%	16%
Have not evaluated anything in the past year	23%	29%	20%	21%	19%	28%
Unweighted n	259	275	238	638	273	282

Note. Based on total number of organizations that responded.

Table B3.3. What was Evaluated in the Past Year by Annual Revenue

	<$125K	$125K-$499K	$500K-$1.5M	>$1.5M
Ongoing programs or services	56%	73%	84%	78%
Projects	49%	64%	69%	68%
Organization's overall effectiveness or impact	48%	58%	67%	59%
Fundraising activities	38%	52%	55%	54%
Volunteer experiences	36%	44%	47%	49%
Overall performance of the board	30%	37%	41%	36%
Products	19%	25%	32%	25%
Have not evaluated anything in the past year	30%	16%	8%	14%
Unweighted n	519	473	495	372

Note. Based on total number of organizations that responded.

Table B3.4. When Evaluations are Conducted by Organizational Type

	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
Performed routinely	61%	69%	78%	82%	73%	70%
Only when need to address specific problems	34%	20%	18%	15%	21%	27%
Only when required by funders	3%	9%	3%	3%	5%	1%
Unweighted n	256	186	284	393	280	208

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.5. When Evaluations are Conducted by Province/Region

	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
Performed routinely	69%	70%	69%	75%	83%	63%
Only when need to address specific problems	26%	23%	26%	19%	14%	29%
Only when required by funders	4%	4%	4%	4%	3%	5%
Unweighted n	211	217	190	547	226	216

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.6. When Evaluations are Conducted by Annual Revenue

	<$125K	$125K-$499K	$500K-$1.5M	>$1.5M
Performed routinely	68%	76%	81%	81%
Only when need to address specific problems	27%	18%	14%	13%
Only when required by funders	4%	4%	2%	4%
Unweighted n	359	398	456	320

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.7. Number of Evaluations in Past Year by Organizational Type

	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
1-5	56%	56%	46%	41%	44%	57%
6-10	23%	23%	24%	21%	19%	19%
11-20	14%	12%	14%	19%	20%	10%
21+	8%	8%	17%	20%	17%	14%
Unweighted n	256	186	284	393	280	208

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.8. Number of Evaluations in Past Year by Province/Region

	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
1-5	47%	59%	50%	42%	54%	49%
6-10	21%	14%	17%	22%	23%	29%
11-20	16%	18%	19%	16%	13%	9%
21+	17%	10%	14%	20%	11%	12%
Unweighted n	211	217	190	547	226	216

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.9. Number of Evaluations in Past Year by Annual Revenue

	<$125K	$125K-$499K	$500K-$1.5M	>$1.5M
1-5	58%	44%	39%	30%
6-10	20%	23%	23%	24%
11-20	14%	18%	17%	17%
21+	10%	15%	20%	28%
Unweighted n	359	398	456	320

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.10. Percent of Evaluations Required by Funder by Organizational Type

	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
None	66%	63%	62%	58%	58%	81%
1%- 25%	8%	9%	10%	14%	14%	9%
26%- 50%	16%	13%	15%	13%	14%	6%
50%+	11%	15%	13%	15%	14%	4%
Unweighted n	230	165	250	344	248	182

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.11. Percent of Evaluations Required by Funder by Province/Region

	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
None	63	54	71	59	70	64
1%- 25%	13	11	9	14	9	4
26%- 50%	14	14	8	12	15	16
50%+	10	21	12	16	5	16
Unweighted n	181	194	172	482	201	189

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.12. Percent of Evaluations Required by Funder by Annual Revenue

	<$125K	$125K-$499K	$500K-$1.5M	>$1.5M
None	72%	56%	57%	52%
1% - 25%	7%	13%	15%	16%
26% - 50%	12%	15%	14%	15%
50%+	9%	17%	14%	17%
Unweighted n	322	360	407	273

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.13. Methods of Evaluation Used in the Past Year by Organizational Type

	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
Staff Meetings	83%	82%	83%	89%	81%	75%
Volunteer Meetings	64%	67%	69%	63%	76%	61%
Surveys	52%	58%	68%	57%	56%	46%
Formal Evaluations –multiple methods	37%	53%	61%	61%	47%	47%
Interviews	45%	40%	58%	53%	47%	39%
Focus Groups	33%	40%	52%	54%	43%	44%
Experimental or Quasi-Experimental Designs	13%	16%	14%	10%	17%	14%
Unweighted n	256	186	284	393	280	208

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.14. Methods of Evaluation Used in the Past Year by Province/Region

	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
Staff Meetings	87%	82%	78%	85%	83%	76%
Volunteer Meetings	72%	66%	70%	63%	62%	73%
Surveys	61%	63%	47%	67%	42%	51%
Formal Evaluations- multiple methods	57%	52%	46%	61%	44%	46%
Interviews	63%	49%	42%	57%	29%	50%
Focus Groups	44%	34%	29%	37%	75%	42%
Experimental or Quasi-Experimental Designs	13%	14%	15%	14%	15%	9%
Unweighted n	211	217	190	547	226	216

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.15. Methods of Evaluation Used in the Past Year by Annual Revenue

	<$125K	$125K-$499K	$500K-$1.5M	>$1.5M
Staff Meetings	76%	87%	91%	93%
Volunteer Meetings	69%	66%	60%	64%
Surveys	43%	65%	66%	76%
Formal Evaluations – multiple methods	41%	58%	65%	70%
Interviews	35%	56%	61%	68%
Focus Groups	42%	45%	49%	59%
Experimental or Quasi-Experimental Designs	13%	13%	16%	17%
Unweighted n	359	398	456	320

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.16. Key Motivation for Last Evaluation by Organizational Type

	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
It was a decision of our staff or board	73%	69%	72%	70%	68%	88%
It was required by funders	14%	13%	13%	9%	15%	4%
It was encouraged by funders	4%	8%	4%	5%	6%	2%
For accreditation purposes	5%	3%	4%	8%	2%	2%
To comply with new funding requirements	2%	4%	2%	6%	5%	2%
Unweighted n	256	186	284	393	280	208

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.17. Key Motivation for Last Evaluation by Province/Region

	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
It was a decision of our staff or board	73%	65%	73%	74%	73%	75%
It was required by funders	11%	20%	14%	11%	7%	11%
It was encouraged by funders	2%	4%	5%	6%	6%	2%
For accreditation purposes	7%	4%	3%	4%	4%	5%
To comply with new funding requirements	3%	2%	2%	3%	7%	3%
Unweighted n	211	217	190	547	226	216

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.18. Key Motivation for Last Evaluation by Annual Revenue

	<$125K	$125K-$499K	$500K-$1.5M	>$1.5M
It was a decision of our staff or board	72%	75%	71%	71%
It was required by funders	10%	12%	13%	15%
It was encouraged by funders	5%	4%	5%	2%
For accreditation purposes	4%	2%	6%	9%
To comply with new funding requirements	4%	3%	3%	2%
Unweighted n	359	398	456	320

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.19. Degree of Board Involvement in Last Evaluation by Organizational Type

	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
The board was not involved	16%	18%	26%	21%	19%	17%
The board requested evaluation information	6%	7%	4%	12%	6%	8%
The board reviewed the evaluation information	30%	38%	32%	35%	40%	21%
The board both requested and reviewed the evaluation information	45%	34%	32%	30%	32%	43%
Other	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%	7%
Don't Know/No Response	1%	1%	3%	1%	1%	4%
Unweighted Base	256	186	284	393	280	208

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.20 Degree of Board Involvement in Last Evaluation by Province/Region

	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
The board was not involved	23%	26%	14%	21%	16%	18%
The board requested evaluation information	5%	6%	10%	6%	13%	6%
The board reviewed the evaluation information	32%	31%	24%	38%	34%	29%
The board both requested and reviewed the evaluation information	38%	35%	47%	31%	32%	37%
Other	2%	2%	5%	2%	4%	6%
Don't Know/No Response	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%	4%
Unweighted Base	211	217	190	547	226	216

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.21. Degree of Board Involvement in Last Evaluation by Annual Revenue

	<$125K	$125K-$499K	$500K-$1.5M	>$1.5M
The board was not involved	16%	22%	23%	26%
The board requested evaluation information	10%	6%	4%	7%
The board reviewed the evaluation information	28%	37%	38%	38%
The board both requested and reviewed the evaluation information	41%	29%	31%	26%
Other	3%	5%	2%	2%
Don't Know/No Response	2%	1%	2%	1%
Unweighted n	359	398	456	320

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.22. What was Assessed in Last Evaluation by Organizational Type

	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
Program/project	23%	26%	26%	20%	27%	24%
Organizational/goals and objectives	19%	21%	12%	18%	18%	19%
Staff/volunteers	7%	7%	17%	19%	15%	12%
Service/product (e.g. workshop, course)	8%	15%	12%	15%	11%	10%
Client/community needs/satisfaction	7%	10%	13%	11%	12%	10%
Event/activity (e.g. fundraising, show)	17%	5%	11%	11%	7%	10%
Process/procedure	6%	10%	4%	4%	4%	9%
Finances/funding	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	0%
Unweighted Base	256	186	284	393	280	208

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.23. What Was Assessed in Last Evaluation by Province/Region

	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
Program/project	27%	23%	27%	27%	16%	24%
Organizational/goals and objectives	21%	20%	20%	15%	19%	16%
Staff/volunteers	16%	17%	17%	12%	17%	17%
Service/product (e.g. workshop, course)	8%	8%	8%	15%	15%	14%
Client/community needs/satisfaction	11%	12%	11%	12%	10%	7%
Event/activity (e.g. fundraising, show)	10%	9%	12%	9%	11%	9%
Process/procedure	4%	4%	2%	6%	8%	6%
Finances/funding	1%	4%	1%	1%	0%	2%
Unweighted n	211	217	190	547	226	216

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B3.24. What was Assessed in Last Evaluation by Annual Revenue

	<$125K	$125K-$499K	$500K-$1.5M	>$1.5M
Program/project	21%	27%	27%	25%
Organizational/goals and objectives	20%	16%	17%	16%
Staff/volunteers	15%	18%	11%	14%
Service/product (e.g. workshop, course)	13%	12%	12%	9%
Client/community needs/satisfaction	10%	8%	15%	14%
Event/activity (e.g. fundraising, show)	9%	10%	11%	12%
Process/procedure	7%	4%	3%	6%
Finances/funding	1%	1%	2%	1%
Unweighted Base	359	398	456	320

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Chapter 4 - Tables

Table B4.1. Difficulty with Outcome Evaluation by Organizational Type

| | Organizational Type | | | | | |
	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
Identify the outcome measures						
Very Difficult	2%	3%	4%	3%	3%	1%
Somewhat Difficult	25%	23%	26%	23%	22%	18%
Somewhat Easy	45%	54%	42%	52%	44%	54%
Very Easy	22%	14%	22%	17%	27%	23%
Don't Know/No Response	5%	7%	6%	4%	3%	4%
Collect the outcome information						
Very Difficult	4%	4%	3%	3%	1%	2%
Somewhat Difficult	17%	29%	26%	20%	26%	23%
Somewhat Easy	57%	46%	40%	57%	40%	53%
Very Easy	21%	19%	29%	19%	31%	18%
Don't Know/No Response	2%	3%	2%	1%	2%	4%
Analyze the outcome information						
Very Difficult	0%	3%	1%	1%	3%	1%
Somewhat Difficult	16%	21%	17%	18%	19%	17%
Somewhat Easy	49%	53%	47%	57%	47%	45%
Very Easy	31%	22%	29%	22%	28%	35%
Don't Know/No Response	4%	1%	6%	3%	3%	2%
Interpret the outcome information						
Very Difficult	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	5%
Somewhat Difficult	13%	16%	15%	21%	18%	16%
Somewhat Easy	54%	64%	48%	53%	53%	47%
Very Easy	30%	18%	33%	23%	25%	31%
Don't Know/No Response	2%	1%	4%	1%	3%	2%
Unweighted base	171	129	213	273	178	140

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year and collected output information.

Table B4.2. Difficulty with Outcome Evaluation by Province/Region

| | Province/Region | | | | | |
	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
Identify the outcome measures						
Very Difficult	3%	4%	1%	3%	2%	3%
Somewhat Difficult	21%	20%	25%	19%	32%	22%
Somewhat easy	51%	43%	46%	49%	53%	52%
Very Easy	18%	29%	28%	25%	6%	21%
Don't Know/No Response	8%	5%	1%	4%	7%	2%
Collect the outcome information						
Very Difficult	6%	4%	3%	3%	0%	1%
Somewhat Difficult	22%	29%	18%	26%	20%	28%
Somewhat easy	59%	48%	53%	41%	60%	44%
Very Easy	14%	18%	25%	28%	16%	25%
Don't Know/No Response	0%	1%	1%	2%	4%	2%
Analyze the outcome information						
Very Difficult	0%	2%	3%	2%	1%	0%
Somewhat Difficult	20%	16%	19%	18%	18%	18%
Somewhat easy	48%	41%	48%	45%	67%	54%
Very Easy	31%	37%	30%	32%	10%	26%
Don't Know/No Response	2%	4%	1%	3%	4%	2%
Interpret the outcome information						
Very Difficult	5%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%
Somewhat Difficult	17%	15%	19%	18%	18%	18%
Somewhat easy	55%	46%	50%	49%	65%	48%
Very Easy	22%	36%	28%	30%	15%	32%
Don't Know/No Response	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%
Unweighted Base	142	152	122	408	149	131

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year and collected output information.

Table B4.3. Difficulty with Outcome Evaluation by Annual Revenue

| | Annual Revenue | | | |
	<$125K	$125K -$499K	$500K -$1.5M	>$1.5M
Identify the outcome measures				
Very Difficult	1%	5%	4%	3%
Somewhat Difficult	22%	22%	29%	28%
Somewhat easy	49%	51%	45%	45%
Very Easy	23%	17%	19%	18%
Don't Know/No Response	5%	4%	5%	5%
Collect the outcome information				
Very Difficult	2%	4%	2%	3%
Somewhat Difficult	22%	23%	27%	25%
Somewhat easy	53%	46%	46%	49%
Very Easy	22%	24%	22%	20%
Don't Know/No Response	2%	3%	3%	3%
Analyze the outcome information				
Very Difficult	1%	1%	2%	3%
Somewhat Difficult	18%	16%	22%	19%
Somewhat easy	50%	57%	47%	46%
Very Easy	30%	21%	25%	27%
Don't Know/No Response	1%	5%	4%	5%
Interpret the outcome information				
Very Difficult	2%	2%	2%	2%
Somewhat Difficult	15%	18%	20%	21%
Somewhat easy	55%	53%	48%	50%
Very Easy	27%	25%	28%	25%
Don't Know/No Response	1%	2%	2%	3%
Unweighted Base	215	261	327	250

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year and collected output information.

Table B4.4. Source of Funding by Organizational Type

| | Organizational Type | | | | | |
	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
Internally	59%	59%	55%	61%	50%	63%
External funder	14%	22%	31%	14%	27%	9%
Both internal and external sources	21%	15%	12%	21%	19%	21%
Don't know/no response	6%	4%	3%	4%	4%	8%
Unweighted n	145	122	191	234	176	130

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year, with cost incurred for last evaluation.

Table B4.5. Source of Funding by Province/Region

| | Province/Region | | | | | |
	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
Internally	49%	55%	62%	57%	64%	51%
External funder	23%	21%	10%	23%	14%	17%
Both internal and external sources	24%	19%	25%	14%	19%	25%
Don't know/no response	5%	5%	4%	6%	3%	7%
Unweighted n	134	129	110	376	134	115

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year, with cost incurred for last evaluation.

Chapter 4 - Tables continued

Chapter 5 - Tables

Table B4.6. Source of Funding by Annual Revenue

| | Annual Revenue | | | |
	<$125K	$125K-$499K	$500K-$1.5M	>$1.5M
Internally	59%	52%	56%	64%
External funder	19%	19%	20%	15%
Both internal and external sources	17%	23%	20%	18%
Don't know/no response	5%	6%	4%	3%
Unweighted n	168	237	316	230

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year, with cost incurred for last evaluation.

Table B5.1. Level of Effectiveness Regarding Use of Evaluation Information by Organizational Type

| | Organizational Type | | | | | |
	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
Very effectively	22%	21%	26%	28%	23%	16%
Effectively	50%	55%	49%	46%	50%	53%
Somewhat effectively	21%	21%	17%	21%	22%	24%
Not effectively at all	0%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%
Don't Know/No Response	8%	4%	7%	4%	2%	6%
Unweighted Base	256	186	284	393	280	208

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B4.7. Adequacy of Funding by Organizational Type

| | Organizational Type | | | | | |
	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
To a great extent	22%	26%	20%	20%	18%	28%
To a moderate extent	27%	29%	29%	23%	37%	28%
To a small extent	11%	12%	7%	9%	9%	7%
To no extent	9%	11%	12%	13%	9%	9%
Don't know/no response	31%	24%	32%	36%	28%	29%
Unweighted n	256	186	284	393	280	208

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B5.2. Level of Effectiveness Regarding Use of Evaluation Information by Province /Region

| | Province/Region | | | | | |
	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
Very effectively	22%	21%	23%	26%	21%	27%
Effectively	47%	50%	48%	51%	54%	40%
Somewhat effectively	21%	21%	27%	17%	21%	28%
Not effectively at all	1%	3%	0%	2%	0%	1%
Don't Know/No Response	10%	5%	3%	4%	4%	5%
Unweighted Base	211	217	190	547	226	216

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B4.8. Adequacy of Funding by Province/Region

| | Province/Region | | | | | |
	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
To a great extent	26%	21%	21%	20%	24%	19%
To a moderate extent	26%	28%	33%	28%	28%	24%
To a small extent	10%	10%	8%	10%	5%	14%
To no extent	11%	14%	11%	11%	8%	14%
Don't know/no response	26%	27%	28%	31%	35%	29%
Unweighted n	211	217	190	547	226	216

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B5.3. Level of Effectiveness Regarding Use of Evaluation Information by Annual Revenue

| | Annual Revenue | | | |
	<$125K	$125K-$499K	$500K-$1.5M	>$1.5M
Very effectively	22%	23%	27%	26%
Effectively	51%	47%	47%	51%
Somewhat effectively	22%	24%	20%	17%
Not effectively at all	1%	1%	2%	1%
Don't Know/No Response	5%	5%	4%	7%
Unweighted Base	359	398	456	320

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B4.9. Adequacy of Funding by Annual Revenue

| | Annual Revenue | | | |
	<$125K	$125K-$499K	$500K-$1.5M	>$1.5M
To a great extent	23%	19%	23%	22%
To a moderate extent	27%	33%	25%	31%
To a small extent	7%	10%	13%	11%
To no extent	12%	9%	11%	9%
Don't know/no response	32%	29%	29%	28%
Unweighted n	359	398	456	320

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B5.4. Usefulness of Outcome Information Collected by Organizational Type

| | Organizational Type | | | | | |
	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
To a great extent	51%	41%	48%	49%	50%	40%
To a moderate extent	37%	50%	43%	41%	40%	45%
To a small extent	9%	5%	5%	8%	6%	13%
To no extent	1%	2%	0%	1%	2%	0%
Don't Know/No Response	2%	1%	4%	2%	2%	2%
Unweighted Base	171	129	213	273	178	140

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B5.5. Usefulness of Outcome Information Collected by Province/Region

| | Province/Region | | | | | |
	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
To a great extent	40%	46%	47%	49%	50%	42%
To a moderate extent	47%	41%	50%	40%	41%	43%
To a small extent	10%	11%	3%	7%	5%	14%
To no extent	0%	0%	0%	1%	3%	1%
Don't Know/No Response	3%	2%	0%	3%	1%	0%
Unweighted Base	142	152	122	408	149	131

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B5.6. Usefulness of Outcome Information Collected by Annual Revenue

	Annual Revenue			
	<$125K	$125K -$499K	$500K -$1.5M	>$1.5M
To a great extent	45%	46%	52%	53%
To a moderate extent	46%	40%	40%	40%
To a small extent	8%	11%	6%	4%
To no extent	1%	1%	1%	0%
Don't Know/No Response	1%	3%	2%	3%
Unweighted Base	215	261	327	250

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B5.7. Uses of Evaluation Information by Organizational Type

	Organizational Type					
	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
Improve programs and services						
To a great extent	60%	75%	65%	73%	61%	69%
To a moderate extent	30%	16%	26%	21%	29%	18%
Increase awareness						
To a great extent	42%	35%	37%	43%	36%	35%
To a moderate extent	33%	44%	35%	32%	34%	36%
Report to the funder						
To a great extent	32%	33%	40%	36%	40%	14%
To a moderate extent	24%	24%	20%	25%	23%	18%
Strategic planning						
To a great extent	58%	57%	63%	52%	47%	59%
To a moderate extent	31%	31%	27%	31%	39%	27%
Share information						
To a great extent	11%	16%	17%	15%	18%	12%
To a moderate extent	31%	28%	35%	36%	33%	27%
Fundraising purposes						
To a great extent	29%	16%	25%	24%	25%	21%
To a moderate extent	33%	35%	24%	28%	28%	25%
Unweighted n	256	186	284	393	280	208

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B5.8. Uses of Evaluation Information by Province/Region

	Province/Region					
	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
Improve programs and services						
To a great extent	64%	62%	66%	73%	69%	63%
To a moderate extent	26%	30%	25%	20%	22%	28%
Increase awareness						
To a great extent	40%	38%	31%	40%	37%	46%
To a moderate extent	36%	34%	41%	32%	37%	31%
Report to the funder						
To a great extent	28%	36%	29%	36%	34%	29%
To a moderate extent	31%	24%	21%	23%	21%	16%
Strategic planning						
To a great extent	62%	42%	51%	61%	53%	46%
To a moderate extent	25%	44%	36%	26%	34%	37%
Share information						
To a great extent	17%	11%	8%	15%	16%	21%
To a moderate extent	27%	34%	34%	31%	36%	30%
Fundraising purposes						
To a great extent	28%	23%	24%	25%	18%	22%
To a moderate extent	37%	25%	24%	28%	26%	29%
Unweighted n	211	217	190	547	226	216

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B5.9. Uses of Evaluation Information by Annual Revenue

	Annual Revenue			
	<$125K	$125K -$499K	$500K -$1.5M	>$1.5M
Improve programs and services				
To a great extent	63%	71%	72%	74%
To a moderate extent	26%	22%	22%	18%
Increase awareness				
To a great extent	40%	36%	36%	38%
To a moderate extent	36%	36%	35%	32%
Report to the funder				
To a great extent	29%	35%	41%	36%
To a moderate extent	20%	29%	22%	21%
Strategic planning				
To a great extent	49%	57%	60%	66%
To a moderate extent	36%	31%	30%	22%
Share information				
To a great extent	16%	13%	16%	11%
To a moderate extent	31%	32%	32%	32%
Fundraising purposes				
To a great extent	19%	27%	31%	26%
To a moderate extent	30%	29%	26%	22%
Unweighted n	359	398	456	320

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B5.10 Level of Evaluation Satisfaction by who had Primary Responsibility for Last Evaluation

	Level of Satisfaction			
	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
External evaluator (n = 168)	0%	2%	33%	61%
Volunteers (n = 174)	1%	6%	52%	41%
Internal staff (n = 1227)	1%	3%	59%	37%
Student or a student intern (n = 17)*	0%	9%	73%	18%

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.
*Caution: small sample size

Table B5.11. Level of Evaluation Satisfaction by Main Reason for Last Evaluation

	Level of Satisfaction			
	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
It was required by funders (n = 204)	1%	3%	48%	47%
It was encouraged by funders (n = 63)*	4%	4%	61%	30%
For accreditation purposes (n = 81)	0%	0%	57%	44%
It was a decision of the staff or board (n = 1160)	1%	3%	58%	37%
To comply with new funding requirements (n = 46)*	0%	4%	42%	54%

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.
*Caution: small sample size

Table B5.12. Level of Evaluation Satisfaction by Source of Funding

	Level of Satisfaction			
	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Both internal & external funding (n = 195)	3%	1%	48%	46%
Internal funding (n = 569)	0%	2%	52%	45%
External funding (n = 184)	1%	3%	55%	40%

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Chapter 5 - Tables continued

Table B5.13. Level of Evaluation Satisfaction by Organizational Type

| | Organizational Type | | | | | |
	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
Very Satisfied	34%	37%	39%	41%	43%	36%
Satisfied	61%	60%	55%	54%	51%	54%
Dissatisfied	3%	1%	3%	1%	4%	8%
Very dissatisfied	1%	2%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Don't Know/No Response	1%	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%
Unweighted Base	256	186	284	393	280	208

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B5.14. Level of Evaluation Satisfaction by Province/Region

| | Province/Region | | | | | |
	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
Very Satisfied	37%	32%	35%	45%	34%	40%
Satisfied	55%	61%	58%	50%	61%	55%
Dissatisfied	5%	6%	4%	3%	0%	4%
Very dissatisfied	0%	2%	2%	0%	2%	0%
Don't Know/No Response	2%	0%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Unweighted Base	211	217	190	547	226	216

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B5.15. Level of Evaluation Satisfaction by Annual Revenue

| | Annual Revenue | | | |
	<$125K	$125K-$499K	$500K-$1.5M	>$1.5M
Very Satisfied	39%	36%	39%	38%
Satisfied	56%	57%	57%	59%
Dissatisfied	3%	3%	2%	2%
Very dissatisfied	1%	2%	0%	0%
Don't Know/No Response	1%	2%	2%	2%
Unweighted Base	359	398	456	320

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Chapter 6 - Tables

Table B6.1. Evaluation Strengths of Voluntary Organizations by Organizational Type

| | Organizational Type | | | | | |
	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
Understanding of projects and program						
Great Extent	61%	73%	65%	63%	58%	58%
Moderate Extent	33%	23%	32%	29%	36%	41%
Small Extent	4%	4%	2%	5%	4%	1%
No extent	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Don't Know/No Response	2%	1%	0%	2%	2%	1%
Understanding the needs of the community						
Great Extent	42%	60%	64%	67%	61%	49%
Moderate Extent	50%	34%	34%	27%	33%	45%
Small Extent	6%	2%	2%	6%	3%	5%
No extent	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Don't Know/No Response	1%	3%	1%	1%	2%	1%
A positive attitude towards evaluation						
Great Extent	46%	56%	46%	56%	53%	53%
Moderate Extent	44%	34%	46%	35%	38%	36%
Small Extent	8%	7%	6%	8%	6%	8%
No extent	0%	1%	2%	0%	2%	1%
Don't Know/No Response	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%	3%
Ability to communicate evaluation results						
Great Extent	36%	33%	38%	37%	37%	34%
Moderate Extent	52%	59%	53%	54%	48%	53%
Small Extent	10%	6%	7%	8%	12%	10%
No extent	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	2%
Don't Know/No Response	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%	0%
Evaluation skills and knowledge						
Great Extent	22%	27%	28%	28%	20%	23%
Moderate Extent	60%	53%	55%	58%	59%	54%
Small Extent	14%	16%	16%	12%	16%	18%
No extent	2%	2%	1%	2%	3%	3%
Don't Know/No Response	3%	2%	1%	1%	2%	3%
Unweighted Base	256	186	284	393	280	208

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B6.2. Evaluation Strengths of Voluntary Organizations by Province/Region

| | Province/Region | | | | | |
	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
Understanding of projects and program						
Great Extent	73%	56%	63%	68%	52%	61%
Moderate Extent	23%	39%	33%	29%	40%	33%
Small Extent	1%	3%	3%	2%	6%	6%
No extent	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Don't Know/No Response	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	0%
Understanding the needs of the community						
Great Extent	58%	52%	54%	65%	58%	55%
Moderate Extent	40%	40%	41%	31%	35%	41%
Small Extent	2%	7%	4%	3%	7%	4%
No extent	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Don't Know/No Response	0%	0%	2%	2%	0%	1%
A positive attitude towards evaluation						
Great Extent	53%	45%	48%	58%	51%	51%
Moderate Extent	37%	44%	44%	33%	41%	42%
Small Extent	7%	10%	6%	8%	6%	7%
No extent	1%	1%	3%	1%	0%	0%
Don't Know/No Response	2%	1%	0%	1%	2%	0%
Ability to communicate evaluation results						
Great Extent	31%	32%	38%	38%	36%	38%
Moderate Extent	53%	58%	48%	52%	58%	48%
Small Extent	13%	8%	12%	9%	5%	12%
No extent	3%	2%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Don't Know/No Response	0%	1%	3%	1%	0%	2%
Evaluation skills and knowledge						
Great Extent	28%	19%	19%	27%	24%	30%
Moderate Extent	50%	61%	62%	55%	61%	52%
Small Extent	17%	18%	17%	14%	11%	19%
No extent	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	0%
Don't Know/No Response	4%	1%	1%	2%	2%	0%
Unweighted Base	211	217	190	547	226	216

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B6.3. Evaluation Strengths of Voluntary Organizations by Annual Revenue

	Annual Revenue			
	<$125K	$125K -$499K	$500K -$1.5M	>$1.5M
Understanding of projects and program				
Great Extent	59%	62%	69%	71%
Moderate Extent	34%	34%	27%	27%
Small Extent	5%	2%	4%	1%
No extent	1%	1%	0%	0%
Don't Know/No Response	1%	2%	0%	1%
Understanding the needs of the community				
Great Extent	55%	57%	65%	63%
Moderate Extent	39%	36%	31%	33%
Small Extent	5%	5%	3%	2%
No extent	0%	1%	0%	1%
Don't Know/No Response	1%	1%	1%	1%
A positive attitude towards evaluation				
Great Extent	51%	56%	49%	50%
Moderate Extent	39%	34%	43%	44%
Small Extent	8%	7%	7%	4%
No extent	1%	1%	1%	2%
Don't Know/No Response	1%	2%	1%	1%
Ability to communicate evaluation results				
Great Extent	35%	36%	37%	36%
Moderate Extent	53%	52%	52%	58%
Small Extent	9%	10%	9%	5%
No extent	1%	1%	0%	0%
Don't Know/No Response	1%	1%	1%	0%
Evaluation skills and knowledge				
Great Extent	24%	26%	25%	27%
Moderate Extent	57%	54%	55%	62%
Small Extent	14%	18%	18%	10%
No extent	3%	1%	1%	1%
Don't Know/No Response	2%	1%	2%	1%
Unweighted Base	359	398	456	320

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B6.4. Evaluation Barriers Perceived as a Big Problem by Organizational Type

	Organizational Type					
	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
Lack of internal capacity (e.g., staff/time)	34%	35%	41%	39%	39%	28%
A lack of money for evaluation	32%	34%	37%	39%	36%	20%
Unclear expectations from funders about what is expected	8%	12%	18%	15%	10%	3%
A lack of skills and knowledge in conducting evaluations	3%	6%	5%	2%	5%	3%
Need to present your activities in a good light	5%	7%	6%	8%	6%	4%
Lack of understanding of value of evaluation	3%	5%	3%	6%	7%	6%
A lack of confidence in your ability to perform evaluation	1%	1%	1%	3%	2%	1%
Difficulty working with evaluation consultants	3%	2%	7%	6%	5%	3%
Unweighted n	256	186	284	393	280	208

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B6.5. Evaluation Barriers Perceived as a Big Problem by Province/Region

	Province/Region					
	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
Lack of internal capacity (e.g., staff/time)	37%	32%	35%	38%	38%	34%
A lack of money for evaluation	30%	35%	23%	35%	36%	41%
Unclear expectations from funders about what is expected	11%	12%	7%	11%	15%	7%
A lack of skills and knowledge in conducting evaluations	4%	4%	6%	3%	3%	6%
Need to present your activities in a good light	6%	8%	6%	8%	3%	8%
Lack of understanding of value of evaluation	4%	3%	8%	5%	6%	9%
A lack of confidence in your ability to perform evaluation	1%	1%	3%	1%	2%	4%
Difficulty working with evaluation consultants	2%	2%	4%	2%	10%	3%
Unweighted Base	211	217	190	547	226	216

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B6.6. Evaluation Barriers Perceived as a Big Problem by Annual Revenue

	Annual Revenue			
	<$125K	$125K -$499K	$500K -$1.5M	>$1.5M
Lack of internal capacity (e.g., staff/time)	35%	36%	36%	39%
A lack of money for evaluation	32%	32%	38%	37%
Unclear expectations from funders about what is expected	11%	11%	11%	9%
Need to present your activities in a good light	6%	6%	8%	6%
A lack of skills and knowledge in conducting evaluations	3%	5%	6%	5%
Lack of understanding of value of evaluation	5%	7%	5%	6%
A lack of confidence in your ability to perform evaluation	1%	2%	2%	2%
Difficulty working with evaluation consultants	4%	5%	5%	3%
Unweighted n	359	398	456	320

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B6.7. Confidence in Ability to Perform Evaluation by Organizational Type

	Organizational Type					
	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
Very confident	1%	23%	0%	28%	0%	2%
Confident	76%	67%	62%	68%	70%	66%
Unconfident	6%	8%	9%	4%	10%	10%
Very unconfident	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%
Don't Know/No Response	1%	3%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Unweighted Base	256	186	284	393	280	208

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B6.8. Confidence in Ability to Perform Evaluation by Province/Region

	Province/Region					
	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
Very confident	19%	20%	23%	23%	28%	26%
Confident	72%	74%	68%	68%	67%	60%
Unconfident	9%	6%	8%	9%	2%	14%
Very unconfident	0%	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%
Don't Know/No Response	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Unweighted Base	211	217	190	547	226	216

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B6.9. Confidence in Ability to Perform Evaluation by Annual Revenue

	Annual Revenue			
	<$125K	$125K -$499K	$500K -$1.5M	>$1.5M
Very confident	23%	21%	24%	27%
Confident	69%	70%	65%	66%
Unconfident	6%	8%	11%	8%
Very unconfident	1%	0%	0%	0%
Don't Know/No Response	1%	2%	0%	0%
unweighted base	359	398	456	320

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B6.10. Evaluation Improvements Perceived as a Big Need by Organizational Type

	Organizational Type					
	Arts & Culture	Education	Health	Social Services	Community Benefits	Other
More Financial Resources	42%	38%	50%	51%	44%	24%
Better access to information about what other organizations are doing	27%	24%	32%	19%	27%	20%
Staff Training about Evaluation	20%	16%	29%	28%	28%	18%
Better Access to Technology (e.g., Computer Software)	25%	23%	35%	34%	30%	21%
Better Access to Resource Tools (manuals, books, etc.)	22%	19%	26%	27%	27%	16%
Greater Consistency from Funders in their Use of Evaluation Terminology	24%	24%	29%	29%	29%	12%
Better Access to University/College Students to Help with Evaluation	16%	14%	26%	23%	26%	13%
Greater Clarity from Funders in their Use of Evaluation Terminology	26%	24%	32%	29%	24%	12%
More Advice from Funders about how to do Evaluation	19%	19%	21%	19%	24%	8%
Funders asking for Similar Evaluation Information	20%	22%	26%	23%	26%	13%
Better Access to Consultants to do Evaluation	20%	15%	21%	21%	23%	11%
unweighted n	256	186	284	393	280	208

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B6.11. Evaluation Improvements Perceived as a Big Need by Province/Region

	Province/Region					
	BC	Alberta	Man./Sask.	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
More Financial Resources	45%	41%	28%	43%	47%	46%
Better access to information about what other organizations are doing	23%	22%	22%	25%	23%	29%
Staff Training about Evaluation	25%	26%	20%	23%	27%	23%
Better Access to Technology (e.g., Computer Software)	23%	24%	20%	28%	37%	33%
Better Access to Resource Tools (manuals, books, etc.)	22%	20%	19%	21%	31%	22%
Greater Consistency from Funders in their Use of Evaluation Terminology	24%	23%	21%	29%	25%	20%
Better Access to University/College Students to Help with Evaluation	20%	17%	18%	22%	20%	20%
Greater Clarity from Funders in their Use of Evaluation Terminology	25%	24%	16%	25%	31%	18%
More Advice from Funders about how to do Evaluation	15%	22%	17%	18%	19%	22%
Funders asking for Similar Evaluation Information	24%	18%	18%	26%	21%	20%
Better Access to Consultants to do Evaluation	20%	22%	15%	17%	19%	26%
Unweighted n	211	217	190	547	226	216

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table B6.12. Evaluation Improvements Perceived as a Big Need by Annual Revenue

	Annual Revenue			
	<$125K	$125K -$499K	$500K -$1.5M	>$1.5M
More Financial Resources	37%	46%	51%	45%
Better access to information about what other organizations are doing	22%	27%	26%	27%
Staff Training about Evaluation	21%	27%	27%	26%
Better Access to Technology (e.g., Computer Software)	29%	25%	29%	34%
Better Access to Resource Tools (manuals, books, etc.)	24%	21%	26%	22%
Greater Consistency from Funders in Use of Evaluation Terms	20%	29%	31%	28%
Better Access to University/College Students to Help with Evaluation	19%	20%	22%	20%
Greater Clarity from Funders in Use of Evaluation Terms	21%	29%	27%	26%
More Advice From Funders on How to Do Evaluation	19%	18%	20%	16%
Funders Asking for Similar Evaluation Information	17%	24%	30%	29%
Better Access to Consultants to do Evaluation	19%	17%	23%	18%
Unweighted n	359	398	456	320

Note. Based on organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

APPENDIX C

Follow Up Interviews Regarding Understanding of Outcome Evaluation

Post-survey interviews were conducted with six voluntary organizations to determine how the term 'outcome' or 'impact' was understood. These fifteen-minute interviews were conducted by telephone.

The results of the interviews showed that the majority of the organizations conducted evaluations of programs/projects (most frequently cited), client or user satisfaction, financial costs, and outcome or impacts. However, further probing into outcome evaluation practices revealed that the term 'outcomes' appears to be misconstrued as 'outputs'. In the interviews, we asked respondents "Could you describe for me the type of outcome or impact information that was collected?" and "When we use the term, outcomes, what do you understand that to mean?". Most respondents gave general responses such as "how did our program benefit others?", "did we meet expectations?", "how effective were our programs?", "were our goals met?", "did we make a difference?". But when asked about how they actually measured outcomes, many respondents gave examples of output measures such as number of visits, level of usage of program/service, increases to donor base, number of people who saw ads, participant/funder satisfaction assessment or number of clients served. When asked more specifically about the kinds of measures or indicators that were used to assess outcomes, respondents either provided more examples of output measures or could not provide a clear response at all.

With respect to the usefulness of the information collected, virtually all respondents reported that the evaluation information was useful to their organization to a great extent. Respondents said that the information provided them with a measurement of their organization's performance; provided documentation of the effectiveness of their program; helped them identify problem areas; provided direction for future improvements; was useful in reporting to funders; and helped to increase their skills and knowledge.

Because respondents were most likely thinking of 'outputs' rather than 'outcomes,' they tended to report that identifying outcome measures and collecting outcome information were "somewhat easy" or "very easy," mainly because they had a clear understanding of their programs and knew what they wanted to achieve from the outset. Analyzing and interpreting the information was also deemed to be somewhat or very easy. A few respondents reported that the level of ease depended on what was being evaluated and on the skill of the evaluator/project team. Overall, respondents were satisfied with their evaluations.

APPENDIX D

ADDITIONAL TABLES: VARIATIONS AMONG FUNDERS

Chapter 6 - Tables

Table D6.1. Evaluation Barriers Perceived as a Big Problem by Funder Type

	Funder Type	
	Government	Foundation
Understanding of projects and program	53%	73%
Understanding the needs of the community	66%	76%
A positive attitude towards evaluation	23%	39%
Ability to communicate evaluation results	19%	36%
Evaluation skills and knowledge	10%	23%
Unweighted n	126	92

Note. Based on funded organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table D6.2. Evaluation Barriers Perceived as a Big Problem by Funder Type

	Funder Type	
	Government	Foundation
Lack of internal capacity (e.g., staff/time)	62%	52%
A lack of money for evaluation	35%	46%
Unclear expectations from funders about what is expected	22%	17%
A lack of skills and knowledge in conducting evaluations	24%	24%
Need to present your activities in a good light	18%	14%
Lack of understanding of value of evaluation	18%	9%
A lack of confidence in your ability to perform evaluation	15%	10%
Difficulty working with evaluation consultants	11%	4%
Unweighted n	126	92

Note. Based on funded organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

Table D6.3. Evaluation Improvements Perceived as a Big Need by Funder Type

	Funder Type	
	Government	Foundation
More Financial Resources	51%	43%
Better access to information about what other organizations are doing	37%	37%
Staff Training about Evaluation	41%	36%
Better Access to Technology (e.g., Computer Software)	24%	25%
Better Access to Resource Tools (manuals, books, etc.)	24%	27%
Greater Consistency from Funders in Use of Evaluation Terms	50%	39%
Better Access to University/College Students to Help with Evaluation	17%	19%
Greater Clarity from Funders in Use of Evaluation Terms	44%	33%
More Advice From Funders on How to Do Evaluation	41%	24%
Funders Asking for Similar Evaluation Information	52%	51%
Better Access to Consultants to do Evaluation	19%	14%
Unweighted n	126	92

Note. Based on funded organizations that conducted evaluation in the past year.

APPENDIX E

VSERP PARTNERS

Voluntary Sector Evaluation Research Project (VSERP) is a joint project of the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy (CCP) and the Centre for Voluntary Sector Research and Development (CVSRD), Carleton University. Dr. Michael Hall and Dr. Susan Phillips serve as co-directors of the project.

CCP is a membership-based organization that works with charities, governments, and corporations to advance the role and interests of the charitable sector for the benefit of Canadian communities.

CVSRD is a partnership of the voluntary sector, the Faculty of Public Affairs and Management at Carleton University and the Centre for Governance at the University of Ottawa. It is working to build a network of researchers and voluntary sector practitioners across Canada who are interested in promoting and undertaking collaborative research and learning about governance, policy, management, and emerging issues in the sector.

Over the last three years, CCP and CVSRD team members, including Katherine Graham, Michael Hall, and Susan Phillips, presented papers related to evaluation and accountability in the voluntary sector at several international conferences in order to foster continued dialogue between voluntary sector organizations and funders about their evaluation needs and resources. CCP and CVSRD also work in close collaboration with the Community Based Research Network of Ottawa (CBRNO) and the Halifax Evaluation Research Network (HERN) in conducting and sharing community-based research, and promoting partnerships among universities, social agencies, and other organizations that have an interest in research and evaluation. Two Carleton faculty (Dr. Phillips and Dr. Whitmore) sit on the CBRNO Steering Committee.

By providing links to the nonprofit sector as well as to the academic community, CCP and CVSRD are committed to advancing the dialogue on evaluation needs and resources of the voluntary sector and funders via research, knowledge sharing, and dissemination.

VSERP National Partners

COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS OF CANADA (CFC) seeks to enhance the quality of life and vitality in Canadian communities by supporting and promoting the fund development, grant making, and leadership of community foundations. With input from community foundations, VSERP, and other philanthropic networks, CFC is undertaking the GrantBenefit initiative. This initiative will allow grant makers to participate in learning circles to explore assessment and evaluation strategies. The GrantBenefit Web site (www.grantbenefit.org) offers a logical framework to guide assessment and evaluation.

PHILANTHROPIC FOUNDATIONS CANADA (PFC)is a membership-based organization representing over 70 private and public foundations across Canada. PFC is participating in the VSERP project to gain knowledge and to exchange experiences and thinking about evaluation with others in the broader community of the voluntary sector. PFC's mandate as a membership-based organization is to promote the development of effective and responsible foundations. The PFC Web site (www.pfc.ca) incorporates many references to evaluation resources.

CCAF-FCVI INC. (formerly the Canadian Comprehensive Auditing Foundation) is a public-private sector partner with VSERP, which seeks to provide exemplary thought leadership and to build both knowledge and capacity for effective governance, meaningful accountability, management, and audit. The results of the CCAF's work related to performance assessment and evaluation are available at the CCAF (www.ccaf-fcvi.com) and VSERP (www.vserp.ca) Web sites.

UNITED WAY OF CANADA - CENTRAIDE CANADA (UWC-CC) is a national, membership-based organization which provides leadership programs and services to its members. UWC-CC provides evaluation support to agencies they fund, and encourages them to develop their own resources. The United Way of Greater Toronto (UWGT) has developed an online Program Effectiveness Organization Development (PEOD) Evaluation Clearinghouse to help agencies locate evaluation

resources that will facilitate the application of outcome measurement within their agencies. Training materials as well as other resources can be downloaded at www.unitedwaytoronto.com/peod/index.html. Participation with VSERP will allow UWC-CC to disseminate the existing practices and resources throughout the UW Movement.

VOLUNTEER CANADA is a national, membership-based organization engaged in the promotion of volunteerism across Canada. Volunteer Canada is developing a more comprehensive approach to evaluation and performance assessment, which includes not only qualitative interviews with community representatives and volunteers, but also development of quantitative indicators. Participation in the VSERP will allow Volunteer Canada to address these needs, and to improve performance assessment as well as other evaluation practices of their members.

MAX BELL FOUNDATION aims to reflect the spirit and intent of its founder to improve Canadian society by encouraging the development of non-governmental initiative and entrepreneurship in public policies and practices with an emphasis on health, education, and communications. The Foundation supports Canadian registered charities with project grants and internship/fellowship grants. By supporting VSERP, the Foundation seeks to improve the capacity of voluntary organizations to effectively assess their work in order to improve their performance and communicate their effectiveness to their funders, stakeholders, and the public.

YMCA CANADA is a federation of charitable associations working in over 250 communities, serving 1.5 million people every year, and involving over 30,000 volunteers and 25,000 donors. Associations in Canada are involved in a number of programs that are designed to build strong kids, strong families, and strong communities. YMCA Canada utilizes a number of evaluation methods to evaluate its role of stimulating and fostering the development of strong member associations and to assess the impact YMCAs and

YWCAs are having in their communities. Through VSERP, the YMCA hopes to find ways to integrate their data, analyze trends, and transform information from a descriptive mode to a prescriptive mode for associations to explore the potential of YMCA longitudinal studies.

VSERP Local Partners

UNITED WAY OF HALIFAX REGION (UWHR) has been an active and respected community organization in the Halifax area for over 75 years. In 1997, UWHR introduced its new approach to measuring community impact with six principles that underlie all the work of the organization: building on assets, capacity building, community impact, collaboration, flexibility, and stewardship. Participation in VSERP allows UWHR to disseminate evaluation tools and resources developed by UWHR and its agencies to the broader community. A detailed description of the UWHR approach to evaluation can be found on the VSERP Web site at www.vserp.ca/research.html.

FAMILY SERVICE CENTRE OF OTTAWA-CARLETON helps individuals and families in distress or at risk to attain greater health and well-being, improve their coping skills, and achieve their potential by providing counselling, education, and advocacy. Family Service Centre of Ottawa-Carleton has conducted a number of research projects assessing how its services benefit citizens. VSERP helps to achieve and use common language by voluntary organizations and funders, and to build and share the same vision and common understanding of evaluation issues.