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Final lessons report on evaluative capability and preconditions for undertaking an evaluation

NOVEMBER 2016

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Our purpose

The purpose of the Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit (Superu) is to increase the use of evidence by people across the social sector so that they can make better decisions – about funding, policies or services – to improve the lives of New Zealanders and New Zealand's communities, families and whānau.

Executive summary

Introduction

This document reports on 'lessons learned' from undertaking evaluations and building evaluation capability in two non-government organisations (NGOs). This project, commissioned and funded by the Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit (Superu), is part of its wider evaluation workstream.

The purpose of this report is to document the lessons learned through undertaking the two evaluations and evaluation capability building (ECB) processes, in order to:[1]

- Inform NGOs about the preconditions and evaluative capability that are needed to undertake an outcome or process evaluation
- Inform funders about how they can assist ECB in the NGO sector.

The lessons presented in this report are those learned from a *combination* of formal evaluation capability building, and through 'learning by doing' as part of a process evaluation in one site and a process and indicative outcome evaluation in a second site. The different types of evaluation, in different social and organisational contexts have provided two natural case studies for reflecting on four specific areas of interest to Superu:

- What helped and hindered the evaluations and ECB
- The preconditions or enablers needed for NGOs to undertake a process or outcome evaluation
- The evaluative capability needed for NGOs to undertake a process or outcome evaluation
- The most pragmatic approach to build evaluation capability within the organisations.

Setting the scene

The evaluation literature most commonly refers to evaluation 'capacity' building, rather than evaluation 'capability' building. As generic terms, capacity and capability are often used interchangeably. Evaluation capability building (ECB) is described in this project as the practice of growing evaluative knowledge and thinking in the organisational context. It is focused on the skills, infrastructure, practices and culture necessary to sustain recognition of the need, value, and use of evaluative thinking, data and evaluation findings in an organisation.

The two organisations that are the focus of the ECB for this project are both mainstream NGOs delivering mentoring programmes as part of their suite of services. Each organisation targets a different population (children and young people in one site, and parents and their family or whānau in the other), and their mentoring approaches are quite different from each other. One NGO is a small organisation of 13 staff delivering services in three locations, and using volunteers to provide the programme being evaluated; the other is a national organisation with the equivalent of 429 full-time staff, and a paid staff member responsible for delivering the programme.

The evaluation in each organisation was built around four visits to each site. The focus of the site visits and evaluation phases were broadly:

1. Assessment of programme and organisational readiness for an outcome evaluation
2. Planning for the evaluation, including the development of key evaluation questions, evaluative criteria, a logic model and discussion of a theory of change (as needed)
3. Data gathering/fieldwork
4. Presentation and analysis of topline findings.

Evaluation capability building with management and staff was an integral and planned part of each of the site visits. The reflections on ECB for this report were drawn from evaluation team reflections on capability lessons learned at each phase of the project and again at the reporting stage, and from the reflections of NGO staff collected in guided group discussions during the last site visits.

What helped and hindered the evaluations and ECB

What helped

NGO organisational approaches to the project

- Both NGOs made a significant investment in time (away from service delivery) and brought staff from a range of levels within their organisation to participate in the evaluations.

- Consistent participation by the same group of staff throughout the project meant there is now a shared understanding of evaluation and outcomes-capability across different levels of the organisation.

- A learning attitude was highly evident, including curiosity, openness and staff's willingness to engage in frank, robust conversations despite potential vulnerabilities, given staff's involvement with the programme being evaluated.

NGO programme factors

- A key strength was the NGOs' in-depth knowledge of the programmes to be evaluated.

- Strong, well-implemented management, operational and service delivery programme processes were in place in both NGOs. This enabled the ECB efforts to focus on those aspects of programme design often less well developed but fundamental to evaluating a programme's effectiveness – logic models, theories of change, data and responsiveness to Māori.

- The willing participation and contribution of programme stakeholders and participants meant the data informing the evaluation was rich and from a range of perspectives.

Funder approach to broader evaluation project

- The nature of this project set up a collaborative, engaged process (which was different from processes where evaluations are 'required' of an organisation). The two successful applicants were involved in negotiating evaluations of programmes they valued, and in selecting the evaluation team.

- The dual focus on evaluation and ECB resulted in a participatory approach to the evaluation. Members of the NGO were actively involved in decision-making and other activities related to planning and carrying out of the evaluations. This sharing of power and control was important to those being 'evaluated'.

Evaluation expertise and resource

- The NGOs reported that the evaluation team's composition was vital for the process. Having evaluators who were experienced in the NGO sector, with the right mix of content, evaluative and cultural knowledge (and connection to the local iwi and Māori communities) meant that NGOs started the evaluation and the ECB process with a foundation of confidence and trust.

- The provision of external resources and facilitation supported the NGO investment of time in the evaluation, resulting in better engagement and 'thinking' by the NGOs. They particularly valued the time spent in foundational evaluation activities such as rich descriptions of the programmes, key evaluation questions, logic models, evaluative criteria and rubrics.

- Both NGOs were clear they could not have undertaken the phase one evaluability assessments without the support of experts to provide an evaluative lens.

Assessment tools and other evaluation tools and processes

- The assessment tools were highly valued. Both NGOs found they enabled them to 'step back' and consider their programme and organisational evaluation capability. The tools enabled a transparent decision-making process regarding the feasibility of an outcome evaluation.

- The NGOs valued the independent, neutral, highly-skilled facilitation, collaborative processes for reaching agreed understanding, the evaluators' ability to listen and draw out the NGOs' expertise, and the range of conceptual models and different ways of thinking brought by the evaluators. The NGOs were clear that using the tools without expert facilitation would not have achieved the same high quality assessment and agreement.

- The combination of participatory workshop processes, NGO engagement, and facilitation by the evaluation team enabled the development of tools that were fit for purpose for the respective evaluations, and immediately useful in other aspects of their work. The process of developing the evaluative rubrics, in particular, was highlighted by both NGOs.

- The NGOs also highly valued the explicit inclusion of responsiveness to Māori within the assessment processes and subsequent evaluations.

What hindered, or will hinder, future evaluation activity by NGOs

NGO capacity (financial and staff resources)

- Neither NGO was able to identify factors that hindered the development of ECB during the now completed project. Both NGOs, however, identified time and resource factors that were challenging which, coupled with the need for funding support and evaluation expertise, would hinder their future evaluation activity.

- The evaluation team is confident that the NGOs are using, and will use, the information and tools that have immediate relevance and applicability to their work. The team is not confident that further recommended actions to become fully ready for an outcome evaluation will be able to be resourced, given competing time and resourcing priorities for NGOs.

Dual focus of conducting evaluation and building evaluation capacity

- While the dual focus was of benefit, it also gave rise to two challenges – one about best use of resources and meeting NGO needs, and the methodological challenge. For the NGO required to undertake a process evaluation, there remains a question as to whether this was the best use of resources, or whether a focus on undertaking programme improvements and ECB (to enable monitoring of outcomes on an ongoing basis and readiness for future outcome evaluations), would have been both a better return on investment and better value to the NGO.

- The methodological challenge was that ECB activities focused on programme improvements (such as logic models, programme theory and outcomes data) were undertaken *at the same time* as the programmes were evaluated. The evaluation team was potentially in the position of evaluating its own efforts when assessing aspects of programme design.

Challenge of Māori responsiveness for mainstream organisations

- The two NGOs (like many other mainstream organisations) are committed to, and proactive in taking steps to be responsive to Māori. For example, they variously have Māori responsiveness strategies, Māori staff working with Māori clients, training in working cross-culturally, and are building relationships with iwi, Whānau Ora providers and/or other Māori organisations. However, both organisations struggled to explicitly articulate issues such as:

  - how Māori values and worldviews are incorporated in the design of their programmes

  - the pathways or processes for the achievement of outcomes for Māori that have been built into the design of their programmes

  - how the evidence that supports their approach will work well with Māori participants.

Inability to 'prove' effectiveness and generalise from small evaluations

- The findings for both evaluations were based on a small sample of programme participants, a small number of stakeholder interviews, and a limited review of the literature. While confidence in the findings was provided by the consistency of feedback across the range of data sources, the extent to which the findings can be generalised, or how much they are due to the specific provider and context, is unknown.

Preconditions needed for NGOs to undertake a process or outcome evaluation

Generally speaking there are few preconditions for undertaking a process evaluation as the focus of a process evaluation is on programme delivery and how it operates in practice, and provides information for potential programme improvement. The two main preconditions are that:

- A planned programme actually exists, meaning that it has been planned as a discrete intervention for a specific purpose, which is separate from, but sits alongside, other practice.
- The programme has been operating for a sufficient length of time that it is possible to document and assess its development and operation.

The preconditions that need to be met for an outcome evaluation are focussed in three areas – programme design, programme data, and organisational context, as follows:

- *Programme design*. This includes, for example, that programme outcomes are clearly specified; measurement tools and processes are in place and used consistently; and the way in which change is intended to occur is clearly articulated, including how the programme responds to Māori.
- *Programme data*. This includes the specification of data needs regarding programme delivery (e.g. client details) and outcomes measurement, the collection and management of client data, and the accessibility of aggregated client data for analysis and reporting.
- *Organisational context*. This means that the organisation is committed to the evaluation, wants and will use the evaluation, can commit the necessary time and resources, and can engage in the evaluation process such as recruiting programme participants. It also means assessing that stakeholders, in particular Māori (within and outside of the organisation), are comfortable with an evaluation occurring.

Evaluative capability needed for NGOs to undertake a process or outcome evaluation

The above preconditions focus mainly on the readiness of the programme to undergo a process or outcome evaluation. The next consideration is *organisational readiness* in terms of evaluative capability necessary to effectively do evaluation, and to use evaluation.

It would be desirable for NGOs to have ready and regular access to evaluative knowledge, thinking and expertise to support programme design and enable assessments of programme effectiveness for enhanced service delivery and return on funder (and taxpayer) investment. This evaluative capability would cover:

- programme design and planning
- programme delivery
- evaluation design and planning
- evaluation implementation
- evaluation analysis, interpretation and reporting.

The reality of the NGO sector (which ranges from very small organisations to a small number of large national organisations) is that they are funded to deliver specific services and there is often little funding available for building the organisational capability and infrastructure (e.g. a client management system) that underpins evaluative capability. For some larger organisations, there may be staff positions dedicated to supporting the organisational infrastructure, with the potential for more in-house evaluative activity, including small evaluations.

This NGO context raises a number of questions. Does having evaluative capability mean that an NGO should be able to undertake their own evaluations internally, or successfully participate in and use an evaluation undertaken by an external evaluator or company? To what extent does an NGO need a solid understanding of what evaluation is and can do?

We suggest that the evaluative capability that can reasonably be expected within NGOs is highly correlated to the size and resources (financial and staff) of the organisation. Small NGOs would be expected to have evaluative capability on a smaller number of dimensions, and larger organisations would be expected to have evaluative capability on these as well as additional dimensions.

We suggest that the minimum focus of evaluative capability for all NGOs is threefold:

- at least one staff member having a baseline understanding of what evaluation is and can do

- to strengthen the programme by addressing the preconditions necessary for an evaluation – programme design, data and organisational capability (as discussed in the previous section)

- to establish an outcomes monitoring system for the programme that will enable the ongoing capture of client changes (knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs, behaviours) from the outset for both organisational reporting and reporting to funders.

We anticipate that for small NGOs, a process or outcome evaluation would occur only for particularly innovative programmes where there is interest in transferability and/or scalability, and these would be funded externally.

The focus for larger NGOs incorporates the evaluative capability for small NGOs, and also includes:

- good skills and active participation in evaluation design, implementation and analysis by key staff

- an easy-to-use data management system that captures robust programme data (including outcomes)

- skills in doing or contracting an evaluation

- understanding and skills to effectively use an external process or outcome evaluation.

A small number of these larger organisations might have the staff capability, and capacity to undertake an evaluation internally, although taking time out from service delivery and funding applications remains challenging for large organisations.

Pragmatic approach to developing evaluative capability

What worked in both NGOs was tailoring capability building to meet their learning needs over the period of the evaluation. However, this was a resource-intensive process to developing evaluative capability which is not sustainable for a large number of organisations.

Important components to building evaluative capability

The project considered what might be more 'pragmatic' or sustainable ways of building evaluative capability. Some important components for consideration in developing a more pragmatic approach include:

• Adopting a tailored and practical approach

• Targeting building people's evaluative capability who can in turn transfer the learning and tools to other programmes and services

• Providing access to evaluation expertise

• Maintaining institutional memory

• Providing tools supported by facilitation

• Extending use of rubrics beyond evaluation

• Explicitly addressing cultural responsiveness

• Enabling learning by doing.

Effective use of limited resources

Consideration was also given to how best to make effective use of limited resources. The evaluation team suggests that any investment model will need to address the issue of the variable baseline in the sector and variable capacity. Equal investment across the sector will not achieve equal readiness. In this project, the same investment of evaluation resource, and capability development has led to different levels of readiness for future evaluations. It is also possible that competitive models of funding distribution may advantage those agencies that are already further along an outcome-ready continuum, often larger NGOs.

To optimise the value of investment in evaluation, we suggest consideration of the following proposals:

1. **Focus on building outcomes monitoring capability first, followed by evaluative capability, for NGOs.** This would provide meaningful support to NGOs in improving their own understanding of programme effectiveness and reporting to their funders.

2. **Match the level of investment to what is needed for an NGO to develop outcomes monitoring and/or evaluative capability.** This suggests determining and distributing funding after the completion of programme evaluability and organisational capability assessments rather than before.

3. **Encourage clustering of similar programmes or NGOs** so that tools developed for one are suitable or adjustable for use in another. A variation on this approach would be to identify lead organisations, and resource them to support similar NGOs in their geographic area.

4. **Provide further evidence briefs** from existing policy developments and research and evaluation projects, such as Superu's *What Works* series, to support the development of evidence-based practice and programmes, and establishing theories of change.

In conclusion

The two case studies on which the findings in this report are developed provide a useful illustration of different organisations and programmes across the NGO sector in New Zealand. Having two such different case studies (with both NGOs agreeing about the value of the project to their programmes and organisations) provides solid support for the tailored and intensive method of building evaluative capability in the NGO sector, provided by this project. However, as this approach is not sustainable going forward, this report has documented what helped and hindered the evaluations and ECB and discussed:

1. The preconditions needed for NGOs to undertake a process or outcome evaluation

2. The evaluative capability needed for NGOs to undertake a process or outcome evaluation

3. Some ideas for building evaluation capability within the NGO sector that are more sustainable than the successful, but resource-intensive approach used in this project.

Two points merit a final comment. Outcomes monitoring is discussed in this paper as a way forward for all NGOs to collect data on client changes as part of business as usual for use at the interface with clients, programme, and organisational level. The downstream value of strengthening organisational practice and providing indicative evidence of the effectiveness of an NGO's service – in the absence of resourcing for evaluations – is potentially significant.

Māori responsiveness is a challenge for mainstream organisations. Cultural, and in particular Māori, responsiveness is a core capability for programmes delivered by NGOs in New Zealand, and for evaluations of them. Further work is needed to better understand what Māori and cultural responsiveness means for the design and delivery of a programme, and the evaluative tools and processes needed to assess responsiveness to Māori and other cultures, in the specific context of the programme and organisation.

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List of tables and diagrams

Note that this list excludes tables and diagrams in the appendices

Project

One of Superu's work areas supports service providers to build their evaluation capacity by providing them with training, tools and resources. As part of this workstream, Superu commissioned Evaluation Works Ltd to undertake two evaluations in partnership with two service providers (Barnardos in Whangarei and Pillars in Christchurch) selected through an open tender process. The project purpose was to increase the providers' knowledge and experience of evaluation, and to provide practical examples of evaluation to the wider social sector. The outputs are a report detailing the process evaluation conducted with Pillars, a report explaining the outcome evaluation undertaken with Barnardos, and a third report putting together the findings and learnings from the two evaluations. All three reports are available online at superu.govt.nz/publication/evaluations

Copyright and use

Introduction

This document reports on 'lessons learned' from undertaking evaluations and building evaluation capability in two non-government organisations (NGOs). This project was commissioned and funded by the Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit (Superu), from the Community Investment NGO Evaluation Fund (the Fund). The Fund was developed to:

- Generate knowledge about the effectiveness of social service programmes delivered by NGOs

- Assist a small number of NGOs to build their capability or evaluation practice within their organisations.

This report relates to the second area of focus for the Fund, specifically 'The advice and expertise component to increase NGOs' capability for evaluation design, monitoring, system design and improving data collection and quality'.[2]

The lessons presented here are those learned from *a combination* of formal evaluation capability building (ECB), and through 'learning by doing' as part of a process evaluation in one site and a process and indicative outcome evaluation in a second site. They also draw on the evaluation team's wider experience across the NGO sector.

The two NGOs that were part of this project are Pillars, a charitable organisation supporting the children and families of prisoners in Christchurch, and Barnardos, a support service for families in the Whangarei area. The project brief was to undertake an outcome evaluation (or alternatively a process evaluation with a focus on preparing the programme for a future outcome evaluation), and at the same time, to build evaluation capability within the organisations. A process evaluation of the Children's Mentoring Programme (CMP) for both children and young people was undertaken at Pillars, and a process and indicative outcome evaluation of the Parent Mentor Programme (PMP) was undertaken at Barnardos.

This Final Lessons report aims to:[3]

- Inform NGOs about the preconditions and evaluative capability that are needed to undertake an impact/process evaluation

- Inform funders about how they can assist the development of evaluation capability in the NGO sector.

The report is structured as follows:

Part 1:   Scene setting regarding building evaluation capability in NGOs

Part 2:   Two ECB case studies

Part 3:   What helped and hindered the evaluations and ECB

Part 4:   Preconditions and evaluative capability needed to undertake an evaluation

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2   Superu (2015). Request for Proposals. Community Investment NGO Evaluation Fund – Conduct Evaluations 2016#1, p.6.
3   Evaluation Works contract with Superu, 12 October 2015, p.5.

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01

Setting the scene

This section describes the context for this Final Lessons report. The project had two requirements:

- To undertake an evaluation in two different sites (ideally an outcome evaluation but if this were not possible a process evaluation) to understand how previously under-investigated and/or innovative programmes achieve outcomes for groups that are of high priority to government
- To support the development of evaluation capability, tailored to the needs of the organisation. The RFP specified a focus on increasing NGOs' capability for evaluation design, monitoring, system design and improving data collection and quality.

This project reports on the lessons learned as part of undertaking the evaluations and the evaluation capability building activity. As well as reflecting on what helped and hindered in the two case studies, this report identifies preconditions and enablers necessary to undertake evaluations of other programmes and reflect on the most pragmatic approach to developing evaluation capability within the organisations.

In this section we describe our two case studies, i.e. the NGOs and the specific programmes evaluated. We also define evaluation capability building (ECB), present our approach to ECB, and discuss the process we used to uncover the learning presented in this report.

1.1_ Two case studies: organisational and programme context

The organisations that are the focus of the evaluations and ECB are both mainstream NGOs delivering mentoring services as part of their suite of services for their target populations. Each organisation targets a different population, and as a result, their mentoring approaches are quite different from each other. The two organisations also vary on a number of other dimensions.

1.1.1_Pillars

Pillars is a small organisation delivering services to support children and families of prisoners. It has offices in two sites, one in Christchurch and one in South Auckland, with a small staff in each (seven and four respectively), and an Activities Centre at Invercargill Prison (with two staff). The evaluation was conducted in Christchurch. The seven Christchurch-based paid staff include the Chief Executive, and two staff undertaking the usual Head Office functions (such as applying for funding and reporting to funders, recruitment and management of staff) and a small team of four delivering services.

The programme evaluated was the Children's Mentoring Programme (CMP) for children of prisoners[4] (aged 6-18). The goal of the CMP is to provide children of prisoners with experiences and relationships that will enhance their development, prevent criminal activities and promote success in education and beyond. Mentors provide individualised time and attention to the children and young people (mentees) in the programme. Mentors are volunteers who are recruited, trained and supported by the Mentoring Coordinator, a paid staff member. The CMP is delivered in conjunction with social (family/whānau) work support for families. The CMP is funded by the Ministry of Social Development to deliver mentoring to 30 children or young people each year.

1.1.2_Barnardos

Barnardos is a large, national NGO of 694 (or 429 FTE) staff, with local offices throughout the country, offering a wide range of services targeted at vulnerable children and their families. The Whangarei office, where the evaluation was undertaken, has a small staff of 12, including part-time staff. Local service provision is supported by staff and resources from the regional and national office. Barnardos have well-developed frameworks for both child assessment, and Māori responsiveness.

The programme evaluated, the In-home Parent Mentor Programme (PMP), is unique to Whangarei. The PMP is a two-week, intensive home-based support service for families and whānau who have children at risk of being notified to Child, Youth and Family (CYF) or who have had previous involvement with CYF. The PMP can be a stand-alone service or part of a cluster of services provided by Barnardos and/or other agencies. It is delivered by a full-time staff member. Barnardos is funded by the Ministry of Social Development to deliver the programme to 22 families and whānau each year in Whangarei.

TABLE

01

Similarities and differences between the two programmes

	Pillars	Barnardos
Programme evaluated		
Target of the service	Children of prisoners at high risk of becoming offenders	Children at risk of being notified to Child Youth and Family (CYF)
Number funded each year	30 children or young people	22 families or whānau
Who delivers programme	Volunteer adult mentors supported by the Mentoring Coordinator	Full-time staff member
Organisational context		
Staff numbers in the office (where the programme is delivered)	7	12
Staff numbers for whole organisation	13	694 (or 429 FTE)
Other programmes offered by office where the programme is delivered	Yes	Yes

4   Children of prisoners are a recognised 'at risk' group with children of prisoners nine times more likely than their peers to become offenders themselves.

1.2_ The evaluations

The project brief specified that the first phase of the project was to assess both the organisation's current evaluative capability, and the programme's readiness for an outcome evaluation, with the type of evaluation conducted for each programme to be agreed after the assessment.

The assessments resulted in different types of evaluations in the two sites. A *process* evaluation, which describes how a programme operates, and how it can be improved, was undertaken of the CMP at Pillars. The focus of a process evaluation is on the theory informing the programme and the infrastructure (policies, processes and systems) which support the implementation process. Its particular value is in assisting stakeholders to understand how a programme outcome is achieved.[5]

A process and indicative *outcome evaluation* of the PMP was undertaken at Barnardos. An outcome evaluation aims to determine the value or quality of a programme (Davidson, 2005). The term 'outcomes' is defined in this project as the changes, results, and impacts that people experience *as a result* of participating in the PMP. The evaluation gathered information on outcomes experienced by the parent(s) or caregiver(s) and child(ren) (i.e. changes in their knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviours), and looked at changes in the immediate and longer term.

1.3_ Evaluation capability building (ECB)

The evaluation literature most commonly refers to evaluation 'capacity' building, rather than evaluation 'capability' building. Superu's recent literature scan on successful NGO evaluation cultures variously found (Bailey, McKegg, Wehipeihana, Moss, 2016, pp.10-14):

- Recent definitions of evaluation capacity building highlight intentionality, the ability to both do and use evaluation, individual and organisational capabilities, and routine and sustainable evaluation practice.

- While there is a range of definitions of evaluative capacity building, scholars agree that it is a "multidimensional and complex process that involves organisational, networking, programmatic and cultural activities" (Suarez-Balcazar et al., 2010, p.308).

- Evaluation capacity building is an activity in and of itself – "separate from actually conducting evaluations" (Labin et al., 2012, p.308).

- While there are a number of different models for understanding evaluation capacity building, which varied according to purpose and context, all agreed that both individual and organisational factors must be addressed when building evaluation capacity.

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5   Process evaluation focuses on how a programme was implemented and operates; identifies the procedures undertaken and the decisions made in developing the programme; and describes how the programme operates, services it delivers and the functions it carries out. By documenting the programme's development and operation, process evaluation assesses reasons for successful or unsuccessful performance and provides information for potential programme improvement or replication". Mathison, S. (2005). *Encyclopaedia of Evaluation*, Sage, p.327.

When discussing the development of evaluation capacity, the Better Evaluation website[6] states that:

> It is important to develop and build on human capital (knowledge and skills), organizational capital (technical infrastructure and processes) and social capital (supportive networks) for effectively managing, undertaking and using evaluations. Evaluation capacity includes developing an evaluation culture of valuing evidence, valuing questioning, and valuing evaluative thinking. (2016)

As generic terms, capacity and capability are often used interchangeably. However, Stacey (2016) argues (in relation to philanthropic support of non-profit organisations) that capacity and capability are two very different things, both of which are critical to non-profit organisations' "impact, results and sustainability". Stacey (2016) and Vincent (2008) differentiate between the two terms as follows:

- Capability is an "aptitude or process that can be developed or improved, i.e. how do we do this, do we have the right skills" (Stacey, 2016)
- Capacity is about the amount or volume, i.e. do we have enough, or need more or less.

They argue that the importance of differentiating between the terms is to enable clarity regarding what is needed and the best use of resources to achieve this. Drawing on Better Evaluation's description above, this suggests being clear on whether the focus needs to be on building knowledge, skills, infrastructure, processes and/or a valuing culture (capability), and/or how much of these things are needed (capacity). This distinction is useful for this paper which reflects on the lessons learned from a focus on building the evaluation 'capability' and identifies the preconditions needed to undertake a process and outcome evaluation. The lessons inevitably stray into the territory of evaluation 'capacity', as described by Stacey and Vincent.

For the purpose of this project, evaluation capability building (ECB) is described as the practice of growing evaluative knowledge and thinking in the organisational context. It is focused on the skills, infrastructure, practices and culture necessary to sustain recognition of the need, value, and use of evaluative thinking, data and evaluation findings in an organisation. The use of the acronym ECB from hereon refers to evaluation 'capability' building.

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6   The website is found at betterevaluation.org/

1.4_ How did the evaluation team approach ECB in the two sites?

ECB efforts are context specific, and designed to support specific organisational goals and development. Our brief for this project was to support the development of evaluative capability in two NGOs to improve their readiness and ability to undertake outcome evaluations. A guiding principle for this project was that any ECB should be realistic, feasible, practically useful and attuned to a small staff focused on delivering services.

The ECB plans and processes undertaken as part of this project addressed capability building by attending to three levels – people, programme and organisation. The possible focus of the evaluation capability building was broad. What occurred in this project included specific skills development for some staff (e.g. purposive sampling, question design, better utilisation of programme data in reporting), strengthening of programme design and organisational knowledge about how a programme works, as well as reviewing the purpose and function of organisational infrastructure (e.g. data management systems and reporting processes). In short, the focus of ECB in these case studies was to improve knowledge of evaluation processes, and to develop skills and the infrastructure suitable for supporting ongoing evaluative activity.

Evaluation capability building for this project was carried out in two ways:

1. as a formal activity in its own right, through the development of ECB plans

2. informally through 'learning by doing', as an integral part of the way the team undertook the evaluations to maximise local participation and transfer of knowledge.

The evaluability and organisational assessments for this project enabled the development of tailored plans for ECB in each of the NGOs. In each site the plans identified capacity building activities to build organisational capability, programme tools, and evaluative knowledge. Much of the ECB occurred informally using the opportunities offered to staff participating in the evaluation process, with some conducted more formally through specific ECB workshops (e.g. the action plans identified at Pillars during the last site visit).

1.5_ Method for identifying the ECB lessons

The method for identifying lessons about ECB has been a two-step process. The first step was to reflect on and review what occurred in each site in terms of what helped and what hindered. The second step was to compare and contrast findings from the two 'cases' with the literature and knowledge about the wider sector, to discuss three specific ECB aspects of interest to Superu:

• Preconditions or enablers needed for NGOs to undertake a process or outcome evaluation

• Evaluative capability needed for NGOs to undertake a process or outcome evaluation

• The most pragmatic approach to develop evaluation capability within the organisations.

To assist us in undertaking this analysis we drew on case study methodology which examines social phenomena ('cases') in their real life situations. This project, with its two different types of evaluations, in two different social and organisational contexts, has provided two natural case studies. The social phenomena here are the evaluations, and the intentional implementation of ECB within the organisations.

The reflections on ECB have been developed as an iterative process. The evaluation team reflected on capability lessons learned at each phase of the project and again at the reporting stage. The reflections of NGO participants were collected in guided group discussions with staff during the last site visits, with the NGOs providing their own reflections, as well as comment on the reflections of the evaluators. Separate interviews were subsequently conducted with the two fieldwork teams by another (non-fieldwork) member of the evaluation team. These interviews were deliberately structured to mine their learnings.

02

Evaluation capability
building (ECB) case studies
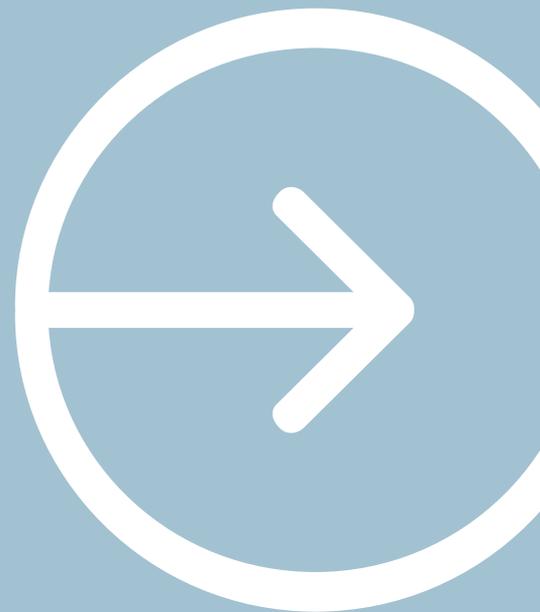
This chapter describes the evaluation capability building process and tools we used in each phase of the two case studies, both 'learning by doing' and as a discrete activity in its own right. We briefly describe the evaluation activities and ECB focus for each of our site visits. We discuss the links between the evaluations and the capability building as the project developed, and how this translated into the development of evaluative knowledge, thinking, skills, infrastructure and/or practice for staff, programmes and/or organisations.

2.1_ Phase one: Assess readiness for an outcome evaluation

Primary evaluative activities for the first phase of the project were the assessment of both programme evaluability and organisational evaluative capability/readiness to undertake an outcome evaluation. These were undertaken in workshops held over two-day visits to each site. Evaluation activities included getting to know one another and the project, understanding the programme(s), and discussing the potential focus of the evaluation. The second day focused on the organisation's evaluation capability.

ECB activities at this stage included formal sessions introducing key evaluation concepts and terms, and 'learning by doing' using the evaluability tool and the outcomes capability assessment and planning tool.

The focus of the programme evaluability assessment was to determine whether the programme was 'ready' for an outcome evaluation. In our framing and analysis we drew on the work of Davies (2013) to develop a tool (see Appendix One) which focuses on three core dimensions of evaluability:

- Programme design. We assessed elements such as whether the *programme* outcomes were explicit and clearly defined, the programme interventions logically linked to the programme outcomes, and whether there is a causal 'chain' connecting the organisation to any realised impacts (the theory of change)

- Availability of information. We assessed whether there was sufficient[7] and accessible information currently available that would enable, when supported by field work data, conclusions to be drawn about the programme

- Organisational context. We assessed whether the organisation was on board, wanted the evaluation and was available for participation in the evaluation.

The evaluability assessment explicitly considered how the needs of Māori were built into programme design, as well as availability of information and the organisational context.

In addition to assessing evaluability of the programmes, we assessed organisational readiness for an outcome evaluation using an adapted version of the Ministry of Social Development's *Outcomes capability assessment and planning tool*. This tool assessed readiness across the following domains: organisational purpose, leadership, identification of outcomes, outcome measures, system capability, staff capability, attribution, doing an evaluation. (A modified checklist and link to the tool are in Appendix Two.)

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7   Sufficiency was considered in terms of both quantity and quality.

In working systematically through these two tools with each NGO, the evaluation team was able to make transparent decisions about each organisation's readiness for an outcome evaluation. This assessment resulted in a process evaluation being conducted at Pillars and an outcome evaluation being conducted at Barnardos in Whangarei.

At this first visit, evaluative and capability-building were linked, as evaluators introduced the tools, and established the evaluative base knowledge necessary for both the evaluation and the development of evaluative thinking.

Capability building at this stage of the project developed evaluative knowledge and understanding about preconditions for an outcome evaluation, specifically:

- A clear understanding of what is required to undertake an outcome evaluation
- Agreement about the type of evaluation (process or outcome) to be conducted
- Shared language for describing the programme to be evaluated
- Demystification of evaluation, in particular agreed understanding of evaluation terms. As one participant said, *'we didn't know what we didn't know, didn't realise how far we had to go.'*
- Identification of current outcomes data and gaps.

2.2_ Phase two: Develop evaluation plan and ECB plan

The second project phase saw the development of the evaluation plans – the process evaluation for Pillars CMP and outcome evaluation for Barnardos PMP – and the evaluation capability plans in each site. Both process and outcome evaluations require detailed understanding of the underpinning theory and logic of the programme, so the second visit to the NGOs focused on these key components both for evaluation and as an ECB activity.

Evaluation activities included development of theories of change; building better/richer descriptions of how the programme worked; how the programme was intended to meet the needs of the client group; and developing measures for client outcomes and service effectiveness.

The two-day workshops for this phase of the project developed a suite of evaluation plan components for each of the evaluations:

- Meaningful key evaluation questions (KEQ) for each programme
- A programme logic and programme theory for each programme
- Developing and agreeing evaluative criteria (rubrics)
- Discussion about the programme approach to Māori responsiveness
- Clear articulation about how the programmes worked
- Identifying programme outcomes.

Evaluative capability building at this phase of the project took place in the form of active engagement in on-site workshops. These were structured learning opportunities linked with the development of evaluation components. In Pillars, for example, the evaluation team used process mapping to work with staff to unpack the ways in which the CMP and the Family Whānau Support programme intersected with each other and worked together to support the mentee (see this map in Appendix Three). A rubric development workshop to identify and agree the evaluative criteria was undertaken in both sites.[8] The intention was that this process would leave NGOs in a position to transfer their learning to other activities within their organisations.

Capability developed during this project phase included:

• An understanding of how to extract a rich enough description of the activities and processes of the programme for the development of robust programme logic with detailed results chains

• Reviewing how programmes work with Māori, and the cultural capacity of staff, so that cultural responsiveness and cultural capacity are an integral part of the programme (and the evaluation)

• Understanding about the identification and use of outcomes and their connection to the services/interventions delivered

• An increased understanding about what it means to be outcomes-focused and evidence-based, rather than focused exclusively (primarily) on the process of caring for clients.

2.3_ Phase three: Conduct evaluations and implement ECB

In this section we briefly describe the methodology for the fieldwork and associated ECB activities. At this point the ECB activities in the two organisations diverged somewhat, in response to the specific needs of each organisation.

Evaluative activities in phase three included a range of fieldwork/data collection activities. At Pillars, data gathering for the process evaluation included key informant interviews and workshops with Pillars management and staff, a focus group with mentors, and semi-structured interviews with staff, mentors and caregivers. At Barnardos, qualitative data gathering included key informant interviews, workshops, a focus group, semi-structured interviews and a hui Māori. The quantitative methods included a desktop review of available outcomes data from 78 caregivers/parents (analysing counts and percentages) and a small questionnaire of the PMP participants who took part in the evaluation. In both localities, NGO staff set up the interviews.

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8   The rubrics developed for each site are attached to the evaluation reports for the respective organisation, also available on the Superu website.

ECB in this phase was mostly embedded in evaluation activities necessary for the fieldwork, such as the development of questionnaires and interview guides and purposive sampling frames, the review and/or development of databases, and the timetabling and management of the fieldwork. These were all opportunities for coaching and staff development. In each site there was particular, in-depth engagement with one staff member who was closely involved with the evaluation in some way.

At Pillars the CMP programme manager undertook interviews with the children and young people who were mentees on behalf of the evaluation team. The ECB activities that she engaged with included review, development and adaptation of existing questionnaires to ensure that the information gathered would be useful for the evaluation. This in turn contributed to her increased understanding of the structuring of data-gathering instruments to both answer the evaluation questions and provide useful evidence for reaching evaluation conclusions.

At Barnardos, the evaluation team had in-depth engagement with a National Office staff to design the outcomes database. The Barnardos staff member set up the outcomes database, entered, coded and cleaned the data for analysis.

In both localities evaluators worked with NGO staff to understand how current client management systems and databases worked and could be used for the current evaluation or adapted for future outcome data capture. This evaluation activity built both staff evaluative capability and organisational outcomes-capability.

Capability developed during this phase included:

- A growing recognition of the importance of data capture (and the differences between outcomes data and other programme data, and data for client management vs. data for reporting)
- An increased knowledge about purposive sampling in the sense of purposeful selection of clients for interview
- Learning how to establish whether programme data can be used to report on outcomes
- Upskilling of a staff member at each site, resulting in their increased knowledge and increased capability to engage with evaluators in the future
- Organisational understanding of the time and resources necessary to undertake an evaluation.

2.4_ Phase four: Analysis and reflections

The evaluation focus for the fourth site visit, as part of a 'no surprises' approach, was presentation of the topline findings that would form the basis of the evaluation report. Evaluation activity prior to the visit included the collation of information from all data sources, evaluation team workshops to discuss the findings, and the analysis of these findings against the evaluative rubrics to generate draft ratings. Final ratings on the rubric were agreed together in the final two-day workshops on each site.

The workshop on the first day of the visit was designed to provide another ECB opportunity for NGO staff to 'learn by doing'. The presentation at each site reiterated the connections between the evaluation questions, the data collected (evidence) and the ratings on the rubrics (evaluative criteria), and then presented a summary of the evidence to staff on the different aspects of the rubric and invited them to make the judgement before presenting the evaluation team's rating. The workshop process allowed active NGO participation in the process of determining ratings.[9]

A large part of the final visit in each site was dedicated to reviewing the ECB plan and completing outstanding aspects. At Pillars in Christchurch this resulted in the development of four action plans associated with strengthening programme design and routinely capturing outcomes data, the completion of which will ready them for an outcome evaluation. These are included in the final evaluation report. At Barnardos, this included further discussion on developing a theory of change for the programme, which was subsequently included in the final evaluation report.

The final part of this visit was a facilitated reflections and discussion session about the lessons learned by the NGOs throughout the project. This had a dual purpose of both being a wrap-up process as the evaluation team concluded their engagement with Pillars and Barnardos, as well as providing data for this lessons learned report.

Capability developed during this phase included:

• Learning how to assess ratings for the mentoring programmes using the rubrics staff helped design

• Increased understanding about what is required to strengthen programme design

• Better understanding of how evaluation findings are generated and interpreted

• Learning the final steps in what is involved in doing an evaluation

• Reflections on how to use evaluative thinking in other parts of their organisation.

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9   In almost all cases NGO staff and the evaluators were in agreement. In a couple of places the staff provided a lower rating for a particular criterion; in one case they provided additional evidence that indicated that the rating should be higher than that given by the evaluation team.

03

What helped and hindered the evaluations and ECB

This section presents information addressing the two questions:

1. What made it easy or difficult to conduct the evaluation of the two programmes?

2. What helped and hindered in the development of ECB throughout the project?

We present reflections from the NGOs and the evaluation team with regard to the above two questions. Given the ECB was most often an integral component of the evaluation, it was not easy, and would have been repetitive to have separated out the reflections on the evaluation and ECB respectively.

The NGOs' reflections are grounded in considerations about undertaking a process or outcome evaluation themselves in the future; the evaluators' reflections in considerations about broader learnings from these evaluations for the wider NGO sector and funders. These reflections have been grouped according to 'what helped' and 'what hindered', as summarised in the following table.

The 'what helped' and 'what hindered' sections are organised slightly differently. The 'what helped' section focuses on NGO and evaluation enablers (combining both the NGOs and evaluation team reflections). The 'what hindered' section focusses on barriers from the different perspectives of the NGOs and the evaluation team.

TABLE

02

Enablers and barriers to carrying out evaluations and/or ECB

What helped	NGO enablers	Evaluation enablers
	Organisational approach • Investment of management and staff resource • External facilitation • Consistent participation • Learning attitude Programme • In-depth knowledge • Good infrastructure • Contribution of programme stakeholders and participants.	Funder approach • Collaborative funding and selection approach • Dual focus on evaluation and ECB fit NGO cultures Evaluation expertise • Composition of team • Knowledge and distance Assessment tools and processes • Fit for purpose • Facilitation • Integration of responsiveness to Māori Evaluation tools and processes • Workshops • Coaching.
What hindered	**NGO perspective**	**Evaluation team perspective**
	• Need for external resource and expertise • Time out from service delivery • Managing evaluation requirements • Organisational outcomes readiness not addressed.	• NGO capacity (financial and staff resources) • Dual focus on evaluation and ECB • Funder outcome reporting requirements not addressed • Challenge of Māori responsiveness for mainstream organisations • Inability of small evaluations to prove effectiveness

3.1_ What helped – NGOs enablers

3.1.1_Organisational approach

Significant investment of management and staff resource

Both NGOs made a considerable investment in time, including time away from service delivery to participate in three two-day site-based workshops, provision of prior and on-site support and information for the two-day fieldwork visit, and responses to requests for information or discussions between site visits.

Both NGOs brought staff from a range of levels within their organisation to participate in the evaluation and ECB process. In Pillars, the CE and Programme Facilitator were involved throughout, with the Mentoring Coordinator fully involved in phases two-four. In Barnardos, the local Service Manager and Parent Mentor, along with the national office Manager Service Development Child and Family Services and an analyst were involved throughout the evaluation. The recently appointed Regional Manager participated in the last two-day analysis and reporting workshop. Barnardos national and regional office staff travelled to participate in the workshops held on the site of the evaluation.

Both organisations also invested staff time in collecting or collating data. In Pillars, the Mentoring Coordinator asked additional questions as part of a six-monthly follow-up questionnaire with mentees. In Barnardos, the national office analyst set-up an Excel database and entered four years of data from the programme, including coding narrative information, with assistance from the programme staff member.

External facilitation supported NGO investment

The provision of external resources meant that busy staff took time out from their service roles to thoroughly engage with the evaluation process, specifically developing rich descriptions, programme logic and theories, identifying the most important evaluation questions and evaluative criteria, and developing rubrics. One participant said that having external facilitation *'makes us think and work a bit harder, rather than rush to the deliverable'* and expressed the view that not investing in doing these foundation tasks well results in lost opportunities. Both NGOs commented that it is difficult to give these activities the time they need to do them well without the external drivers.

Consistent participation

The same group of between two-three staff at Pillars and four staff at Barnardos attended all three workshops. Having the same group of staff, consistently working together throughout the project, meant there is now a shared understanding of evaluation and outcomes-capability across different levels of the organisations. Consistency also meant that time was not spent bringing new people on board as the process continued.

Learning attitude

Curiosity, openness and a willingness to engage was highly evident. All participated with openness, an interest in learning and a willingness to engage in frank, robust conversations. Participants brought a willingness to look in detail at their programmes. NGOs brought their existing programme descriptions and frameworks, and worked from these to develop more detailed descriptions about the programme they were delivering, and why.

Some participants commented that this exposure is a difficult process, especially when a single staff member delivers the programme. There is a strong personal commitment to the work and to making sure that it is effective for the families they serve. While they believe they provide a good service, this process is personally exposing and vulnerable.

Programme

In-depth knowledge

While the evaluation process often involved drawing out and making the underlying thinking explicit, a key strength was the NGOs' in-depth knowledge of the programmes to be evaluated, along with some of the underpinning frameworks and lenses (professional and cultural) through which staff were operating.

Good infrastructure

Strong, well-implemented management, operational and service delivery processes were in place in both NGOs. This enabled the ECB efforts to focus on those aspects of programme design often less well developed in many organisations but fundamental to evaluating a programme's effectiveness –programme and evaluation logics, theories of change, data and responsiveness to Māori (given the Treaty of Waitangi responsibilities and the high numbers in the target populations).

Contribution of programme stakeholders and participants

Whilst the evaluation involved small numbers (due to scope), the willing participation of staff from other agencies in Whangarei, and families and whānau willingness to provide feedback in both sites, meant that data informing the evaluation was rich and from a range of perspectives. This contributed to making the findings more meaningful and robust. The willingness to participate is often a reflection of people (agencies and clients) valuing the programme and/or highly engaged with a particular issue.

3.2_ What helped – Evaluation enablers

3.2.1_Funder approach

Collaborative funding and selection approach

The nature of the Community Investment *NGO Evaluation Fund* set up a collaborative, engaged process from the 'get-go' (as opposed to processes where evaluations are 'required' of an organisation). This attracted organisations keen on an evaluation opportunity.

The two successful applicants to this project were involved in selecting the evaluation team, and selecting and negotiating evaluations of programmes they valued, that could be achieved within the allocated resource. One NGO particularly appreciated their involvement in the selection process in order to select a team that had the best fit for their organisation.

Dual focus on evaluation and ECB fit with NGO cultures

ECB, or the way that it occurred in these two evaluations, resulted in a 'participatory evaluation' approach. Participatory forms of evaluation involve the organisation "actively in decision making and other activities related to the planning and implementation of evaluation studies. The reasons for participant involvement, which vary ..., include ... building the capacity of a group or institution to conduct additional evaluations" (King, in Mathison, 2005, p.291). Participatory evaluation involves sharing power and control between the evaluators and the organisation, which is important to New Zealand NGOs (and often many other organisations) (evaluators' experience).

King describes four distinguishing characteristics of participatory evaluation that were all features of the evaluation and ECB process with the two NGOs (Mathison, 2005):

i. Direct and active involvement in evaluation planning and implementation

ii. Fostering of participant ownership during the evaluation process

iii. Role of the professional evaluator is as a partner, facilitator or coach

iv. Increasing the evaluation capacity of individuals or organisation through 'learning by doing'.

Evaluation expertise

Composition of the evaluation team

The NGOs reported that the evaluation team's constitution was vital for the process. Having evaluators who were experienced in the NGO sector, with the right mix of content, evaluative and cultural knowledge (and connection to the local iwi and Māori communities) meant that NGOs started the evaluation and the ECB process with a foundation of confidence and trust.
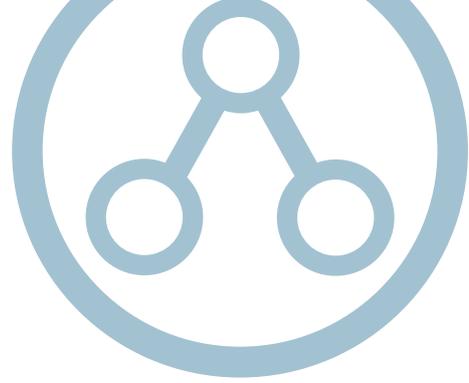
Knowledge and distance

Both NGOs were clear they could not have undertaken the evaluability and organisation assessments without the support of evaluation experts. As they put it themselves, *'we didn't know what we didn't know'*. The evaluation expertise helped them to review the programme, their thinking about the logic of the programme, their theories of change, the evidence base and data through an evaluative lens. Without the experts they would not have the clarity, or the distance to undertake the process themselves.

Assessment tools and processes

Valuable assessment tools

The assessment tools were highly valued. They allowed participants to focus on all programme and organisational aspects required to be ready for an outcome evaluation. Both NGOs found having the tools enabled them to 'step back' and take an overview of their own systems and processes. Using the tools made the process for deciding evaluation type (process or outcome) and draft evaluation questions clear and transparent.

Importance of high-quality, external, neutral facilitation

The NGOs are clear that the using the tools on their own would not have achieved the same high quality assessment and agreement of a way forward. NGOs valued the:

- Independent facilitation that made it safe for all workshop participants (including cultural safety).

- Collaborative process for reaching agreed understanding. The process was not just a question and answer session, but allowed time and space to really reach agreement on the terms of the evaluation and the way forward.

- Evaluators' ability to listen and draw out NGO expertise. One evaluation team member described this as 'respect the kaupapa of whatever work they are doing, and understand context and how hard they work. People are doing a good job within the constraints'.

- Facilitation by highly skilled neutral evaluators. This created a safe space to understand the programme process while protecting the individuals delivering the service. Mapping the process in visual diagrams was a critical part of this process: 'the diagram of PMP processes was what lifted it out of the personal'. 'The charting and diagramming helped focus on the process, not the workers, but grounded in a real story'.

- Range of conceptual models and different ways of thinking, as part of the facilitation of the workshops meant that participants did not get stuck in their own perspectives, or when the discussion was stuck, trying something different enabled the creation of models that captured the complexity of the programmes and their operating environments in a straightforward way.

Integration of responsiveness to Māori

The evaluability assessment explicitly considered how the needs of Māori were built into programme design, availability of information and the organisational context (given Treaty of Waitangi responsibilities and the high numbers in the target populations). The explicit inclusion of the responsiveness to Māori was highly valued by both NGOs. Māori evaluation team members who have whakapapa connection in the project regions ensured this process was well grounded and thorough.

Other evaluation tools and processes

Evaluation tool development via well-designed workshops

The combination of participatory workshop processes, NGO engagement, and facilitation by the evaluation team, enabled the development of tools that were fit for purpose for the respective evaluations, and immediately useful in other aspects of their work. The development of the evaluative rubrics in particular was highly valued by both NGOs. The rubric process enabled the NGOs to see what an excellent service would look like, and to identify areas that may need work. Staff from the NGOs valued the clarity provided by the process maps or diagrams, and the evaluation logic diagrams. Both have used, or plan to use, the evaluation outputs to engage with other services or parts of their own organisation.

The workshop process, which built evaluation capability while carrying out an evaluation, was identified by both the NGOs and the evaluation team as having the following benefits:

- Developing the evaluation plan and tools with NGO staff allowed more time for strengthening relationships and building trust and respect for each other's roles and knowledge.

- Each component of the evaluation was developed with high quality information drawn out from the NGOs in the workshop process. Each workshop built on the foundation of the one before with richer information and more in-depth discussions each time.

- Having participated in the development and application of the tools, rather than just viewing and reviewing them, NGO participants are more able to use the tools and processes in other parts of their organisation.

- Work-shopping the evaluation findings against the rubrics provided the opportunity for checking, discussion and joint agreement about the evaluation conclusions.

Evaluative coaching with key staff

Staff who were engaged with the field work were provided with coaching in specific processes, including developing a sampling frame for interviewee selection, data collection tools and a database for collating and coding case notes and client feedback. A staff member from Barnardos accompanied the evaluators during some of the fieldwork interviews and focus groups. These staff can now use these skills elsewhere within their organisations.

3.3_ What hindered – Reflections from the NGOs

Neither NGO was able to identify factors that hindered the development of ECB during the project. However, they were clear that there were time, resource and expertise factors that were challenging during the evaluations, and would hinder future evaluation activity within their organisations.

Need for external resource and expertise

Participating in the evaluation and ECB process required a significant investment from both NGOs. While they are confident they received value for money from the process (and the outcome evaluation for one NGO, but not the process evaluation for the other NGO – to be discussed shortly), the NGOs are not confident about prioritising the resources and time for evaluations in the future. The NGO that has yet to complete an outcome evaluation was clear that undertaking further evaluations would require ongoing funding and expert support.

Both NGOs said it would be difficult to put aside the time necessary to undertake an evaluation without external resourcing and evaluators driving the process. For example, while the NGOs could have done some reflection before participating in the assessment, they were clear that the structure and facilitation provided by the evaluators, made it more likely that they would invest the necessary time and resource in the process. The independent facilitation also enabled them to put aside the lenses associated with their roles (such as social worker, manager) and take the broader view.

Time out from service delivery

A commitment to all the workshops from staff involved was vital to achieving maximum benefit, but for small NGOs, taking time out from business as usual, in a challenging social service environment is not easy. This will equally apply to the challenge of conducting future evaluations.

Managing evaluation requirements

The complexities of managing evaluation requirements is challenging for small NGOs and small local NGO offices. Both NGOs commented on the difficulties of setting up and managing the fieldwork processes. Re-contacting past clients, organising meetings, taking time out from work to be interviewed as part of the evaluation all placed pressures on already stretched resources of NGOs with a small staffing base.

3.4_ What hindered – Reflections from the evaluation team

NGO capacity (financial and staff resources)

The NGOs committed substantial resources to this project. The evaluation team echoes the NGOs' concerns that it will be difficult to continue this level of resourcing to build on the evaluative capability they have developed.

The team is confident that the NGOs are using, and will use, the information and tools that have immediate relevance and applicability to their work in hand (including building the evaluative capability of other staff in the larger NGO). However, the team is not confident that further recommended actions to become ready for an outcome evaluation, that requires the specific dedication of staff time will be, or will able to be resourced given the competing time and resourcing priorities for NGOs.

The team's reservation about evaluation being an integral part of NGO practice, service delivery and reporting is also based on the observation that while the programmes in both NGOs had some evaluation infrastructure in place (completed or partially completed logic models, a substantive theory of change in the case of one NGO, and data that could be used for outcomes reporting), these were not being actively utilised. These examples highlight the need to refresh and keep institutional knowledge alive in the event of staff turnover. For example, understanding how a programme is intended to work – its underpinning rationale, theory of change and design – is important both (i) when considering programme improvements, and (ii) for designing, collecting and making meaning of data to measure the achievement of programme outcomes and assess its effectiveness in contributing to the intended and desired changes.

Dual focus on evaluation and ECB

The previous section noted the benefits of this project with its dual focus on conducting an evaluation and ECB. This dual focus also gave rise to two challenges – one about best use of resources and meeting NGO needs, and one methodological.

The evaluability assessment undertaken in the first site visit assessed one of the NGOs as 'not ready' for an outcome evaluation. The contracted requirement was therefore to undertake a process evaluation. There remains a question as to whether this was the best use of resources or whether an exclusive focus by the evaluation team on working with the NGO to undertake programme improvements and ECB would have been both a better return on investment and better value to the NGO.[10] At the time, both the NGO and evaluation team were of the view that more benefit would result from devoting the allocated resource to developing an outcomes framework and measures, aligning the framework and measures with an NGO's recording and reporting systems, developing a robust theory of change to address programme contribution, and building staff capability to successfully operate the system. This would have enabled the NGO to monitor outcomes on an ongoing basis, and 'be ready' for outcome evaluations in future.

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10 This matter was discussed with Superu at the time and the decision taken to proceed with a process evaluation as contracted.

The evaluation team did develop a series of pragmatic ECB action plans with the NGO but was unable to work with them to action these at the same time as conducting the evaluation. As NGOs are keen on 'real time change', to quickly action identified improvements, the NGO applied for funding from elsewhere to support this but was only partially successful. The achievement of the action plans will be affected by competing demands on resources.

The other challenge was methodological. Given the ECB activities were focused in part on programme improvements (such as logic models, programme theory and outcomes data) *at the same time* as conducting evaluations of the programmes, the evaluation team was potentially in the position of evaluating its own efforts when assessing aspects of programme design. The team adopted the position of evaluating these aspects of the NGOs prior to the ECB activities, that is, at the time of the evaluability assessment.

Challenge of Māori responsiveness for mainstream organisations

While good conversations were held with both NGOs about 'how their programme is responsive to Māori', the discussions were challenging and sensitive (as it is with many mainstream organisations). The evaluation team's reflections about this include:

- On the one hand, the two NGOs (like many other mainstream organisations) are committed to, and proactive in taking steps to be responsive to Māori, for example, they variously have Māori responsiveness strategies, Māori staff working with Māori clients, cross-cultural training, and are building relationships with iwi, Whānau Ora providers and/or other Māori organisations.

- On the other hand, neither organisation was able to explicitly articulate, for example:
  – how Māori values and worldviews are incorporated in the design of the programmes
  – pathways or processes for the achievement of outcomes for Māori, that have been built into the design of the programme
  – evidence that supports their approach will work well with Māori participants.

Sensitivity occurs when the evaluation team probes, and the evaluation 'finds' that improvements are needed in order for the programme to better respond to Māori. Such discussion and findings often do not 'fit' nor reflect the 'effort' and the 'doing' that committed NGOs are making to be responsive to Māori.

The challenge for mainstream NGOs, and for evaluators, is shifting the discussion to what Māori responsiveness means for the design, delivery, evaluation, and reporting on a programme, in its specific context. The evaluation team continues to find that unpacking these issues can be difficult, challenging and sensitive territory.

To assist this discussion, a Māori member of the evaluation team developed a specific Tikanga Māori evaluation rubric for the outcome evaluation at Barnardos. The rubric identified key criteria and descriptions for the programme to function effectively with Māori participants. Literature from Superu's *What Works* series was drawn on to provide information about parenting programmes found to be effective with whānau. The rubric was trialed in Barnardos Whangarei, and adapted and offered to Pillars for their consideration and future use.

A Māori hui was also held to seek wider feedback for the outcome evaluation. This hui was not as successful as the evaluators hoped. The intent was to have a hui with agency representatives who were familiar with, and had knowledge and experience of how the programme worked. A broader attendance made it difficult to keep the focus on the needs of the evaluation. The evaluation team will develop a clearer invitation process in the future.

Inability to 'prove' effectiveness and generalise from small evaluations

The findings for both evaluations were based on a small sample of programme participants, a small number of stakeholder interviews, and a limited review of the literature. While confidence in the findings was provided by the consistency of feedback across the range of data sources, the extent to which the findings can be generalised, or how much they are due to the specific provider and context, is unknown.

The outcome evaluation was also not able to definitively address whether the ultimate target of the programmes (and of the NGO) – the children – were benefited by the programme. Both evaluations sought information from staff and parents regarding changes for children, and the process evaluation included the staff member gathering further information from children as part of a normal reflection process. Addressing the ethical and methodological issues to include children directly in the evaluation was beyond scope.

04

Preconditions and evaluative capability needed to undertake an evaluation

This section discusses three specific ECB aspects of interest to Superu:

1. The preconditions or enablers needed for NGOs to undertake a process or outcome evaluation
2. The evaluative capability needed for NGOs to undertake a process or outcome evaluation
3. The most pragmatic approach to develop evaluation capability within the organisations.

The findings in relation to the preconditions and the evaluative capability needed to undertake an evaluation (at 1 and 2 above) are primarily relevant to NGOs; the findings identified in relation to developing evaluation capability are primarily for funders.

In this section we also discuss the concept of 'outcomes monitoring' as an important initiative that NGOs can usefully adopt to track key outcomes over time (for improving service delivery and planning, along with reporting to funders), which is the same data that would be needed in any future outcome evaluation.

Throughout this section, we draw on our learnings about what helped and hindered in our two case studies (see previous section). We compare and contrast these experiences, as well as drawing on the literature scan on successful NGO evaluation cultures, undertaken for Superu (Bailey et al., 2016). The findings are located within the government-funded NGO context.

We begin by defining a process and outcome evaluation, and outcomes monitoring, to provide context for the following discussion.

4.1 Process evaluation

The purpose of a process evaluation is to describe how a programme operates, and how it can be improved. Its focus is on the theory informing the programme and the infrastructure (policies, processes and systems) that support the implementation process. Its particular value is in assisting stakeholders to understand how a programme outcome is achieved.

A process evaluation is a useful step for 'getting ready' for an outcome evaluation as it enables a review of how the programme is functioning in practice (e.g. whether it is addressing what it was intended to address, whether its goals have changed), and identifies what needs to be done to improve or strengthen the programme. The clarity about a programme afforded through a process evaluation, means that claims about how the programme contributes to client changes are easier to assess in any subsequent outcome evaluation.

4.2_ Outcome evaluation

The purpose of an outcome evaluation is to determine the overall value or quality of a programme. This means first determining what changes have occurred, and second, being able to show that the programme contributed to these changes. The term 'outcomes' is defined in this project as the changes, results, and impacts that people experience *as a result* of participating in a programme. The outcomes may be immediate or longer term. The sorts of questions an outcome evaluation might address include:

- How worthwhile are our outcomes?

- How do we know they are *our* outcomes (i.e. as a result of the programme)?

- Where and for whom do our services work best, why and under what conditions?

- Where are results weaker? Why?

- How sustainable are the impacts?

4.3_ Outcomes monitoring (ongoing outcomes measurement)[11]

While used in a range of ways, we use the term 'monitoring' to describe the ongoing measurement, in this case, of outcomes and use of this data.[12] We define 'outcomes monitoring' as the regular collection of data on client changes (knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs, behaviours) against a set of previously identified programme or service outcomes, as part of business as usual. This enables and is used by an organisation to track client changes at the individual, programme and/or service level, to assess the extent to which clients are or are not making changes, and to disaggregate data (for example, by programme, worker or location) on an ongoing basis. It is anticipated that this data would comprise the core dataset in any future outcome evaluation.

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11 Outcomes monitoring is consistent with results-based reporting in that intended outcomes are identified up-front and processes for measuring the achievement of these outcomes put in place. Ideally the driver for outcomes monitoring is for the organisation to capture what it needs to know to demonstrate effectiveness of the programme and organisation. Information for reporting to funders should be able to be accessed from an organisation's outcomes monitoring data. There are many tools available to assist in developing an outcomes monitoring approach (including Results-Based Accountability, Outcomes Star, Youth Outcomes Model and Measures, PCOMS). The capability required to undertake outcomes monitoring is described in the Outcomes Capability Assessment and Planning Tool developed by MSD and available online.

12 Monitoring is generally described as a regular, systematic activity to observe and check the progress of quality of a programme or service over time. It often takes place shortly after a programme or service has begun, and throughout the course of the programme or service (or at designated points).

While providing important, indicative information for the organisation, initial client changes will not be able to be attributed to any specific programme or service. Once an outcome evaluation has been undertaken however, or a robust, evidence-based theory of change that addresses programme contribution has been established and accepted, the changes will be able to be claimed as 'outcomes' of the programme or service.

4.3.1_The preconditions needed for NGOs to undertake a process or outcome evaluation

The starting point for any evaluation is 'knowing what you need to know'. The first step is both deceptively simple and challenging at the same time, which is the NGO having clarity about specifically *what* they want to find out from an evaluation and, in particular, the question(s) that they want to answer. There are a range of allied subsidiary questions to support the clarification process which include: Is it possible to answer this question/find this out?

The second step is to have clarity about the purpose for finding out the information and *how the evaluation will be used.* This will determine what type of evaluation you will need to undertake. For example, if the NGO wishes to understand how a programme is being implemented then a process evaluation may be required; if the NGO wishes to determine the effectiveness or success of a programme then an outcome evaluation is what is required.

The third step is assessing *whether it is possible to undertake this type of evaluation* for the programme in this organisation. The following discussion addresses this third step, specifically the preconditions for undertaking a process or outcome evaluation.

Process evaluation preconditions

Generally speaking there are few preconditions for undertaking a process evaluation as the focus of a process evaluation is on programme delivery and how it operates in practice, and provides information for potential programme improvement. The two main preconditions are that:

- A planned programme actually exists, meaning that it has been planned as a discrete intervention for a specific purpose, separate from but alongside other practice. It is more than a loose coalition of activities, generally aimed at the same goal, and there is a shared language for describing the programme
- The programme has been operating for a sufficient length of time that it is possible to document and assess its development and operation.

Outcome evaluation preconditions

Assessing readiness for an outcome evaluation has been a key part of this project. The project found that in order to undertake an outcome evaluation the programme itself needs to be sufficiently robust and 'ready' to support an outcome evaluation.
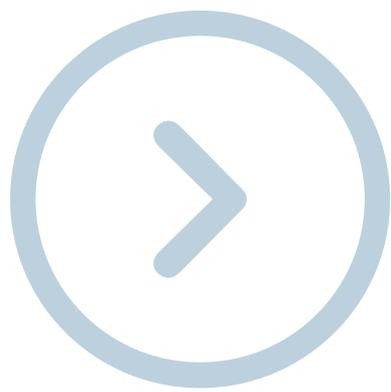
The particular preconditions that need to be met for a programme to undergo an outcome evaluation (as described in Part 2 and attached in Appendix One) are:

- *Design*. This includes that programme outcomes are clearly specified, that measurement tools and processes are in place and used consistently, and that the way in which change is intended to occur is clearly articulated, including how the programme responds to Māori.

- *Data*. This includes the specification of data needs regarding programme delivery (e.g. client details) and outcomes measurement, the collection and management of client data, and the accessibility of aggregated client data for analysis and reporting. Understanding about what data collection and use involves is often low, and its importance underestimated. The table below outlines some of the key steps involved in successful collection and use of programme data.

TABLE

03

Key steps in collecting and using programme data[13]

Task	Steps
Collection of data	1. Identification and definition of data to be collected 2. Development of guidelines and a data collection protocol 3. Set up data capture fields in IT system (taking account of reporting requirements) 4. Individual/frontline staff buy-in 5. Frontline staff gathers information from client at identified times 6. Recording/inputting data into IT system.
Use of data	1. Technical skills to extract data from IT system and/or engagement with IT system owner 2. Identification of information needed in aggregate form for various purposes e.g. case management, reporting to Board or funders 3. Decision making regarding which recipients receive what types of reports and how frequently (e.g. Board, funders) 4. Running reports based on data needed 5. Analysis of data 6. Staff discussion/interpretation of data 7. Translating data into a format for reporting to funders.

- *Organisational context*. This means that the organisation is committed to the evaluation, wants and will use the evaluation, can commit the necessary time and resources, and can engage in the evaluation process such as recruiting programme participants. It also means assessing that stakeholders, in particular Māori (within and outside of the organisation) are comfortable with an evaluation occurring.

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13   This table has been modified from the original source (Platform Trust, 2015, p.12).

4.3.2_The evaluative capability needed for NGOs to undertake a process or outcome evaluation

The focus of the previous section was the *readiness of the programme* to undertake a process or outcome evaluation. In this section, we focus on *organisational readiness in terms of evaluative capability* (including individual capability) necessary to effectively do evaluation, and to *use* evaluation.

Our intention here is not to list the generic range of skills, methodologies and tools that are required to undertake an evaluation – books are written on this subject! Rather we discuss the evaluative capability – evaluative knowledge, skills, thinking, infrastructure and practices – that NGOs need and might be reasonably expected to have in-house.

In terms of need, it would be desirable for organisations to have ready and regular access to evaluative knowledge, thinking and expertise to support programme design and enable assessments of programme effectiveness for enhanced service delivery and return on funder (and taxpayer) investment. This evaluative capability would cover:

- programme design and planning – as programme outcomes are agreed, and systems and processes for data capture are identified

- programme delivery – to ensure fidelity of programme implementation and reliability and consistency of data capture

- evaluation design and planning – as key evaluation questions are identified, criteria are developed, and methodology agreed

- evaluation implementation – as survey and fieldwork instruments are developed, and documents, desktop data and informant views are captured

- evaluation analysis, interpretation and reporting.

However this discussion is located in the reality of the NGO sector, where there are very small organisations (represented by Pillars in this project with 13 paid staff) and much larger national organisations (represented by Barnardos in this project with 429 FTEs nationally[14]). NGOs are funded to deliver specific services, and for small organisations there is often little funding available for building the organisational capability and infrastructure (e.g. a client management system) that underpins evaluative capability.[15] For some larger organisations, there may be staff positions dedicated to supporting the organisational infrastructure, with the potential for more evaluative activity in-house, including small evaluations.

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14 Even though the programme evaluated at Barnardos was a small one, the evaluation was supported by both regional and national offices as well as the local office, so able to draw on evaluative capability and resources from the wider organisation.

15 MSD's Capability Investment Resource Fund and Capability Mentor Programme were developed in recognition that in the current funding climate, NGOs were struggling to keep up with the needs of their target populations, and taking time out to develop organisational infrastructure and capability was simply not possible without significant additional funding.

This NGO context raises a number of questions. Does having evaluative capability mean that an NGO should be able to undertake their own evaluations internally? Does it mean *knowing* the organisational and programmatic preconditions, to enable successful participation in and use of a robust evaluation undertaken by an external evaluator or company? To what extent does an NGO need a solid understanding of what evaluation is and what it can do?

Within this context we suggest that the evaluative capability that can reasonably be expected within NGOs is highly correlated to the size and resources (financial and staff) of the organisation. On the continuum below small NGOs at one end would be expected to have evaluative capability on a smaller number of dimensions, and at the other end, larger organisations would be expected to have evaluative capability on these, as well as additional dimensions. The level of evaluative capability should also progressively strengthen as the NGO becomes larger. (We propose this continuum could usefully be developed into a rubric).

Diagram 1_Continuum of evaluative capability by organisation size and resources

Small organisations – focus on a baseline understanding of evaluation, strengthening the programme, and outcomes monitoring

Large organisations – additional focus on good evaluative knowledge and skills of key staff, good data (including outcomes), skills for doing or contracting, and using a process or outcome evaluation
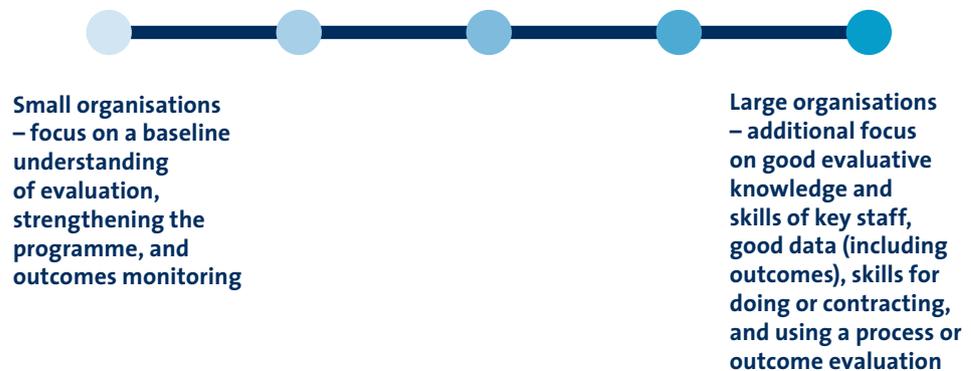
We suggest that the minimum focus of evaluative capability for all NGOs (represented by small organisations on the continuum) is threefold:

• at least one staff member having a baseline understanding of what evaluation is and can do

• to strengthen the programme by addressing the preconditions necessary for an evaluation – design, data and organisational capability (as discussed in the previous section)

• to establish an outcomes monitoring system for the programme that will enable the ongoing capture of client changes (knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs, behaviours) from the outset for both organisational reporting and reporting to funders.

We anticipate that for small NGOs, a process or outcome evaluation would occur only for particularly innovative programmes where there is interest in transferability and/or scalability, and these would be funded externally.

The focus for NGOs at the other end of the continuum incorporates the evaluative capability for small NGOs and also includes:

- good skills and active participation in evaluation design, implementation and analysis by key staff

- an easy-to-use data management system that captures robust programme data (including outcomes)

- skills in doing or contracting an evaluation

- understanding and skills to effectively use an external process or outcome evaluation.

A small number of the larger organisations might have the staff capability, and capacity to undertake an evaluation internally, although taking time out from service delivery and funding applications remains challenging for large organisations.[16]

Aspects of evaluative capability

In the discussion above we have distinguished between the evaluative capability needed for outcomes monitoring (for small NGOs) and for a process or outcome evaluation. We found that using the core components from MSD's *Outcomes Capability Planning and Assessment Tool* provided a useful framework for thinking about the areas in which capability needs to be developed for each of outcomes monitoring, a process evaluation and an outcome evaluation, and the levels to which this capability might be required.

The core components of the MSD framework, along with brief descriptions are listed in the table following.[17] Column 4 describes the evaluative capability required for outcomes monitoring, column 5 for a process evaluation and column 6 for an outcome evaluation.

The table illustrates that all evaluative activities require all evaluative capability aspects to a greater or lesser extent. The difference lies in the amount needed and focus.

- Outcomes monitoring involves undertaking *regular, ongoing collection, analysis and reporting* of data on the changes being experienced by clients

- A process evaluation *describes* how a programme operates, including how a programme outcome or client changes are achieved and measured

- An outcome evaluation *determines* what changes have occurred, shows that the programme contributed to these changes, and assesses the overall value or quality of a programme.

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16   Both organisations noted that their ability to participate in evaluations in the future will be dependent on resource availability

17   The table is a further adaptation by Evaluation Works Ltd for the purpose of this project, of the MSD Outcomes Capability Assessment and Planning Tool, referred to previously. Evaluation Works first modified the Tool and the associated Checklist in assessing organisational readiness for an outcome evaluation. This version of the checklist is attached in Appendix Two.

TABLE 04

Areas of evaluative capability by type of evaluative activity

	Capability area	Outcomes monitoring	Process evaluation	Outcome evaluation
1	Clarity of organisational purpose	Clarity of organisational purpose	Clarity of, and links between, organisational and programme purpose	Clarity of, and links between, organisational and evaluation purpose
2	Leadership	Leadership required to guide and support the organisation to identify and measure outcomes	Leadership of, and locus of decision-making responsibilities associated with evaluation are clearly defined and in place	Leadership regarding demonstrating effectiveness via outcomes monitoring and evaluation
3	Identification of outcomes (programme and/or organisational)	Identification of key programme and/or organisational outcomes to be measured and monitored, including any key results required as part of contracts with funders	Programme and/or organisational outcomes are described as part of a programme logic	Identification of outcomes data needed for evaluation (may be same as outcomes monitoring data)
4	Measurement tool(s) for assessing client outcomes	Tools needed to measure the achievement of outcomes are in place (e.g. scales, rubrics and/or metrics)	Outcome measurement tool(s) measure what they claim to measure (construct validity)	Outcome measures are valid and useful for the evaluation and supplemented as needed in order to determine programme effectiveness
5	Attribution of client changes	General description of how client change is intended to occur	Clear articulation of programme theory of change, including evidence base for testing in future outcome evaluation	Testing of theory of change and use of other evaluative processes for assessing programme contribution to client changes
6	System capability regarding data capture	A coherent system for capturing programme data, including outcomes data is in place and operational. It includes tools or templates to support programme data capture	System is capturing data as intended	System enables capture of useable and useful client data and programme outcomes over time
7	Staff capability	Staff understanding and engagement with outcomes monitoring, including data capture, analysis and reporting	Staff understanding about, and engagement with, what evaluation is and can do, what they do and do not know and where they need help. Knowledge, skills and experience in process or outcome evaluation design and methodology, evaluative tools, fieldwork, analysis and reporting	Staff understanding about, and engagement with, what evaluation is and can do, what they do and do not know and where they need help. Knowledge, skills and experience in process or outcome evaluation design and methodology, evaluative tools, fieldwork, analysis and reporting
8	Analysis and reporting	Staff and organisational use of data to meaningfully analyse and report on programme outcomes	Staff use evaluation findings to identify how well the programme is functioning, and changes needed to strengthen it	Strong analytical skills to interpret and make meaning, sift evidence and draw evaluative conclusions

4.3.3_The most pragmatic approach to developing evaluative capability

All participants in this project agreed that the evaluative capability of the staff, programme and organisation in both NGOS had been significantly improved. Both NGOs stated they now have a clearer understanding of what it takes to conduct an outcome evaluation. When retrospectively rating their readiness for an evaluation on a scale of one to five they rated themselves at two-three before the project, and four-five at the end. Both NGOs were able to articulate the effect that improved evaluative thinking was having on other parts of their agency and programme.

This is a positive result. What worked in both sites was tailoring capability building to meet the learning needs of each NGO over the period of the evaluation. This was a resource-intensive process to developing evaluative capability that is not sustainable.

This section of the report considers approaches and activities for developing evaluative capability that are more 'pragmatic'. For the purpose of this report we define 'pragmatic' as aiming to achieve similarly good results for a larger group of NGOs for less resource. We are not in a position to identify 'the most pragmatic' approach but identify what have emerged as important components, and put forward a number of proposals for making effective use of limited resources.

Important components to building evaluative capability

Adopt a tailored and practical approach

As might be anticipated, it worked well to link evaluative capability learning to undertaking an evaluation of a real programme, in real time, that is meaningful to staff. This suggests ECB efforts are best if context-specific, designed to support particular organisational goals and development needs, and realistic, feasible, immediately and practically useful.

Target people's evaluative capability

In recent literature, ECB efforts are focussed on building the capability of both individuals and organisations (Bailey et al, 2016). The targeted skills development undertaken with key staff in both NGOs worked well (individual capability building), along with the provision of various evaluation tools that could be adapted and applied to other organisational programmes and building linkages between programme and organisational frameworks and data sets (organisational capability building). The staff involved in the two sites variously included national, regional and service managers, who are in positions to, and have stated they will transfer the learning and tools to other programmes and services in their organisations. This transfer process began in one of the organisations, during the evaluation.
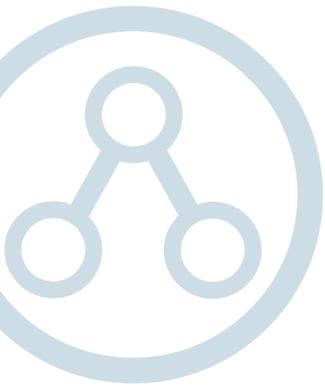
Provide access to evaluation expertise

NGOs are rightly focused on service delivery and often do not have the time, money nor capability to think cogently about the 'success' of their programmes. It became clear in the course of this project however, that NGOs need to have someone with evaluative thinking in the organisation or readily accessible to the organisation. Consideration needs to be given to how this might be funded, for example, a full-time evaluator being shared across a cluster (by location of service delivery type) of organisations, or ensuring that any funding received that requires an evaluation has additional funding tagged to that activity.

Maintain institutional memory – document, document, document

In this project the evaluators were able to observe first-hand how evaluative expertise had been used in designing a very good, theoretically robust programme (with built-in tools to evaluate client change and programme effectiveness), and how the understanding about the rationale for the design, data collection and analysis had been lost over time with staff turnover. Maintaining institutional memory about the rationale underpinning the programme is a critical competency for organisations with regular turnover. Documenting how the programme is intended to work and its underpinning rationale is a key strategy for mitigating the loss of key programme personnel, as is focusing on the transfer of this knowledge in the induction of new staff.

Provide tools supported by facilitation

We have discussed at some length throughout this report the value and use of the *evaluability assessment tool*[18] – which assesses the readiness of the programme for an evaluation and where strengthening needs to occur – and the organisational readiness tool which reviews the purpose and function of organisational infrastructure such as data management systems and reporting processes.[19] Other 'tools' developed during this project included process mapping to understand and illustrate how the programme worked, rubrics to guide data collection for the evaluation and enable transparent judgments, logic models, outcomes models, a theory building description, post-programme follow-up questions/questionnaire, sampling strategies, the rationale behind setting up an outcomes database, and capability building action plans for one organisation.

There was clear agreement that tools developed for this project would easily support the further development of evaluative capability in the two NGOs, and would highly likely be similarly useful with other NGOs. In Barnardos for example, a Dropbox with all key tools from the evaluation has been set up for use by staff. In this way the organisation is optimising their 'return on investment' from the evaluation.

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18 The evaluability assessment tool is found here: msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/community-investment-strategy/outcomes-capability-planning-and-assessment-tool.html

19 The assessment tools described were developed for facilitated use by an evaluator. If they were to be considered useful for application by NGOs themselves, they need further work to become NGO-friendly and usable. Such development would need to consider how to make differentiations between programme evaluation readiness and organisational evaluative capability clear, rationalise overlaps, and consider how they fit with and differ from the *Evaluation Capacity Assessment (ECA) Tool* developed as part of the NGO Evaluation Fund. The ECA tool focuses on three areas to develop an evaluation culture within an organisation – organisational context, the organisation itself and the people who make up an NGO.

While the tools were considered valuable by staff in this project, they also said that the tools alone were not enough and that maximum benefit is achieved by the provision of expert facilitation. Our experience (both in this project and in working with other NGOs) supports this view. There is proliferation of evaluative tools available online but no process for selecting between them. Evaluation expertise is required to provide guidance in this process and tailor any generic tools to the needs of the organisation in order for them to be of optimum use.

The use of rubrics can extend beyond the evaluation

The evaluative rubrics, and associated logic model, for each site rated special mention by NGO participants, being considered valuable for the evaluation itself but as importantly, for providing a guide about how the programme could be further developed and used in the event of scaling up or rolling out the programme to other sites. The NGOs also identified these two tools as providing very useful guides for the evaluation of other services, and for the rubrics in particular, ongoing use as performance and practice quality measures with the programme being evaluated, and across a range of services. The rubrics themselves are excellent examples what can be achieved by combining organisational expertise and evaluative expertise, as they are tailored specifically to the needs of the programme. While this makes them less directly available for a wider group of NGOs, understanding the key components of what constitutes evaluative criteria in the form of a rubric – what matters, levels of effectiveness, and descriptors at different levels – might be helpful. Given that the two NGOs were going to be using the rubrics either on an ongoing basis with the programme being evaluated, and/or with other programmes, this indicates some of the descriptors of a quality service are generic and transferable.

Explicitly address cultural responsiveness

As discussed in Part 2, many mainstream NGOs are actively committed to supporting Māori clients and also struggle with how to incorporate Māori values, worldviews and determinants of success in the design of the programmes. The focus for mainstream NGOs, and for evaluators, is to shift the discussion to what Māori responsiveness means for the design, delivery, evaluation, and reporting on a programme, in its specific context.

To assist this discussion, a Tikanga Māori rubric was developed in collaboration with one organisation (attached at Appendix Four), and later adapted for consideration by the other organisation (based on their programme and evaluation documentation). As noted earlier and below, ideally the latter would have also happened in collaboration with the organisation as this significantly strengthens the effectiveness of and use of such developments.

Learning by doing

It is our view that the value of the rubrics (and the other tools) was enhanced as a result of staff involvement in the development of them, and then again in the application of the rubrics to the evaluation findings.

Proposals for making effective use of limited resources

For NGOs to optimise the value of ECB opportunities that may be available across the sector, we first need to recognise that equal investment across the sector will not achieve equal readiness. In this project, the same investment of evaluation resource and capability development has led to different levels of readiness for future evaluations. Any investment model will need to address the issue of the variable baseline in the sector and variable capacity. It is possible that competitive models of funding distribution may advantage those agencies that are already further along an outcome-ready continuum. Often these will be larger NGOs with the resources to develop higher quality funding applications. Focusing funding only on these NGOs will miss the opportunity to capture the learning from small innovative projects.

There are a number of pathways for addressing these issues in future projects. To insure that small NGOs are not disadvantaged, and to optimise the value of investment in evaluation, we suggest consideration of the following proposals:

1. **Focus on building outcomes monitoring capability first, followed by evaluative capability, for NGOs.** This would provide meaningful support to NGOs in improving their own understanding of programme effectiveness and reporting to their funders. These organisations would be better able to engage with funders and provide high-quality outcomes information. Collecting consistent outcomes data over time would create a dataset suitable for supporting outcome (and other types of) evaluation in the future. Organisations with robust outcomes monitoring would necessarily have some elements of the capability required to undertake a process or outcome evaluation (refer Table 4).

2. **Match the level of investment to what is needed for an NGO to develop outcomes monitoring and/or evaluative capability.** This suggests determining and distributing funding after the completion of programme evaluability and organisational capability assessments rather than before.

3. **Encourage clustering of like programmes or NGOs** so that tools developed for one are suitable or adjustable for use in another. Most NGOs in New Zealand do not have sufficient funding for ongoing evaluative support. Encouraging sharing of resources and shared learning hubs could increase the reach of the fund. A variation on this approach would be to identify lead organisations, and resource them to support similar NGOs in their area.

4. **Make evaluative information and findings accessible and widely available** to support the development of evidence-based practice and programmes and establishing theories of change. The government sector invests a large amount of resource in developing evidence briefs to support policy development, and undertaking research and evaluation projects. Many of these involve informal or small-scale literature reviews that are not publicly available. Translating policy, research and evaluation findings into practice evidence (such as Superu's *What Works* series) would support NGOs, including those that no longer have a library resource.

05

In conclusion

The two case studies on which the findings in this report are developed provide useful illustration of the range of organisations and programmes across the NGO sector in New Zealand. The two NGOs have different histories, contexts and resources. Both deliver mentoring programmes, but the target population, focus, method of delivery, staffing and other resources are different. Both have well developed operational processes. In one case the historic data collected for the project was able to be transformed into a database suitable for evaluation, in the other, the nature of the information and available resources meant this was not possible.

Having two such different case studies, but with both NGOs agreeing about the value of the project to their programmes and organisations, provides solid support for this tailored and intensive method of building evaluative capability in the NGO sector. However as this approach is not sustainable going forward, this report has documented on what helped and hindered the evaluations and ECB and discussed:

1. The preconditions needed for NGOs to undertake a pr;ocess or outcome evaluation

2. The evaluative capability needed for NGOs to undertake a process or outcome evaluation

3. Some ideas for developing evaluation capability within the NGO sector that are more sustainable than the successful, but resource-intensive approach used in this project.

Two points merit a final comment. Outcomes monitoring is discussed in this paper as a way forward for all NGOs to collect data on client changes (knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs, behaviours) as part of business as usual for use at the interface with clients, programme, and organisational level. While initial identification and set-up of programme outcomes may be time-consuming, the downstream value of strengthening organisational practice and providing indicative evidence of the effectiveness of an NGO's service – in the absence of resourcing for evaluations – is potentially significant.

Māori responsiveness is a challenge for mainstream organisations. Cultural, and in particular Māori responsiveness is a core capability for programmes delivered by NGOs in New Zealand, and for evaluations of them. Further work is needed to better understand what Māori and cultural responsiveness means for the design and delivery of a programme, and the evaluative tools and processes needed to assess responsiveness to Māori and other cultures, in the specific context of the programme and organisation.

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Appendix One:

Evaluability assessment instrument
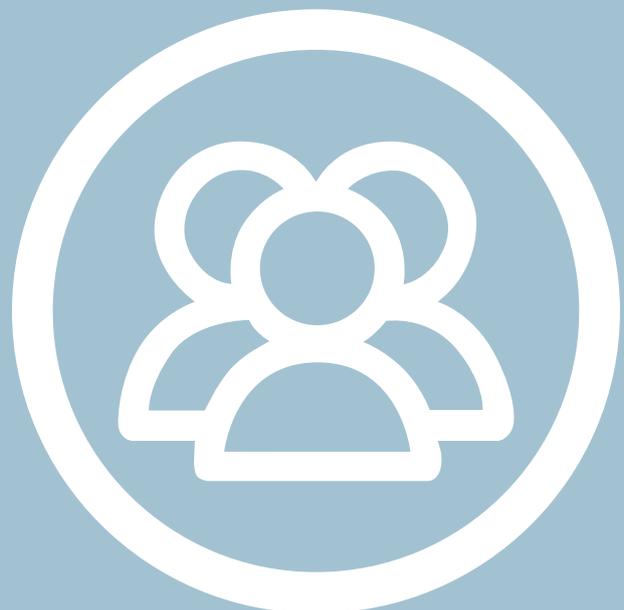
Evaluation Works Ltd developed the following tool, specifically for this project, and tested it at Pillars Christchurch and Barnardos Whangarei. The tool is informed by the report *Planning Evaluability Assessments: A Synthesis of the Literature with Recommendations*[20], the *Better Evaluation* website and our experience.

The first page of the tool was used as a handout to help 'frame' the discussion with the NGOs about the readiness of their programme for an outcome evaluation. It identifies:

- the three areas that were specifically explored in assessing the evaluability of the programme – design, data, and organisational readiness
- the range of possible results from this assessment. The dark green circle indicates that the programme meets the criteria for an outcome evaluation; the light green circle that the design, data and the organisation's evaluative capability need strengthening but that some indicative outcomes may be realised; and the orange circle indicates that a process evaluation is appropriate while work is undertaken to improve the programme design and data, and organisational evaluative capability, in preparation for an outcome evaluation in the future.

The three pages that follow provide a checklist of more specific questions in relation to design, data and organisational readiness. The evaluators used these questions as prompts in their discussions with staff, and used these responses, along with reading of relevant organisational documentation, and learning about data capture and management processes, to populate the tool for each organisation. The answers to the questions were recorded on a scale of zero to four by the site evaluators and the pattern of answers used to suggest which of the three outcome options (the circles) were indicated. (It was intended that the results be tallied and multiplied by a weighting of importance, but decisions about weighting had not been made by the time of the site visits, and may be developed in the future.)

It is important to note that this tool, with the exception of the first page, was used as a guide by the evaluators and not something for the NGOs per se. It was used in two ways:

a. To inform the interview/discussion guides for the first visit with the NGOs

b. To record the fieldwork evaluation teams' assessment.

20 Davies, R. (2013). *Planning Evaluability Assessments: A Synthesis of the Literature with Recommendations*, Working Paper 40, Department for International Development, Cambridge, UK.

Is your programme ready for an outcome evaluation?

Programme design:
Is there a clear description about the purpose of the programme and its intended outcomes, including outcomes for Māori? Is there a description about how the programme is intended to work? Is this actually happening?

+

Availability of information:
Are there robust outcomes measures and/or data that can be used to assess whether the intended outcomes are occurring?

+

Organisational context:
Is the organisation and other interested parties, including Māori, on board, available to take part, want and will use the evaluation? Are the programme participants happy to take part?

=

Yes
Mostly
Somewhat or not really

YES = OUTCOME EVALUATION

The programme design is clear, what is happening is well documented, outcomes have been identified and a sound outcomes data collection system is in place and used by all staff. The data and information being collected is robust, and the organisation is ready to go!

MOSTLY = PROCESS EVALUATION AND INDICATIVE FINDINGS FROM AN OUTCOME EVALUATION

The programme design and what is happening is clear and mostly documented. The intended outcomes have been identified and reasonable data is being collected that can contribute to analysing and reporting on outcomes. The focus is on getting the programme ready for a full outcome evaluation, including strengthening the theory and causal linkages to enable attribution, and further development of the data collection system.

SOMEWHAT or NOT REALLY = PROCESS EVALUATION AND GETTING READY FOR AN OUTCOME EVALUATION

The programme would benefit from describing *how* it is intended to work and whether this is happening. That is, clarifying its purpose, its theory, how it was designed and operates (a process evaluation). It would also benefit from identifying its intended outcomes (and ways of measuring these), causal linkages, and development of data systems for measuring programme outcomes (getting ready for an outcome evaluation).

Programme design

Key questions: Are the programme outcomes explicit and clearly defined? Do the programme interventions logically link to the programme outcomes? Is there a causal 'chain' connecting the organisation to any realised impacts (the theory of change)? Are there particular outcomes for Māori (and any other significant groups) and if so, pathways for their achievement built into the programme design?

Guiding questions for the <u>evaluators</u> to explore and answer	No (or very little) = 0	Partly = 1	About halfway = 2	Mostly = 3	Yes = 4	Weight
Outcomes and pathways						
Clarity						
Are the programme outcomes explicit and clearly defined?						
Is the intended target group clearly defined?						
Are there different outcomes for Māori (and any other significant groups)?						
Do the programme interventions (activities) logically link to the programme outcomes?						
Have pathways/processes for the achievement of the identified outcomes for Māori been built into the programme design?						
Credibility						
Is there evidence or theory (research, etc.) that the programme will benefit the target group? Is the design of the programme theory based, e.g. social learning theory, attachment theory?						
Is the approach for working with Māori based on consultation with Māori stakeholders and/or informed by appropriate forms of evidence?						
Agreement						
Is there agreement about what the purpose of the programme is, what the cause or driver of the issue being addressed is, what the programme is trying to achieve, how it works, and for whom?						
Context						
Has the role and/or potential impact of other individuals or other factors outside of the programme (positive or negative) been identified?						

Guiding questions for the evaluators to explore and answer		No (or very little) = 0	Partly = 1	About halfway = 2	Mostly = 3	Yes = 4	Weight
Plausibility	Is there a problem definition or an understanding of the issue that the programme is addressing, the drivers of the problem or issue, and how the programme will address these?						
	Is there a causal 'chain' connecting the organisation to any realised client outcomes (the theory of change)?						
Focus	Is it clear which bit(s) of the causal chain are most critical to the success of the programme?						
Complexity	Is it a programme, service of an intervention? Are there expected to be multiple interactions between different parts of the programme (complicating attribution)?						
Testing	Is there an alternative hypothesis (counter-factuals) for testing attribution? Is the 'dose' clear? Issues of programme fidelity? Is there proven (evidenced) best practice?						
Outcome indicators or measures							
Testing	Are there indicators or measures of the intended (and other) outcomes?						
Validity	Do the indicators measure what is expected to happen?						
Reliability	Will use or assessment by different people result in the same measure?						

Availability of information

Key questions: Is there sufficient and accessible information (sufficiency of both quantity and quality) that, supported by fieldwork during the evaluation, will enable conclusions about the *effectiveness* of the programme? Is data able to be explored by ethnicity (specifically Māori) and gender?

Guiding questions for the evaluators *Not everything important can be measured, and not everything that can be measured is important*	No (or very little) = 0	Partly = 1	About halfway = 2	Mostly = 3	Yes = 4
Information					
Are there documents describing the programme, its purpose, what it is trying to achieve, how it works and for whom?					
Is information on the evidence and theory base for the programme available?					
Are the reports from any previous evaluation and/or research studies available?					
Data					
Is there data for the programme participants?					
Is there data on those that made enquiries, received programme info, enrolled (i.e. determining who does and does not engage)					
Are there sufficient numbers of participants to undertake an outcome evaluation?					
Is raw data available for the programme participants?					
Are summary statistics available for the programme participants?					
Is the data complete?					
Is the process for collecting data clear?					
Is the data reliable?					
Is the data able to be disaggregated by ethnicity, in particular Māori?					
Is the data able to be disaggregated by gender?					

Guiding questions for the evaluators *Not everything important can be measured, and not everything that can be measured is important*	No (or very little) = 0	Partly = 1	About halfway = 2	Mostly = 3	Yes = 4
Using data to report on outcomes					
Can the data currently collected be used to inform the outcome indicators or measures?					
Is the relationship between the data and the way it can be used to inform the outcome indicators or measures logical and clear?					
Comparison (including within the programme, i.e. who does it work for?)					
Are there baseline measures?					
Is there time series data? For how long (how long after the programme are participants followed)?					
Is there data on a control group?					
Is comparable national or regional data available?					
Are there 'gold standard' programmes (programmes found to be effective) that could be used as a comparator?					

Organisational context

Key questions: Is the organisation on board, wanting and willing to use the evaluation, available timing-wise, and can make contact with programme participants? Are Māori stakeholders (within and outside of the organisation) comfortable with an evaluation occurring?

Guiding questions for the evaluators *Would like to revisit these, as they are generic to evaluation per se. Are there any outcome evaluation specific questions that should be here (instead)?*	No (or very little) = 0	Partly = 1	About halfway = 2	Mostly = 3	Yes = 4
Receptiveness					
Is the Board keen on evaluating the programme?					
Is the management keen on evaluating the programme?					
Is the staff keen on evaluating the programme?					
Are Māori stakeholders happy for an evaluation to be occurring?					
Use					
Have the primary users of the evaluation findings been identified?					
Is there a commitment to using the evaluation findings?					
Is there clarity about how the evaluation findings will be used?					
Do the proposed approach, likely methodology and methods have credibility within the organisation?					
Is there tolerance for negative findings?					
Are there opportunities for evaluation process use?					
Availability					
Is the Board available to participate in the evaluation?					
Is the management available to participate in the evaluation?					
Is the staff available to participate in the evaluation?					
Will the evaluators be able to have contact with the programme participants?					
Will the evaluators be able to have contact with other programme stakeholders?					

Guiding questions for the evaluators *Would like to revisit these, as they are generic to evaluation per se. Are there any outcome evaluation specific questions that should be here (instead)?*	No (or very little) = 0	Partly = 1	About halfway = 2	Mostly = 3	Yes = 4
Ethics and safety					
Are there particular ethical, safety or sensitivity concerns for either the evaluators or programme participants?					
Can the safety or sensitivity concerns be adequately addressed so no harm is caused?					
Risks					
Are there any risks in doing the evaluation (e.g. risk of losing funding, impacting on NGO's relationship with programme participants (e.g. trust), workload for staff)?					
Are the risks able to be managed?					

Appendix Two:

Checklist used in this evaluation for assessing organisational readiness and capability to undertake an outcome evaluation

The checklist that follows was used as a basis for discussion with Pillars staff in assessing the organisation's readiness and evaluative capability to undertake an outcome evaluation. The checklist is based on a tool developed by Rae Torrie in her work for the Ministry of Social Development (called the Outcomes Capability Assessment and Planning Tool) and both products are owned by them. The tool and the checklist can be accessed here: msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/work-programmes/community-investment-strategy/outcomes-capability-planning-and-assessment-tool.html. Evaluation Works was granted permission to trial these products for this project. The prompt questions in the Checklist (below) have been slightly changed to reflect the needs of this project, and a second checklist on 'doing an evaluation' has been added.

Checklist: Organisational readiness and capability to undertake an outcome evaluation

1. **Clear direction/ clarity of organisational purpose**	**What does your organisation exist to do in your community? What business is your organisation in?**	• What is your mission/goals? • What and who is your community? • Who are your clients? • What are the reasons that people might use your services? • What sort of changes might people who come here expect to make? • Are service outcomes attractive to Māori? Do service outcomes uphold Mana Maori? Do service outcomes add to Mana Motuhake of whānau?
2. **Leadership**	**How does your leadership support the organisation to deliver and evaluate its outcomes?**	• How does the Board support a results/outcomes-driven organisation? • How does management provide the climate for, and support, staff to grow and develop capability in outcome evaluation? • Who are the individual champions driving results-based services supported by outcome evaluation? • Who understands and envisions opportunities for outcome evaluation to further add value to the organisation?

3. **Identification of clear outcomes (organisational and programmatic)**	**What sort of change for clients are your services aiming to achieve?**
	
	What outcomes need to be measured for specific programmes and/or for funders?
		• How are the desired outcomes for clients – at an organisational and/or programme-level articulated?
		• What outcomes are meaningful in terms of the organisation's strategic direction?
		  – Which outcomes do your services directly influence?
		  – Which outcomes does you organisation contribute to more distantly/indirectly?
		• What outcomes does the organisation need to report on, including as part of funders' contracts?

4. Measuring outcomes (both organisational and programmatic)	**How do we know we're making a difference?** **How do we capture programme data to report on outcomes at organisational or programmatic level?**	• What are the critical outcomes that you should be measuring? • What information/evidence will tell you that you are making a difference? • Are you using an outcomes model/framework to measure and report on outcomes? • How does programme data feed into our organisational outcome measures?
5. Attribution of client changes	**What is your organisational approach/theory of change?** **How is change expected to occur?**	• How do you understand the way you work will assist the client to change – at organisational and/or programmatic level? • How are the underpinning organisational approach and staff interventions intended to lead to change (enabling provider claims of contribution to any client changes)? • Does your theory of change link to evidenced-based theories or is it particular to your organisation?
6. System capability regarding outcomes data capture	**Is there a robust system in place for gathering, extracting and reporting on data for an outcome evaluation?**	• Are appropriate fields for data gathering established in the ICT/CMS system? • Are processes in place for capturing evidence in a consistent and ongoing way? • Are processes for capturing data a core part of business-as-usual? • Does the IT/CMS system allow for the easy extraction of data? • How do staff members access the information they need?
7. Staff capability	**Are staff committed to engaging in an outcome evaluation, and equipped to do so e.g. design, data-gathering, analysis and reporting?**	• Do staff understand how an outcome evaluation can support their practice at the individual and organisational level? • Are staff engaged and committed to an outcome evaluation? • Have staff had training in some core components of evaluation? • Is evaluative thinking an embedded part of their work? • Are there staff with the necessary capability to analyse, interrogate and contextualise the data to make meaning of it?

Checklist: Doing an outcome evaluation

|		
1. Design	Is the evaluation design fit for purpose and robust?	• Has a literature review been used to assist with evaluation design? • Have key evaluation questions (as distinct from research questions) been developed? • Have evaluative criteria been developed? • What information/evidence will be required to determine whether the evaluative criteria are met? • What approaches and methods will be used to gather data? • Who are the stakeholders who need to be involved?
2. Data gathering	Can the data that is gathered address the evaluation questions and provide useful information?	• Have instruments been designed to gather the necessary data? • Have staff been trained in gathering data? • Have all interviews/focus groups etc been completed? • How is the evidence that is gathered managed?
3. Analysis	Can the data be used to demonstrate the difference the organisation is/is not making for people using their services?	• What systems and processes are in place to ensure robust analysis and interpretation of the information that is provided? • How will you know that any client changes are about your service and not about other factors?
4. Reporting	Can the findings be reported in a way that is useful and powerful for stakeholders – clients, management and board, funders?	• Who are the audiences for reporting and what are the reporting requirements on the organisation? • Is the information presented in a way that the key messages can be easily accessed and used?

Appendix Three

Process map outlining how the CMP and the Family/Whānau programmes work together

Mentoring process map – Pillars

Child/YP referred	Assessment by FWSP	Assessment by FWSP	Matching of mentor & child/YP	Pillars oversight

Child/YP referred

- Agency, caregiver or YP calls Pillars
- Referrer completes form on website
- Referral information picked up by Mentor Coordinator
- Mentor coordinator calls caregiver to assess baseline eligibility for mentoring of all children and YP in the family
  - Not eligible
  - Eligible

Assessment by FWSP

- FW worker sets up meeting with caregiver by phone
- Programme Facilitator and FW worker visit caregiver to build engagement and provide consent for full assessment
  - Consent
  - No consent
- FW worker returns and completes FW assessment with caregiver, assessing needs of all family members
- Options for Pillars involvement including mentoring made to family
- Caregiver asks child or YP if they would like to receive mentoring
  - Yes
  - No

Assessment by FWSP

- FW worker and caregiver complete application for mentoring
- Application referred to Mentor Coordinator along with handover process from FW worker
- Mentor Coordinator calls caregiver to arrange time to meet child/YP
- Mentor Coordinator meets with child/YP and together complete 'pre match mentee' questionnaire
- Child/YP placed on waiting list until mentor match is found
- Check in every 1 or 2 months by Mentor Coordinator

FW worker likely to still be working with family and may work directly with child/YP if there are parental issues, eg. truanting

Check in every 1 or 2 months by FW worker if family engaged on FWSP waiting list

Parallel process of recruiting and training mentors

Matching of mentor & child/YP

- Mentor Coordinator identifies a possible mentor match for the child/YP
- Mentor Coordinator identifies a possible mentor match for the child/YP
- The Mentor Coordinator and mentor go to the child/YP's home and meet with the mentee and caregiver to:
  - Explain the programme
  - Establish frequency of meeting
  - Sign 4-way agreement including consent to share information
- After agreement is signed, mentor and mentee arrange first meeting time

Mentoring relationship takes place over a 12 month period – the mentee has contact with the mentor every week or fortnight

Pillars oversight

- After a month, the Mentor Coordinator checks with the mentee to see how the mentoring is going
- The mentor submits monthly logs and receives monthly supervision from the Mentor Coordinator
- Information for mentee case management is provided by the FWSP worker, the Mentor Coordinator, the mentor, the caregiver and the school
- The Mentor Coordinator observes mentors and mentees together at events she arranges every 2 months
- The Mentor Coordinator undertakes a six month mentee evaluation
- The Mentor Coordinator undertakes a closure interview with the mentee

Appendix Four

An example of a Tikanga Māori rubric for evaluating a mainstream programme

Rubric – Tikanga Māori

Core concept	This rubric is about the Tikanga Māori aspects of the programme being delivered: KEQ 1d: How well does *In-home Parent Mentor Programme* work for incorporating Tikanga Māori?
What matters	• **Rangatiratanga** – whānau are determining the change/the way. Children are actively involved in programme activities. Whānau are standing strong. Whānau are being supported to make the necessary changes they determine
	• **Kawa and Tikanga** – kawa (protocols) and Tikanga (rituals) are affirmed and developed alongside the children and whānau to support a well-structured home life
	• **Awhi Mai/Awhi Atu** – children and whānau are supported (awhi) to grow and nurture one another in a supportive home environment where tasks are shared amongst all and work is done collectively to ensure the smooth running of the household
	• **Moemoeā/Ka Taea/Kia Āhei** – the programme supports the children and whānau see new possibilities. Children and whānau are motivated and inspired by the programme to make positive changes

What matters	Descriptors
Very good (working very well) Must meet *all* criteria	• **Rangatiratanga** – whānau are clearly determining the change/the way. Children are 100% actively involved in programme activities. Whānau have made many changes and are able to sustain them and seek further support when needed • **Kawa and Tikanga** – each whānau has kawa (protocols) and Tikanga (rituals) developed alongside the children and whānau to support a well-structured home life • **Awhi Mai/Awhi Atu** – children and whānau are clearly supported (awhi) to grow and nurture one another in a supportive home environment where tasks are shared amongst all and work is done collectively to ensure the smooth running of the household • **Moemoeā/Ka Taea/Kia Āhei** – the programme supports all whānau members to see new possibilities. There is a high level of enthusiasm for making and maintaining the changes experienced in the programme
Good (working well) Must meet all criteria for good (and additional criteria under OK/needs work)	• **Rangatiratanga** – whānau are clearly determining the change/the way. Most of the whānau members are actively involved in programme activities. Whānau have made some changes and know where to get support • **Kawa and Tikanga** – most whānau have kawa (protocols) and Tikanga (rituals) developed alongside the children and whānau to support a well-structured home life • **Awhi Mai/Awhi Atu** – children and whānau are clearly supported (awhi) to grow and nurture one another in a supportive home environment where tasks are shared amongst the majority of whānau members and work is done by most to ensure the smooth running of the household • **Moemoeā/Ka Taea/Kia Āhei** – the programme supports all whānau members to see new possibilities. There is some level of enthusiasm for making and maintaining the changes experienced in the programme
OK/needs work Must meet all criteria	• **Rangatiratanga** – whānau are involved in some way in deciding what changes happen. Some whānau members are involved in programme activities. Whānau have made some changes • **Kawa and Tikanga** – some whānau have kawa and Tikanga, however the home life needs further structure • **Awhi Mai/Awhi Atu** – children and whānau are clearly supported (awhi) to grow and nurture one another in a supportive home environment, however tasks are not shared and there are tensions around keeping the household running smoothly • **Moemoeā/Ka Taea/Kia Āhei** – the programme supports all whānau members to see new possibilities. However, there is no enthusiasm for making and maintaining the changes experienced in the programme
Not OK (is not working well)	Any of the criteria for *OK/needs work* requirements is not met. • **Tikanga Māori** – there is no evidence of any Tikanga Māori approaches being encouraged or implemented

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