The webinar **Measuring the Impact of Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) Change Interventions** aired on **September 27, 2022.** It was the third webinar in the PSE webinar series. The webinar discussed evaluation practices for PSE work and described helpful resources and templates that could be adapted to save coalitions time and effort.

This document summarizes key takeaways and resources from the webinar, which can be viewed at the following link: https://youtu.be/5zhurGtydmI

The *American Cancer Society* **Comprehensive Cancer Control (ACS CCC)** team hosted the webinar. The ACS CCC team seeks to build the capacity of grant recipients in the *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* **National Comprehensive Cancer Control Program** to implement policy, systems, and environmental change approaches and evidence-based promising practices in cancer prevention, screening, diagnostic follow-up, and survivorship.

Presenter

Annette Gardner, PhD, MPH
Associate Professor (retired), University of California, San Francisco
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Measuring the Impact of PSE Interventions

Annette Gardner, PhD, MPH, Associate Professor (retired), University of California, San Francisco; Principal, AL Gardner Consulting

The goals of the webinar were to

- Provide an evaluation reality check, including why nonprofits evaluate and what they evaluate
- Describe some universally applicable concepts, designs, and methods
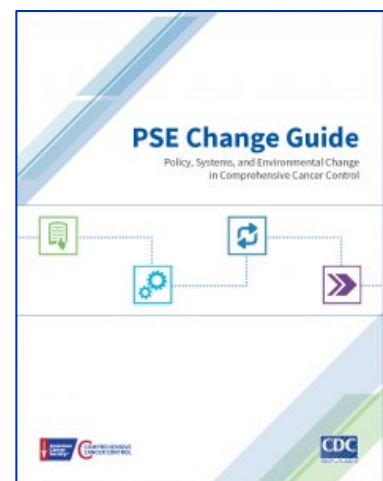- Share a public health evaluation case study that similarly targets policy change

This webinar discussed the evaluation step in PSE Change Process described in the updated PSE Change Guide.[1]

[1] *In this webinar, 'advocacy' is sometimes used as an overarching term that includes policy change initiatives.*
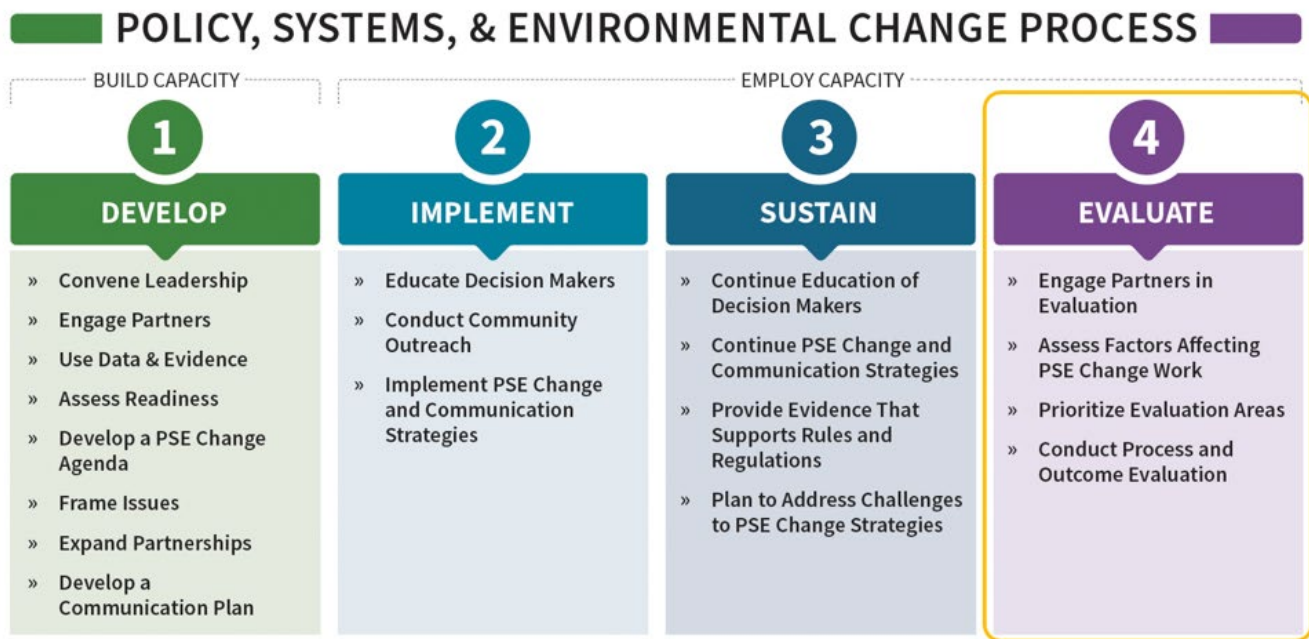
The PSE Change Guide

The *PSE Change Guide* was created by a partnership between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the *American Cancer Society (ACS).* It was designed to be a practical tool for cancer coalition staff and partners to use for implementing PSE changes.

The *PSE Change Guide* defines a change framework consisting of four phases: Develop, Implement, Sustain, and Evaluate. The material in this webinar relates to Step 4 Evaluation in the *PSE Change Guide* Change Process model shown below.

The PSE Guide Change Process

Evaluation is a critical component throughout the PSE change process. The process of PSE change is not linear; instead, it involves a cyclical process that moves back and forth among the four steps of the PSE change process.

POLICY, SYSTEMS, & ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE PROCESS

BUILD CAPACITY

1 DEVELOP

» Convene Leadership
» Engage Partners
» Use Data & Evidence
» Assess Readiness
» Develop a PSE Change Agenda
» Frame Issues
» Expand Partnerships
» Develop a Communication Plan

EMPLOY CAPACITY

2 IMPLEMENT

» Educate Decision Makers
» Conduct Community Outreach
» Implement PSE Change and Communication Strategies

3 SUSTAIN

» Continue Education of Decision Makers
» Continue PSE Change and Communication Strategies
» Provide Evidence That Supports Rules and Regulations
» Plan to Address Challenges to PSE Change Strategies

4 EVALUATE

» Engage Partners in Evaluation
» Assess Factors Affecting PSE Change Work
» Prioritize Evaluation Areas
» Conduct Process and Outcome Evaluation

The Nonprofit Evaluation Landscape

The webinar began by summarizing some data on why nonprofits evaluate and the policy change strategies they use. For many evaluators and funders, policy change strategies, tactics, and impacts determine the design of the evaluation process.

The *University of California at San Francisco*, *Strengthening Democracy*, and the *Alliance for Justice/Bolder Advocacy* conducted a study (2019-2022) and surveyed 5,600 U.S. nonprofits about their evaluation capacity. 175 nonprofits responded to survey questions that were focused on organizational advocacy strategies and tactics and evaluation gaps and strengths.

The top strategies used by survey respondents were coalition work, public awareness campaigns, and policymaker education. Nonprofits used an average of 10 strategies or tactics and bundled them or used them sequentially.

In the past few years, nonprofits shifted their policy change work to virtual platforms (67%) because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, 78% of nonprofits said they adopted a focus on racial equity. Evaluation strategies must also shift and be flexible because policy change work is not static.

Nonprofits evaluate their work for diverse reasons and audiences, but most often, they evaluate for organizational learning (95%) and not only because evaluation is a funder requirement.
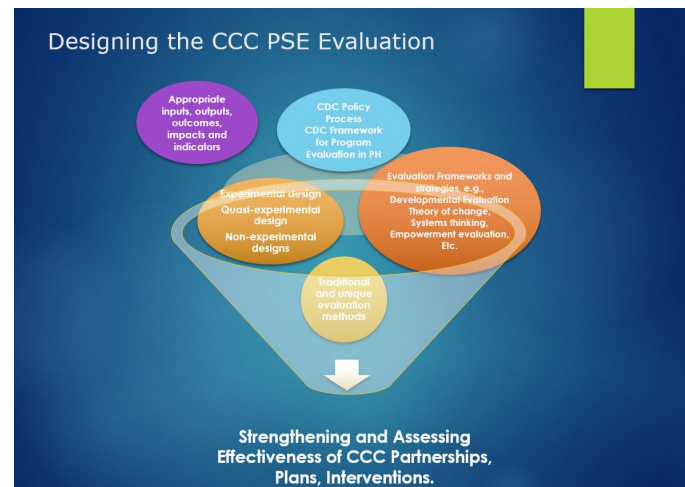
Other reasons they evaluate include planning future strategies (88%), communicating with funders (67%), seeking out new partners (53%), and sharing information with policymakers and other decision-makers (52%). Evaluators need to be sensitive to the different reasons why organizations evaluate and how they can support organizational evaluation activities.

Evaluation Concepts, Designs, and Methods

The webinar discussed universal evaluation concepts, designs, and methods. The following information is based on a 2014 Aspen/UCSF survey of evaluators and six evaluation case studies.

The key components of evaluation design, when adapted for PSE changes, are these:

- **The Evaluation Context.** Identify appropriate inputs, outputs, outcomes, impacts, and indicators that are tailored to PSE work.

- **Evaluation Frameworks**. The *CDC Policy Process* and the *CDC Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health* are important evaluation resources. Other evaluation frameworks can also be useful, and some are more applicable to PSE evaluation than others. Applicable frameworks include systems thinking, theory of change, developmental evaluation, and empowerment evaluation.

- **Evaluation Methods.** Consider experimental, quasi-experimental, and non-experimental design approaches to evaluation. Note that in PSE change work, it may be very difficult to define a control group for an experimental design (control + experimental groups). Additionally, consider using traditional evaluation methods such as surveys, focus groups, opinion polling, contribution analysis, and champion tracking.

- **Team Roles**. Consider team roles and responsibilities early in the evaluation process. Evaluators often wear multiple hats and must address various overlapping information needs. It is a good evaluation practice to identify roles in the partnership development stage and when building an evaluation culture.

Evaluation Models and Frameworks

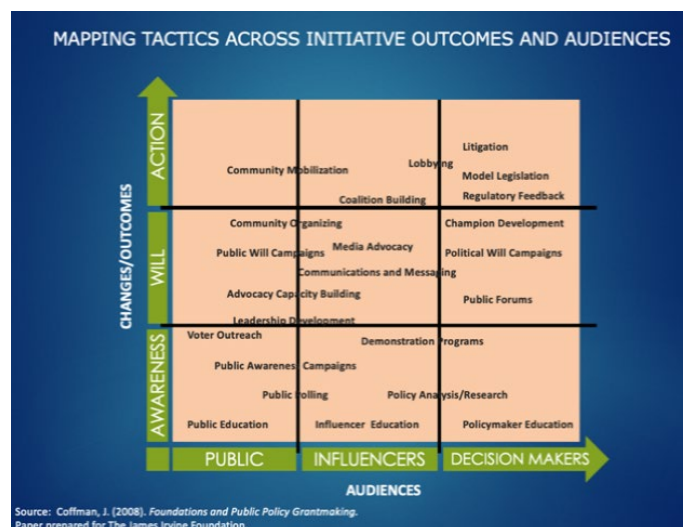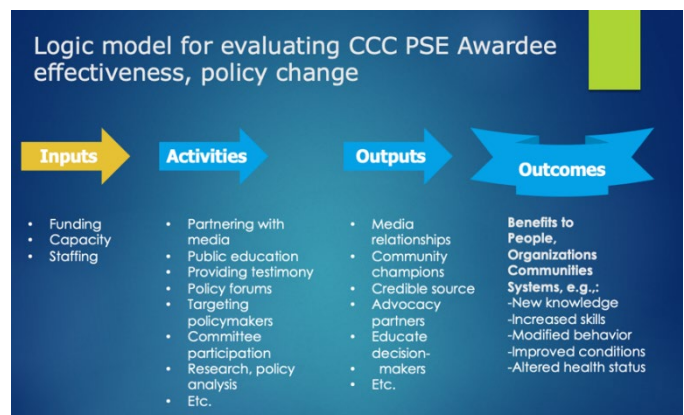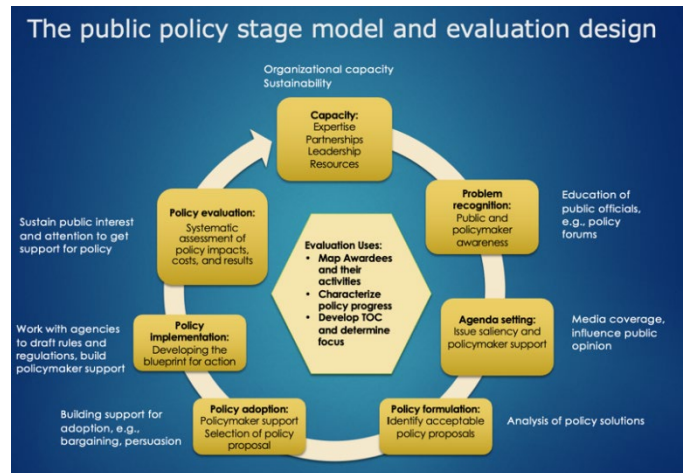Several models can help you with your evaluation project.

The *public policy stage model* is useful for developing an evaluation theory of change and describing how a policy change initiative works. This model can be used to develop appropriate evaluation questions.

It was also adapted to include a critical capacity step for PSE work. Examples of policy change tactics were added for each stage to illustrate how the model could be used in practical applications.

The *logic model* is an important component of many, but not all, policy change evaluations. One of the key challenges in evaluating PSE initiatives is that they are not linear, so a logic model may not always capture the uncertainty and unpredictability that is typical in the policymaking process. But, if applicable, the logic model can help you to develop a shared understanding with stakeholders about the evaluation program.

Mapping Tactics Across Initiative Outcomes and Audiences is another helpful model. This model provides a way to see the interplay between tactics and outcomes as well as between tactics and audiences. It depicts the types of influences on the X-axis and the temporal development of people on the Y-axis.

This model can help you to frame, map, and describe the initiative, including short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes.
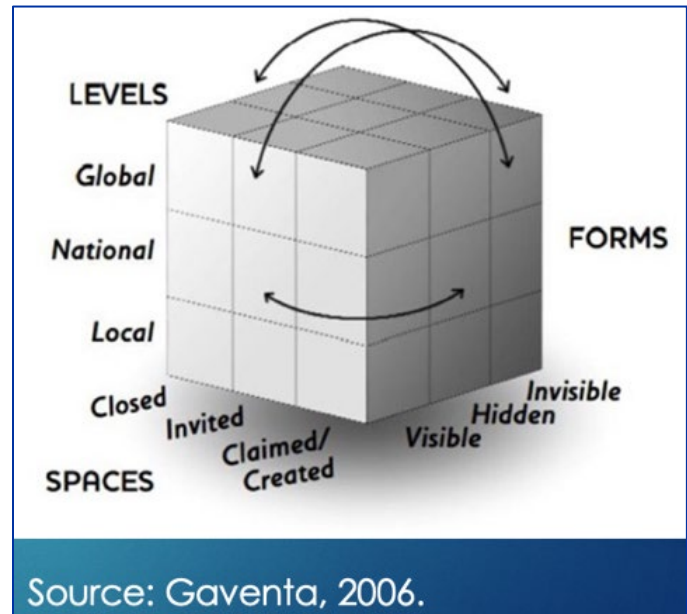
The **_Power Cube model_** is a model for identifying and organizing power by levels (local to global), spaces (closed, invited, claimed), and forms (visible, hidden, invisible).

Some questions or aspects of power that should be considered as part of contextual analysis and characterizing the political culture include:

- What does power look like?

- Who has power over others?

- Who has political power, and what is their agenda?

- Whose voices are being heard and why?

Source: Gaventa, 2006.

The **_Equitable Evaluation Framework_** helps to embed health equity into evaluation designs and processes. The framework considers the following:

- Evaluation and evaluation work should be done in the service of equity.

- Evaluative work should be designed and implemented with equity in mind. That is, evaluation design should be multiculturally valid and oriented toward participant ownership.

- Evaluative work should answer critical questions about:

    1) the ways in which historical and structural decisions have contributed to the condition to be addressed

    2) how the underlying systemic drivers of inequity affect PSE strategies, and

    3) the ways in which cultural contexts affect the structure and operating conditions of the change initiative itself.

Unique Evaluation Methods

A major evaluation challenge in the late 2000s was the lack of appropriate methods for PSE-specific work. Conventional program evaluation methods – activity tracking, interviews, surveys, financial analysis, and case studies – were useful, but they lacked specific constructs and measures for advocacy and policymaking. The conventional methods did not answer questions about the effectiveness of tactics in real-time or in a way that informed PSE strategies. The conventional methods were time-consuming to develop, administer, and analyze.

Unique evaluation methods have been developed to address the lack, and they include public opinion polling, contribution analysis, policymaker interviews, policymaker rating scales, bellwether methodology, and champion tracking.

Additionally, *network analysis tools* can provide coalitions with information about resources and the various partnerships over time. *PARTNER* is a social network analysis tool that is being used by public health departments across the country. *Visible Network Labs* will do the analysis and write the report. Coalitions can include their own questions in the instrument, such as scaling from aware to cooperative to coordinated to integrated partner activities.

The Tribal Tobacco Education and Policy Initiative Case Study

The *Tribal Tobacco Education and Policy Initiative* was a five-year initiative to develop the capacity of five tribal nation grantees to reduce commercial tobacco use through culturally-based policy advocacy approaches.

Some key features of their evaluation plan were that it was designed early, used a variety of methods, was conducted over the course of the program, and was done in partnership with the tribes. It was an ideal evaluation.

Summary

Key Lessons for Evaluation Design

- Evaluation methods are a combination of user-friendly data collection activities, typical evaluation methods such as surveys, and unique methods such as media analyses.

- Cultural factors are key and can determine both evaluation and program success.

- Decentralization of evaluation capacity and operations is important to program success.

Ensuring CCC PSE Program Evaluation Success

Evaluation program success includes the following:

- Striving for equitable partnerships

- Using tools such as systems thinking

- Addressing what is meaningful to awardees

- Considering what is credible to whom

- Reviewing the data and findings with partners

- Linking to strategy

- Telling a good story

- Sharing best practices

- Supporting an evaluation culture: *"Evaluative thinking is defined as critical thinking applied in the context of evaluation, motivated by an attitude of inquisitiveness and a belief in the value of the evidence that involves identifying assumptions, posing thoughtful questions, pursuing deeper understanding through reflection and perspective taking, and informing decisions in preparation for action."* Buckley et al. (2015)

Q&A

Q. What tips do you have for CCC programs and coalitions that are currently developing their PSE interventions to make evaluation a critical practice within the coalition setting?

A. Have a structured conversation about how evaluation supports the planning of PSE interventions. An external facilitator can help coalition partners work through evaluation design conversations. What do we want to accomplish? How will we get there?

Advocacy and Policy Change Evaluation Resources

This section contains an extensive list of evaluation resources that have been organized into How-To Guides for beginner, intermediate, and advanced advocates. It also contains two sections on Resources for Topical Areas and Resources for Building Evaluation Capacity.

How-to Guides for Advocates

(For advocates with different levels of experience)

Beginner Level

- *A User's Guide to Advocacy Evaluation Planning* by Julia Coffman (2009).
  https://archive.globalfrp.org/publications-resources/browse-our-publications/a-user-s-guide-to-advocacy-evaluation-planning

- *Advocacy Progress Planner* by Aspen Institute (2018).
  https://www.aspeninstitute.org/programs/aspen-planning-and-evaluation-program/tools/

- *An Advocacy Evaluation Mini-Toolkit: Tips and Tools for Busy Organizations* by LFA Group (2013).
  https://www.alnap.org/system/files/content/resource/files/main/advocacy-evaluation-mini-toolkit.pdf

- *Getting Started: A Self-Directed Guide to Outcome Map Development* by ORS Impact (2014).
  https://www.orsimpact.com/directory/Getting-Started-Guide.htm

- *Oklahoma Tribal Advocacy Toolkit* by National Indian Education Association (2018).
  https://www.niea.org/advocacy-resources

- *The Advocacy Strategy Framework: A Tool for Articulating an Advocacy Theory of Change* by Julia Coffman and Tanya Beer at Center for Evaluation Innovation (2015).
  https://www.evaluationinnovation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Adocacy-Strategy-Framework.pdf

Intermediate Level

- *A Guide to Measuring Advocacy and Policy* by ORS Impact (2007). https://www.orsimpact.com/directory/Guide-to-Measuring-Advocacy.htm

- *Advocacy and Policy Change Evaluation: Theory and Practice* by Annette L. Gardner and Claire D. Brindis (2017). https://www.sup.org/books/title/?id=24906

- *EAA Advocacy Evaluation Guide* prepared by Christina Mansfield for the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (2011). https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/resources/guide/eaa_advocacy_evaluation_guide

- *Pathfinder: A Practical Guide to Advocacy Evaluation* by Innovation Network for the Atlantic Philanthropies (2009). http://www.pointk.org/resources/files/pathfinder_evaluator_web.pdf

- *When the Best Offense is a Good Defense: Understanding and Measuring Advocacy on the Defense* by ORS Impact (2019). https://www.orsimpact.com/directory/Defensive_Advocacy.htm

Advanced Level

- *No Royal Road: Finding and Following the Natural Pathways in Advocacy Evaluation* by Jim Coe and Rhonda Schlangen (2019). https://www.evaluationinnovation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/No-Royal-Road.pdf.

- *Pathways for Change: 10 Theories to Inform Advocacy and Policy Change Efforts* by ORS Impact (2013). https://www.orsimpact.com/directory/Pathways-for-Change-10.htm

Resources for Topical Areas and Emerging Areas of Importance

(For advocates and evaluators)

Advocacy Capacity

- *ACT (Advocacy Capacity Tool)* and *ACT! Quick* by Alliance for Justice/Bolder Advocacy (2020). https://bolderadvocacy.org/resource-library/tools-for-effective-advocacy/evaluating-advocacy/

- *Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool: Facilitator's Guide* by USAID (2017). https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5a57ffe52aeba57afe10b243/t/5ae7a30f8a922d40d2a82ba4/1525130002235/ABH_aca_tool+guide.pdf

- *Advocacy Core Capacity Assessment Tool* by TCC Group (2007).
  https://www.tccgrp.com/resource/advocacy-core-capacity-assessment-tool-advocacy-ccat/

- "Examining Issues Facing Communities of Color Today: The Role of Evaluation to Incite Change" by Leah C. Neubauer, Dominica McBride, Andrea D. Guajardo, Wanda D. Casillas, and Melvin E. Hall in *New Directions For Evaluation,* Volume 2020, Issue 166.

- *Informing Advocacy and Communications Capacity Building Efforts* by ORS Impact (2019).
  https://www.orsimpact.com/directory/InformingAdvocacy.htm

- *The Advocacy Capacity Review Guide* by Rhonda Schlangen and Aspen Planning and Evaluation Program. https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/HewlettSRHRAdvocay.ACRGuide.Public-1.29.20.pdf

- *What Makes an Effective Advocacy Organization? A Framework for Determining Advocacy Capacity* by the TCC Group for The California Endowment (2009). https://www.tccgrp.com/resource/what-makes-an-effective-advocacy-organization-a-framework-for-determining-advocacy-capacity/

Assessing Power and Influence

- *Advocacy That Builds Power: Transforming Policies and Systems for Health and Racial Equity* by Julia Coffman, Gigi Barsoum, Albertina Lopez, and Mariah Broth Gantz at the Center for Evaluation Innovation (2021). https://www.evaluationinnovation.org/publication/advocacy-that-builds-power-transforming-policies-and-systems-for-health-and-racial-equity/

- *Introduction to Power Mapping* by Center for Nonprofit Management (2021).
  https://cnmsocal.org/news/introduction-to-power-mapping/

- *Monitoring and Evaluation of Policy Influence and Advocacy* by Josephine Tsui, Simon Hearn, and John Young at Overseas Development Institute (2014).
  https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/8928.pdf

- *Powercube.net, an Online Resource for Thinking About Power Relations* by the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex (2011). https://www.powercube.net/

- *Six Things We've Learned About Power and their Implications for Evaluation* by Katie Fox at Innovation Network (2019). https://www.innonet.org/news-insights/resources/six-things-weve-learned-about-power-and-their-implications-for-evaluation/

Coalitions, Collaboratives, Collective Impact

- *The Alignment Index: An Innovative Tool* by ORS Impact and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (2014). https://www.orsimpact.com/blog/The-Alignment-Index-An-Innovative-Tool.htm

- *Evaluating Collective Impact: Five Simple Rules* by Marc Cabaj (2014). https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/hubfs/Resources/Publications/Evaluating%20Collective%20Impact%205%20Simple%20Rules.pdf

- *Guide to Evaluating Collective Impact* by Hallie Preskill, Marcie Parkhurst, and Jennifer Splansky Juster at FSG (2013). https://www.fsg.org/resource/guide-evaluating-collective-impact/

- *Unique Methods in Multi-Stakeholder Advocacy Evaluation* by ORS Impact (2018). https://www.orsimpact.com/directory/unique-methods-in-multi-stakeholder-ae.htm

- *What Makes an Effective Coalition: Evidence-Based Indicators of Success* by Anne Gienapp (ORS Impact), Jewlya Lynn (Spark Policy Institute), Rebecca Ochtera (Spark Policy Institute), and Jared Raynor (TCC Group) for the California Endowment (2011). https://www.tccgrp.com/resource/what-makes-an-effective-coalition-evidence-based-indicators-of-success/

Community Organizing

- *Core Components of Community Organizing Evaluation* by Alliance for Justice (2008). https://bolderadvocacy.org/community-organizing/core-components-of-community-organizing-evaluation/

- *Grassroots Action and Learning for Social Change: Evaluating Community Organizing* by Catherine Crystal Foster, Justin Louie, and the Center for Evaluation Innovation (2010). http://www.pointk.org/client_docs/File/center_pubs/evaluating_community_organizing.pdf

- *PowerCheck*: *Community Organizing Capacity Assessment Tool* and *PowerCheck Quick* by the Alliance for Justice/Bolder Advocacy (2018). https://bolderadvocacy.org/community-organizing/

Contribution Analysis

- *Contribution Analysis in Policy Work: Assessing Advocacy's Influence* by ORS Impact (2017). https://www.orsimpact.com/directory/contribution-analysis.htm

- *Four Tools for Assessing Grantee Contribution to Advocacy Efforts* by Tanya Beer and Julia Coffman at Center for Evaluation Innovation (2015).

https://www.evaluationinnovation.org/publication/four-tools-for-assessing-grantee-contribution-to-advocacy-efforts/

- *RAPID Outcome Assessment* by Overseas Development Institute (2013).
  https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/7815.pdf

Equity in Evaluation

- *Equitable Evaluation Framework* by Equitable Evaluation Initiative (2017).
  https://www.equitableeval.org/

- *Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture* by Equity in the Center (2018).
  https://equityinthecenter.org/aww/

- *Resources for Evaluation* from Racial Equity Tools (2021).
  https://www.racialequitytools.org/resources/evaluate

Other Advocacy and Policy Change Evaluation Resources

- *Beyond the Win: Pathways for Policy Implementation* by ORS Impact (2016).
  https://www.orsimpact.com/directory/beyond-the-win.htm

- *Champion and "Champion-ness": Measuring Efforts to Create Champions for Policy Change* by David Devlin-Foltz and Lisa Molinaro at Aspen Institute (2010).
  https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/files/content/docs/pubs/Champions_and_Championness_Aug2010.pdf

- *Evaluating Legal Advocacy: A How-To Guide for Evaluators, Funders, and Advocates* by Jared Raynor and Deepti Sood at TCC Group (2016).
  https://www.evaluationinnovation.org/publication/evaluating-legal-advocacy-a-how-to-guide-for-evaluators-funders-and-advocates/

- *Data Collection for Advocacy Evaluation: The "Intense-Period Debrief"* by Innovation Network (2007). http://www.pointk.org/client_docs/File/advocacy/intense_period_debrief.pdf

- *Learning at the Speed of Trust* Learning Brief by Itad (2022). https://www.itad.com/knowledge-product/learning-at-the-speed-of-trust-learning-brief/

- *Not Always Movements: Multiple Approaches to Advance Large-Scale Social Change* by ORS Impact (2020). https://www.orsimpact.com/directory/Not-Always-Movements.htm?categories=&keywords=&pg=2_4

Resources for Building Evaluation Capacity

(For evaluators and funders)

- *A Guide to Organizational Capacity Assessment Tools* for William & Flora Hewlett Foundation by Informing Change (2017). https://hewlett.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/A-Guide-to-Using-OCA-Tools.pdf

- *Building Evaluation Capacity: Activities for Teaching and Training* (2nd Ed.) by Hallie Preskill and Darlene Russ-Eft. (2016) Sage Publications: Los Angeles, CA.

- *Evaluation Coaching: Light Up Your Client's Expertise* by Betsy Baum Block at Center for Evaluation Innovation (2018). https://www.evaluationinnovation.org/publication/evaluation-coaching-light-up-your-clients-expertise/

- *Learning from Mapping MLE Capacity for Advocacy* by Isabel Vogel and Stefanie Wallach at Itad (2019). https://www.itad.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Briefing-paper-1_190627-1.pdf

- "New Directions for Evaluative Thinking" by Anne T. Vo and Thomas Archibald in *New Directions for Evaluation,* Volume 2018, Issue 158. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/ev.20317

- *Point K Learning Center* by Innovation Network. http://www.pointk.org/resources/search/results?page=4&mode=browse&category=383

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