



World Vision Canadian Programs External Evaluations

2011

Introduction

World Vision's Canadian Programs, re-launched in 2005, recently commissioned external evaluations of two of its core [programs](#), Partners to End Child Poverty (PECP) and FreeForm (FF). These evaluations included national interviews, focus groups, literature reviews and surveys and were conducted by the Centre for Community Based Research ([CCBR](#)) under the leadership of the Centre's Research Director, Rich Janzen.

Canadian Programs' mandate is to partner with urban community based organizations to cultivate the well-being of Canadian children living in poverty. Working with over 55 community-based ministries, World Vision has funded 80 multi-year projects (representing an WVC investment of over \$15 million) over the past 6 years. Through FreeForm, World Vision has made an intensive investment in the leadership teams of 23 ministries in BC, MB, ON, and Québec.

The strategic objectives of WV Canadian Programs are:

Equip the leadership of community based ministries to grow their organizational capacity

Build sustainable strategies and networks to end child poverty in Canada

Fund innovative approaches that cultivate resiliency in children, families and communities

Research the root causes and present dynamics of Canadian child poverty

Advocate for the peace and well-being of children living in poverty

To learn more about WV Canadian Programs please see our [2005-2010 report](#).

KEY FINDINGS

from the Partners to End Child Poverty (PECP) evaluation



Overall Program Findings

- PECP was able to attract a **wide range of partners** from major Canadian cities (e.g. Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Hamilton, Montréal)
- PECP partners were **very satisfied** with the program.
- In addition to the existing evaluation trainings and tools, study partners suggested providing **more evaluation** support to partner organizations.

Child Well-Being Outcomes

- Many partners indicated that their projects increased the participants' (i.e. children, youth and their families experiencing poverty) **hope for the future.**
- PECP project participants were observed to have experienced **greater self-confidence, improved behaviour,** and improved **relationships** with others.
- A large number of PECP partners focused on providing or facilitating **access to basic needs** for project participants.
- PECP partners indicated that their project participants were more likely to **attend and stay in school** and have attained **academic success.**
- **Improved health** was the most frequently reported outcome for project participants.

Partner Organizational Development Findings

- An **overwhelming number** of study participants indicated that partner organizations' planning and **programming capacity increased** to a **great extent** after participating in PECP.
- PECP contributed toward financial viability of partners to a varied extent
- PECP **enhanced the credibility** of most of the partners in their communities.

“We’ve had phenomenal support from World Vision people throughout the project. We’ve been completely impressed... This has been a very positive experience.”

“One clear success is about achieving high school equivalency, some of them going on in school, which was their dream. Some of them were successfully getting employment or a better one.”

“Partnership with World Vision really helped our organization to build itself.”

PECP Evaluation Recommendations and World Vision Response

Primary Recommendations	World Vision Canadian Programs (CP) Response
<p>Enhance the capacity of our partners to conduct project evaluations and address their ‘evaluation hesitancy’ by providing more evaluation support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canadian Programs (CP) has launched a specific Case Management training and pilot-phase support for the Project Managers hired after the LEAP 1 and LEAP 2 training toward project monitoring and evaluation support • CP commits to re-vamping its LEAP 3 (<i>Mid-Term Evaluation</i>) training in order to better equip project managers to reflect, analyze and recommend changes to their project for the remaining periods. • CP has allocated a new \$2000 evaluation budget for its current cohorts, to be accessed at the end of the funding term, along with creating new evaluation-phase support from CP.
<p>Conduct ongoing PECP program evaluation — including tracking changes in partner capacities as a result of PECP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CP has adapted its Partnership Annual Review agenda with funded partners to explicitly monitor response to the program, as well as check-in upon partner’s organizational development growth.
<p>Link PECP project outcome measurement to Child Well-Being</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CP has launched its first research project on indicators of effective settlement for newcomers with specific connection to Child Well-Being (CWB) outcomes. Similar research focused upon serving with other populations will be subsequently initiated.
<p>Provide more room for qualitative reporting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Case Management training will emphasize the space for qualitative reporting in the existing report. CP will continue to seek input about how best to balance qualitative and quantitative reporting in its semi-annual report template. • CP will encourage partners to document the project visually through submitting photos.
<p>Keep tools simple and user-friendly</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CP’s new pilot phase protocol includes coaching on completing Semi-Annual reports, alongside the revamp of LEAP 2, LEAP 3 and LEAP 4.

KEY FINDINGS

from the FreeForm (FF) evaluation



The goal of FreeForm is to increase the organizational capacity of Canadian partner ministries aligned with WV's vision of life in all its fullness for every child.

Overall Program Findings

- An **overwhelming majority** of the study participants were **very satisfied** with the program.
- All study participants unanimously acknowledged the benefits of FreeForm being delivered from a **Christian** faith perspective.
- A few study participants indicated that the **language and concepts** used in the tools was not easy for them to understand and grasp
- More than three-quarters (76%) of the evaluation survey respondents reported that the program was effective in providing individualized **coaching**.
- **All respondents** (100%) noted that the program was **effective** in terms of **content and facilitation**.

Partner Organizational Development Findings

- FreeForm was **most effective** in building the **leadership team capacity** of participating organizations
- An **overwhelming majority** (86%) of survey respondents reported an increased ability to focus upon an organization's **mission, vision, and values** as a result of participating in FreeForm
- Some participants noted that FF highlighted the importance of **financial capacity** and motivated them to look at different options of financial resources.
- Two-thirds (64%) indicated that FreeForm had increased their organization's ability to **recruit, motivate and retain staff**.
- An **overwhelming majority** of participants found the FreeForm helpful in providing opportunities to **learn** from other colleagues.

Conclusion

- FreeForm was very effective in building capacity of the participating organizations, particularly leadership team and strategic capacity

“We would strongly encourage World Vision to continue to offer FreeForm, it's been a privilege to gain the insights and concrete information/strategies that we'd had so much difficulty finding on our own.”

“FreeForm is like receiving a box full of really useful tools, and being shown what function they can play in making your organization more effective.”

“FreeForm gave us a very good perspective on where we were and where we fell short, and a very clear sense of how we were going to get there.”

FreeForm Evaluation Recommendations and World Vision Response

Primary Recommendations	World Vision Canadian Programs (CP) Response
<p>Provide more information about the program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In documents such as the 2005-2010 Canadian Programs Report, FreeForm (FF) website, and FF application, there is now a clearer description of the process, goals, and level of commitment required to complete the program. We will invite FF graduates to attend one part of Seminar I of the new cohort to provide a “participant’s eye view” of the program.
<p>Determine Readiness of organization</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CP has instituted a more formal Letters of Commitment process to ensure Sr. Leader, Board, and Leadership Team buyin from the outset. CP will pilot a renewed orientation meeting for organizational stakeholders prior to first seminar. The large number of applicants to FF Cohort 6 has allowed us to be more rigorous in assessing the readiness of partner ministries to complete the program.
<p>Clarify and enhance coaching relationship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CP is gathering a formal Coaching package that spells out the expectations of the coaching relationship with partners. CP has instituted formal check-in points for the facilitators with partner ministries as they complete more challenging assignments.
<p>Promote Online sharing platform</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CP is pursuing using Moodle course management software toward this end.
<p>Provide more focus on Financial and HR capacity building</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The FreeForm curriculum continues to be re-written to strengthen application in these two areas. CP is launching a Graduate Certificate in Non-Profit Management that contains specific, in depth, courses on these two topics.