

SUSTAINING NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION CAPACITY AFTER AN INTENSIVE  
CAPACITY-BUILDING PROGRAM

by

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(Under the Direction of Rebecca Nesbit)

ABSTRACT

As the nonprofit sector grows and increasingly becomes the delivery system for public services across the country, an interest in nonprofit capacity to deliver these services has also increased (Milward, 1994; Mirabella, 2001; Herman & Renz, 2004). The purpose of this study was to identify the longitudinal change in organizational capacity in local nonprofit organizations after an intensive capacity-building program and explore the intervening variables that influenced the change. Findings underscored capacity building's association to organizational effectiveness theory and identified multiple factors that influence the change in organizational capacity over time.

INDEX WORDS: Nonprofit, Capacity, Organizational capacity, Organizational effectiveness, Longitudinal change.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

As the nonprofit sector has grown, becoming the delivery system for a rising number of public services across the country, the interest in nonprofit organizational capacity to deliver these services has also increased (Milward, 1994; Mirabella, 2001; Herman & Renz, 2004). While the concept of organizational capacity lacks a clear definition, some scholars agree that principals look to build capacity in order to help nonprofit organizations achieve their mission (Wing, 2004; Christensen & Gazley, 2008; DeVita et al., 2001, Leake et al., 2007; Eisinger, 2002). Thus private and public partners have chosen to invest in the organizational capacity of nonprofits, in order to improve the effectiveness of the nonprofit sector as a whole (Cornforth & Mordaunt, 2011).

Beginning in Fall 2009, the federal government, via the Administration for Children and Families' Strengthening Communities Fund (SCF), a part of the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act, awarded such an investment to 45 organizations in northeast Georgia. The project, named Building Community Services That Grow Local Economies (BCS), launched a partnership among three institutions in Athens, GA, including two community-based nonprofit organizations and The University of Georgia's Institute for Nonprofit Organizations. The BCS project provided intensive capacity-building training, technical assistance, and funding to nonprofit and faith-based organizations in Northeast Georgia, within the following five broad areas: 1) organizational development, 2) program development, 3) collaboration and community engagement, 4) leadership development, and 5) evaluation of effectiveness. The project activities

and data collection took place from September 2009 through October 2011, over two annual cycles of service delivery, with an independent contractor hired to conduct outcome and process evaluations.

As the executive director of one of the three leads, I was part of the team that coordinated and delivered the training and technical assistance to participating organizations. I witnessed changed perspectives as program managers evolved an understanding of 'why' capacity matters, and how its growth can impact their services. However, since services and focus in nonprofit organizations follow funding, once the BCS project was complete, so was our involvement. I have often wondered if any lasting change was made in these organizations, and whether and how their increased organizational capacities sustained over time.

The literature tells us, changes to organizational structure and culture take an enormous amount of time to see. Once the “interventions” are completed, the results may take months or years to take shape, or may never materialize at all. As Wagner (2003) stated, “there are few quick fixes when it comes to building capacity, and in many cases, it is unrealistic and often counterproductive for capacity builders to demand immediate results, reported quarterly” (p. 109). Wing (2004) further maintained that expectations of immediate results are often coupled with unrealistic projections of outcomes:

Many capacity-building initiatives are 1 to 2 years long. The longest tend to be 5 years long. Yet in a competitive proposal process, there is a tendency for agencies in 2-year initiatives to promise 5-year outcomes (in 2 years), whereas agencies submitting to 5-year programs promise 10-year outcomes (in 5 years). Unfortunately, it is rare for an evaluation to extend much beyond the life of the initiative itself. Although it might make the most sense to look for 10-year

outcomes after 10 years, the most likely scenario in a 5-year program is that the evaluation needs to deliver the goods early in the fourth year in time for the funder's board to consider whether the program should be renewed. After we factor in the first year it took for the initiative to get underway, we are usually looking at 2.5 years of effort toward 10-year goals and wondering why we are not more effective at capacity building (p. 157).

These considerations concern the initial formal evaluation of capacity-building programs. Longitudinal studies are absent from the research, casting a shadow over sustainability once an intervention has ended. As a result, we have no evidence that capacity, once "built" in an organization, lasts beyond the immediate project or evaluation term. Foundations and governments support organizations that initially show compliance with expected increases in capacity building according to prescribed measures. However, once the active capacity-building efforts have concluded, then what happens? Does the organization continue on the arc of increased capacity? Does the organization set these efforts on the shelf and return to business as usual? What factors affect the ability of the organization to maintain—or even continue to grow—organizational capacity? What factors lead that capacity to shrink?

This research study sets out to explore these questions, by identifying the longitudinal change in organizational capacity in local nonprofit organizations after an intensive capacity-building program, and exploring the intervening variables that influenced the change. The guiding research questions include:

1. How does organizational capacity change over time after an intensive capacity-building program?

2. What intervening variables impact an organization's ability to continue to increase organizational capacity over time after an intensive capacity-building program?

The remainder of this dissertation proceeds as follows. I first explore the literature regarding organizational capacity and capacity building, including a discussion of organizational effectiveness, the theory most closely associated with capacity-building efforts. In Chapter 3, I set out to describe the mixed-methods research, guided by these research questions, which will ultimately inform future practice. Chapter 4 presents the findings and analysis of the existing data, describing participating organizations' levels of organizational capacity at the time of the initial project, and the effects of BCS activities. Chapter 5 measures and analyzes nine of the participating units' current organizational capacity, and discusses their executive directors' explanations of why their capacity moved—or remained the same—over time. Finally, Chapter 6 provides a summary and conclusions drawn from the analysis.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Definition & Purpose of Capacity Building**

Extant literature on nonprofit capacity building agrees on the difficulty of defining itself (Sobeck & Aguis, 2007; Wing, 2004; Newborn, 2008; Kapucu & Demiroz, 2013; Yung et al., 2008). Sobeck and Aguis (2007) wrote of myriad definitions that “range from ‘resource-based perspectives (that) focus on the inputs and outputs of an organization’ to others that ‘identify core components, challenges, and activities related to capacity building’” (p. 238). Wing (2004) claimed the term to be as highly abstract as the nonprofit sector.

Why is capacity building so difficult to define? Related literature acknowledges the wide array of nonprofit organizations and the need to consider each independently in the capacity-building process. As Wing (2004) stated, the term ‘nonprofit’ encompasses a huge diversity within itself, referring to everything from a handful of volunteers in a neighborhood that come together for specific projects, to huge universities and healthcare systems (p. 154). Kapucu et al. (2011) agreed: “The definition of capacity building, similar to its interventions, is tailor made to fit the nonprofit organization requiring assistance” (p. 237). There is no “one size fits all” for the organizations involved or the interventions undertaken.

Some agreement exists that capacity building is for the purpose of increasing the ability of nonprofit organizations to achieve their mission (McPhee & Bare, 2001; Wing, 2004; Christensen & Gazley, 2008; DeVita et al., 2001, Leake et al., 2007; Eisinger, 2002). Assuming that the effectiveness of an organization rests on the achievement of mission, many link

organizational effectiveness to the definition of capacity building. Overall, the spectrum of definitions generally includes the idea of an intervention, such as training, to improve organizational processes and result in increased effectiveness.

For the purposes of this paper, I will adopt Kapacu et al.'s (2011) definition of organizational capacity, organizational effectiveness, and capacity building as follows:

Organizational capacity encompasses the organizational knowledge, systems, and processes that contribute to organizational effectiveness. Organizational effectiveness is a nonprofit's ability to achieve its stated mission. Capacity building from this perspective refers to individualized interventions designed to improve an organization's ability to operate effectively and efficiently (p. 238).

This logical progression links organizational capacity to organizational effectiveness and mission achievement in nonprofit organizations. It deconstructs each term concisely to simplify a complicated construct.

But how does one operationalize the ability of an organization to "achieve its stated mission?" It cannot mean the number served, or a ratio of the number served to the number of those in need. It cannot mean a financial ratio of number served to total budget. The very breadth of nonprofit services underlines the argument that some organizations serve few very comprehensively and others serve many with a light touch. Because the literature on capacity building is short on theoretical approaches, we turn next to organizational effectiveness theories to understand how to understand success in capacity building.

### **Organizational Effectiveness Theories**

If, in fact, the purpose of capacity building is to increase organizational effectiveness, then the process of capacity building should be simple. Once we define the dimensions required

for an organization to be effective, we could simply build the capacity of organizations in those areas and – voila – the ability of the organization to more efficiently and effectively work toward its mission is achieved. Light (2004) identifies this logic chain as depicted in Figure 2.1.

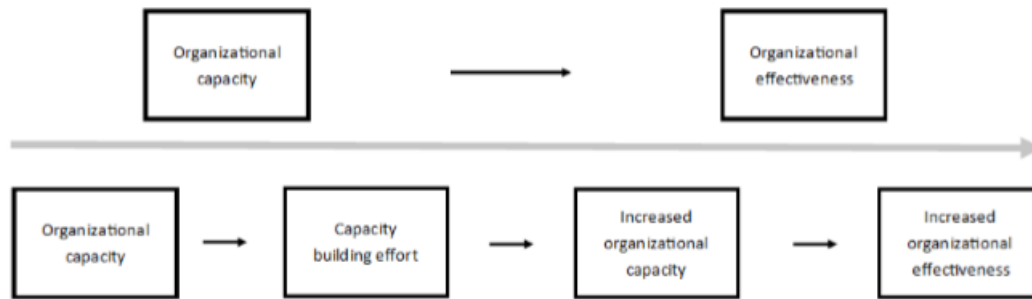


Figure 2.1: Organizational Capacity and Organizational Effectiveness

On which dimension do you measure effectiveness: organizational mission or goals, involvement of stakeholders in pursuing these goals or directives, or something else entirely? Organizational effectiveness in nonprofit organizations, especially those in complex environments, is not so easily defined, realized, or even assessed, although a number of models have tried.

The rationalist-goals approach, focused on the output side, identifies an organization's goals and assesses how well it has attained them. In this model, it is important to consider indicators (operationalized goals) that signal goal achievement (Daft, 2010; Sowa et al., 2004). While this approach may seem direct, goals are often nested within sets of goals, which may conflict with each other or cover different dimensions. Goals may also be implicit or explicit, be directed at different players within the organization, and lack clarity (Rainey, 2014; Herman & Renz, 2004;).

The systems-resource approach focuses on the input side of organizational effectiveness. From this perspective, an organization's effectiveness relies on its ability to secure often scarce



and valued resources and ultimately manage them successfully. Indicators in this sense include bargaining position, competent assessment of the external environment, efficient use of resources for maximum achievement, and the ability of an organization to respond to changes in the environment (Daft, 2010; Sowa et al., 2004). In nonprofit settings, one would be hard-pressed to identify an organization that gauged effectiveness by budget size, rather than mission achievement (Herman & Renz, 2004).

A third approach, human resource and internal process models, seeks to assess performance by examining such dimensions as internal communications, leadership style, motivation, and interpersonal trust. Often measured through organizational accounting and control systems, this model may provide crucial insight into human resource systems in nonprofit and public organizations, though it may not fully assess the overall effectiveness of the organization (Rainey, 2014).

Participant-satisfaction models gauge satisfaction with the organization among stakeholders, such as employees, donors, suppliers, consumers, regulators, and external controllers, through mechanisms like employee or client satisfaction surveys. Those polled are asked to provide feedback on the success of the organization in fulfilling their needs or sharing (and working toward) their goals (Rainey, 2014; Sowa et al., 2004). A related, though more comprehensive theory (Herman & Renz, 2004) argues that the overall effectiveness of nonprofit organizations is “whatever multiple constituents or stakeholders judge it to be” (p. 695). Grounded in both multiple-constituency perspective and social constructionism, this argument maintains that organizational effectiveness is not a single reality, but a more complicated construct in which multiple stakeholders with differing perspectives evaluate organizational effectiveness. For example, clients may pay the most attention to their personal conditions,

organizational funders may prioritize financial reporting and program assessments, and collaborating organizations may focus on willingness to pursue a common vision. As a result, measures of effectiveness develop and change according to constituencies and stakeholders.

Finally, Sowa et al. (2004) built upon this multi-dimensional model, arguing for two primary and distinct levels of effectiveness: management and program. Management refers to organizational and management characteristics, and the program level refers to the specific service provided by the organization. Management and program effectiveness are each further composed into two sub-dimensions: capacity and outcomes. Capacity refers to how the organization operates, the structures in place, and the operating processes that dictate action. Outcomes refer to the results produced by management and program activities. Both objective and perceptual measures are utilized to understand the constructs.

Because I have chosen a practitioner-based research topic, this study tends to rely on Herman and Renz's (2004) model of nonprofit effectiveness. Their findings hold that "stakeholders do not judge nonprofit effectiveness similarly" (p. 699); further, multiple stakeholders introduce multiple realities for judging effectiveness. Thus, while boards may hold one perception of success, clients may hold a very different view, as may funders, staff, etc. This variety of realities (partially based in social constructionism) complicates any determination of an organization's effectiveness.

With these models, then, measures of effectiveness become organizationally-specific and may change through time. It is not surprising that efforts to define a capacity-building model of nonprofit organizations are equally viscous. If the goal of capacity building is to increase organizational effectiveness, what are the dimensions of organizational effectiveness that will

contribute to this goal? This next section seeks to define and explore the dimensions of capacity building reported on in nonprofit literature.

### **Dimensions of Organizational Effectiveness/Capacity**

As difficult as it is to come to a single definition of capacity building, so is it a challenge to fully inventory the organizational dimensions addressed in capacity-building efforts.

Nonprofit effectiveness is multidimensional, and each organization has specific needs based on its individual situation and phase of development (Herman & Renz, 2008; Wing, 2004; Kapacu et al., 2011). The literature identifies multiple dimensions of organizational capacity, and, under each dimension, the sub-topics are numerous.

Some expected overlap occurs across these primary areas of content. Cornforth and Mordaunt (2011) summarized that many existing funders of capacity building refer to different organizational functions or resources, such as leadership, management, human resources, or technical or financial capacity. Others have identified capacities relating to organizational goals such as adaptive, absorptive, innovative, entrepreneurial, and transformative capacity (p. 432).

More often than not, the former interpretation applies. For example, Newborn (2008) identified six key areas of effectiveness—governance, fundraising, financial management, program delivery, administration, and cultural competency—that should be considered “holistically” (p. 23). In Kapacu et al. (2011), the program of study offered workshops on grant writing (the only study to reference multiple levels of grant-writing classes), organizational effectiveness, fundraising, volunteer management, strategic planning, board development, major gifts/planned giving, individual giving, and program evaluation (p. 239).

Again, we are defining organizational effectiveness as the ability of an organization to meet its mission, and organizational capacity as the knowledge, systems, and processes that

contribute to organizational effectiveness. For the purposes of this paper, I draw on the five critical areas defined in Minzner et al.'s (2006) random assignment evaluation of the Compassion Capital Fund, which most closely match those measured through the SCF data for this study. In each project, capacity-building assistance was provided in some or all of these areas, with the goal of improving the effectiveness and overall management of participating organizations. The five dimensions are:

1. Organizational Development – systems that underlie the effective functioning of the organization, including processes related to human resources, financial management, mission and planning definition, governance, legal compliance, policies and procedures, and information technology.
2. Program Development – systems that support effective service delivery, including processes related to outcome evaluation, client satisfaction, and expansion or improvement of services.
3. Revenue Development – systems that underlie the effective funding and resource support of the organization, including diversification of funding sources, financial stability, and donor development.
4. Leadership Development – the professional and career development, board and volunteer recruitment and development, and development of succession plans.
5. Community Engagement – the assessment of community needs, community asset mapping, marketing development, development of strategic partnerships, and leveraging resources and collaborative relationships.

These five dimensions of capacity building most closely match those outlined in the workplans used in the SCF/BCS study and are therefore are the most salient for this study.

Furthermore, these five dimensions, identified by the funding source as key areas for improvement, give insight into the intent behind the BCS project.

## **Approaches and Delivery Systems for Capacity Building**

### **Approaches to capacity building**

Cornforth and Mordaunt (2011) noted that the approach used to build capacity can be based on a deficit or empowerment model. The deficit model relies on an external actor to assess the organization and prescribe a course of action based on external interventions. The empowerment model, expectedly, empowers the participating agencies to identify and address their capacity-building challenges themselves. Admittedly, most approaches fall somewhere in the middle of these two extremes (p. 432).

Wing (2004) asserted that capacity-building activities can focus on individual people or on organizational systems. There are issues with both approaches, which create difficulty in implementation and evaluation (p. 158). If activities focus on an individual, via coaching, training, and skill development, the beneficiary of those activities can leave the organization and take those skills with them. On the other hand, capacity-building activities that focus on the organizational structure, such as the development of policies and strategic plans, can sit unused on the shelf or fail to exert actual influence on employees.

The BCS project used an approach based primarily on the empowerment model, though the BCS team identified methods for addressing capacity needs and recommendations on how to build it. Furthermore, the capacity-building project successfully served both individuals and organizations. As we will see in the coming chapters, both approaches served well in addressing short- and long-term capacity needs.

### **Delivery Systems**

The assortment of approaches, or methods, for undertaking capacity-building efforts are limited compared to the expansive range of topic area. The five primary methods identified by the research are 1) Consultation or technical assistance in the form of professional advice on an organizational problem; 2) Training in a group setting; 3) Professional coaching for organizational leadership, management, or staff; 4) Services provided that result in a work product (evaluation, fundraising plan) to help an organization achieve its objectives; and 5) Financial support, either for general operations or specific to capacity-building goods or services (Sobeck & Aguis, 2007; Sobeck, 2008; Cornforth & Mordaunt, 2011; Wing, 2004, Leake et al., 2007, Minzner et al., 2014). Additionally, services can include online information, peer networking and any other form of advice and assistance (Yung et al., 2008).

Leake et al. (2007) found that, of these approaches, the amount of total technical assistance provided to an organization was most predictive of its overall gains in organizational capacity. Furthermore, they found that organizations that received training, technical assistance, and subawards achieved higher gains on outcome areas and subscales than those participating only in workshops. These are the three primary methods by which the organizations in the BCS project engaged in their capacity-building activities. Coming chapters will show that the development of work products, while helpful in the short term, means less over time.

In addition, the process generally includes an organizational needs assessment to identify which areas of organizational capacity require intervention; the service provider then maps out a plan to build capacity for or with the participating organization. For example, Kapacu et al. (2011) evaluated a capacity-building program called ‘ADEPT,’ which interviewed 40 participating organizations at the commencement of the program to identify organizational needs, then developed workshops on the ten topic areas most important to building capacity.

Similarly, the BCS project, the basis for the current study, conducted an assessment using the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool, as well as an in-person interview with the leader(s) of each organization. This helped develop workplans to identify the most impactful capacity-building activities for each organization. The delivery of capacity-building measures took four forms, as identified above: 1) Individualized technical assistance; 2) Group training; 3) Service collaborations between agency staff and BCS support staff resulting in a product (for example, a fundraising plan or board manual); and 4) Financial assistance for related activities.

### **Measuring Success in Capacity Building**

Evaluation of program outcomes does not always rely on an empirical process, though nonprofits have responded to funders' demands for increased reporting and accountability. In the past two decades, the transition from output to outcome reporting has required the sector to focus more heavily on recordkeeping and results. However, evaluation of capacity-building processes has proven difficult: without a consistently-defined concept or approach for capacity building, it is nearly impossible to measure success. While tools to measure organizational capacity do exist, no one standard for measurement holds. Both qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods assessments are available (Krishnaveni & Aravamudhan, 2013; Krause et al., 2014). In a study of 24 tools intended for organizational capacity assessment, available publicly online, the authors determined that the average tool measures nine "domains" and 11 "subdomains." Of these, only one domain, Governance/Leadership/Management, remained consistent across all assessments (Krause et al., 2014).

Why is measurement so difficult? First, these multiple approaches, content areas, and objectives "thwart the development of an appropriate framework" for evaluation, according to Sobeck et al. (2007). Results and outcomes range in time (from intermediate to long-term), focus

(from serving more clients, to improving sustainability, to refinements in program delivery), and in emphasis (from internal systems to changes in adaptive capacity) (p. 39).

Furthermore, performance associated with successful outcomes in capacity-building programs are difficult to measure. Wing (2004) posed two salient arguments for this difficulty. First, there are no underlying measures of performance for many areas of capacity building. He asked, “How do we measure the performance of a board of directors? What is the measure of performance of strategic planning? By how many units of *what* is one planning process better than another?” (p. 156). Next, he pointed out the iterative nature of capacity building: goals change over the course of the process due to the interdependency of the organizational structures, and the consultants change the work plan in reaction. He asked, “How can an evaluator be deeply enough involved to capture the depth and complexity of the reality?” (p. 159).

Another challenge to the evaluation of capacity-building programs is the extended length of time required for changes to organizational structure and culture. Even when the “interventions” are completed, the results are sometimes not reflected in concrete form for months or years. As Wagner (2003) stated, “there are few quick fixes when it comes to building capacity, and in many cases, it is unrealistic and often counterproductive for capacity builders to demand immediate results, reported quarterly” (p. 109). Krause et al. (2014) agreed that organizational capacity assessment should be a continuous process.

Wing (2004) argued that expectations of immediate results are often coupled with unrealistic projections of outcomes—both in the short- and long-term. His argument is one that many grantors struggle with:

Many capacity-building initiatives are 1 to 2 years long. The longest tend to be 5 years long. Yet in a competitive proposal process, there is a tendency for agencies



in 2-year initiatives to promise 5-year outcomes (in 2 years), whereas agencies submitting to 5-year programs promise 10-year outcomes (in 5 years). Unfortunately, it is rare for an evaluation to extend much beyond the life of the initiative itself. Although it might make the most sense to look for 10-year outcomes after 10 years, the most likely scenario in a 5-year program is that the evaluation needs to deliver the goods early in the fourth year in time for the funder's board to consider whether the program should be renewed. After we factor in the first year it took for the initiative to get underway, we are usually looking at 2.5 years of effort toward 10-year goals and wondering why we are not more effective at capacity building (p. 157).

Yung et al. (2008) found that while capacity-building services are in demand, the smaller organizations that need it most generally lack the resources to pay. Finally, funding for capacity building itself is admittedly scarce. Capacity-building work is so resource-intensive that it limits the number of organizations able to participate. Strong evaluation designs increasingly depend on a large number of observations. While common sense would dictate that funders interested in strong systems and organizations would support evaluations of the program itself, a wide variety do not (Sobeck & Aguis, 2007; Kapacu et al., 2011).

### **Intervening Variables that Influence Capacity over Time**

The literature on capacity neglects one question entirely: which variables influence the level of capacity in an organization over time? Therefore, for the purposes of this study, I have identified potential variables from nonprofit effectiveness literature to consider for this effect. I included these as prompts in interviewing nonprofit leaders about possible causes of changes in capacity over time.

As board effectiveness is arguably the most explored topic in nonprofit effectiveness, I include this intervening variable in my exploration. Several studies correlate board and organizational effectiveness (Herman & Renz, 2000, 2004, 2008; Bradshaw et al., 1992), finding specifically that strategic planning is more likely to be present in effective organizations. (Brown, 2005). While many effective board practices appear in assessments of capacity, the individual advocacy of board members was ultimately found to be the important variable in successfully maintaining or increasing capacity.

Another element that can affect organizational effectiveness in nonprofits is the CEO or executive director. Herman and Heimovics described the nonprofit staff leader as the individual perceived to be centrally responsible for outcomes (p. 171) and therefore key in the capacity-building process. They argued that effective CEOs provide leadership for their boards and the organization (p. 174), rendering them the ability to increase investment in capacity-building efforts and their success. In fact, this study found that staff leadership was viewed as a, if not *the*, primary reason for success in maintained or increased capacity over time.

As the two primary forms of leadership for nonprofit organizations, the board and the CEO can inspire, or de-incentivize, capacity-building efforts. Two additional environmental factors exist, though they are not specifically tied to organizational effectiveness in the literature. First, funding of the nonprofit organization can affect the retention of capacity, by directly or indirectly financing capacity-building activities. Second, technology such as lower-cost webinars or tracking systems could help the nonprofit leader increase organizational capacity.

### **Findings of Empirical Research on Capacity Building Programs**

To date, capacity building-programs are evaluated in three primary areas. First, did the program actually affect the capacity of the organization as desired? Second, did increased

capacity enhance the organization's effectiveness in service delivery? Finally, a cost-benefit analysis helps decide whether the capacity-building program was worth it.

For the reasons cited above, few quantitative evaluations measure the effectiveness of capacity-building programs. Those that do have revealed that: 1) External environmental factors (funding trends, client needs) influence the propensity of grassroots nonprofit organizations to participate in capacity-building interventions; 2) Exposure to capacity-building interventions will increase participants' likelihood of pursuing subsequent capacity-building interventions; and 3) Participation in capacity-building interventions will lead to a self-reported increase in usable knowledge (Kapucu et al., 2011; Sobeck, 2007; Minzner et al., 2014). Furthermore, no significant differences were found between the success of faith- vs. community-based organizations or across organizational age (Minzner et al., 2014).

### **Linking capacity to organizational effectiveness**

Eisenberg's (2002) study of capacity in grassroots food assistance programs in Detroit measured organizational performance and capacity in five areas: resources, effective leadership, skilled and sufficient staffing, level of institutionalization, and links to the larger community. He found that programs with more paid staff are likely to be more effective, and that institutionalization, in the form of computerized recordkeeping, contributes modestly to organizational effectiveness. However, neither formalization of processes or planning nor networking with other organizations for technical assistance contributed to overall organizational effectiveness.

Paynter and Berner (2014) found that while leadership capacity is positively associated with increased capacity, the resulting increase on the number of clients served (again, in a study of grassroots food assistance programs) is weak. Organizations with higher capacities for

leadership are 1.11 times more likely to increase the number of clients by only one, relative to those with lower leadership capacity scores. The same patterns were found for management, resource strategies, operational activities, and network strength.

In Minzner et al.'s (2014) randomized control study of capacity-building programs, organizations demonstrated increased capacity in five core areas (organizational development, program development, revenue development, leadership development, and community engagement). However, there was no significant impact on the actual number of clients served or the number of organizations that added or expanded program areas during the evaluation period.

### **Cost-benefit analysis**

The findings related to cost-benefit analysis come from a single study (Sobeck, 2008). The study used a sample of 125 grassroots organizations (1,445 individuals) that participated in capacity building or other efforts aimed at improving organizational effectiveness over a five-year period. The major findings of the multi-regression analysis are below:

1. There is a link between the level of investment in capacity building and the intermediate outcomes of increased planning, grant writing, and evaluation. As investment increased, organizations were more likely to plan on a regular basis, understand how to link community needs to program ideas, and define activities and identify resources needed to carry out program plans. Greater investment made organizations more likely to report more confidence in grant writing, knowledge about grant opportunities, and understanding of what funders are looking for in grant applications.
2. A modest investment in these grassroots organizations can yield a significant return. For example, a \$3,317 investment per organization, over five years, makes groups

substantially more likely to employ process and outcome evaluations. The annual investment required for grant writing is \$3,262, and for planning is \$3,262.

3. The age, staff, and budget of the participating organization was related to the investment. Organizations with lower budgets and smaller staffs may need other resources in addition to educational sessions to build their infrastructure. Younger organizations were more likely to realize benefits in terms of grant writing and planning.
4. Participants did not report increased contacts or support as a result of attending capacity-building educational sessions. Setting time aside during educational sessions for discussions and networking may provide more opportunities for interaction, peer sharing, and support.
5. Fund development was not affected. Although capacity in grant writing was significant improved, no significant increase in fund development was indicated (Sobeck, 2008).

### **Critique of the Capacity-Building Literature**

In reviewing the literature on capacity building and organizational effectiveness, three primary themes deserve comment.

To begin, most of the literature on capacity building is descriptive, but lacks consensus. Scholars cannot agree on definitions, purpose, dimensions, or a single theory of organizational effectiveness to focus dimensions. Future work should seek to synthesize current definitions and dimensions of capacity building for further study.

Second, empirical evidence linking capacity to organizational effectiveness is scant and weak (Herman & Renz, 1998; Sobeck & Aguis, 2007; Light, 2004; Wing, 2004). According to the evidence above, the strongest link established between capacity building and increased effectiveness was that of Paynter & Berner (2014), who found a factor increase of 1.11 in

organizational effectiveness among organizations with increased capacity. Without this link, scholars may need to reconsider the overall benefits of capacity building. Is the injection of funding to help nonprofits operate at a higher capacity worthwhile without an impact on mission achievement? Are there other benefits (reduced turnover of staff and volunteers, financial stability, etc.) that make it worth it?

Third, longitudinal studies on the effects of capacity building are absent. In fact, searches for ‘capacity building in nonprofits’ turned up no long-term studies of its sustainability. As a result, we have no evidence to indicate that capacity, once “built” in an organization, lasts beyond the immediate evaluation term. Therefore, foundations and government funding are supporting organizations that, while initially compliant with the capacity-building program according to the prescribed measures, may not continue on that arc. What happens after active capacity-building efforts have concluded? What factors affect the ability of the organization to maintain, grow, or shrink organizational capacity? These are the questions I set out to explore in this research study.

With so much undefined and unanswered regarding capacity building in nonprofit organizations, this dissertation cannot fill all gaps. Instead, I will focus my research on the behavior of organizations following an intensive capacity-building intervention. The Research Questions guiding this study are:

1. How does organizational capacity change over time after an intensive capacity-building program?
2. What intervening variables impact an organization's ability to continue to increase organizational capacity over time after an intensive capacity-building program?

In the next chapter, I will describe the mixed-methods research used to answer these questions.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

For this empirical analysis, I employed a mixed-methods approach to examine and describe the knowledge, perceptions, and experiences of nonprofit leaders regarding longitudinal change in organizational capacity, and the intervening variables that influenced the change, after an intensive capacity-building program. The Research Questions guiding the study include:

1. How does organizational capacity change over time after an intensive capacity-building program?
2. What intervening variables impact an organization's ability to continue to increase organizational capacity over time after an intensive capacity-building program?

In this chapter, I first discuss the project history that informed initial participant selection, data collection, and methodological decisions. I then explain the mixed-methods research design employed in this study, followed by an exploration of its limitations and strengths.

#### **Historical Overview**

In September 2009, three institutions in Athens, GA, including two community-based nonprofit organizations and The University of Georgia Institute for Nonprofit Organizations, partnered to launch a project named *Building Community Services That Grow Local Economies* (BCS), which was federally funded by the Administration for Children and Families. BCS provided intensive capacity-building training, technical assistance, and funding to 45 nonprofit and faith-based organizations in Northeast Georgia. The project focused on the following five broad areas of capacity building: 1) organizational development, 2) program development, 3)

collaboration and community engagement, 4) leadership development, and 5) evaluation of effectiveness. Upon an organization's application to the program, BSC staff administered an instrument, the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool, that measured enhanced capacities at the organizational level. The project and data collection took place from September 2009 through October 2011 via two cycles of service delivery. A timeline can be found in Appendix K.

### **BCS Application Process**

The BCS service area covered five Northeast Georgia counties: Barrow, Clarke, Elbert, Greene, and Jackson Counties, all identified based on high poverty rates. Recruitment outreach included email announcements to nonprofit and faith-based listservs, flyer distribution to nonprofit, faith-based, and state-funded agencies, informational meetings held in each county, and other methods. A Request for Proposals (RFP) was distributed, with BCS project staff providing technical support as needed. Organizations were expected to provide evidence of charitable activity in one or more of the eligible counties, but were not required to be tax-exempt according to section 501(c)(3), to allow for inclusion of faith-based programming.

An advisory committee comprised of the lead institutions, key partners, and officials from each eligible county reviewed and ranked applications. Federal funding guidelines suggested giving priority to nonprofits or faith-based organizations with 1) budgets of less than \$500,000, 2) partnerships with the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services regarding access to TANF funds, and 3) the ability to respond to organizational needs, expand services, diversify funding, engage in effective long-term planning, and create collaborations that enhance performance, in three major areas:

1. Creating a system of support that transitions clients from unemployment to self-sustainability;



2. Helping clients overcome barriers to securing and retaining employment; and
3. Partnering with public and private sectors to increase job creation and business retention and expansion activities.

Nonprofit and faith-based organizations submitted applications, preassessed by the Point K tool, over two cycles, in order to maximize the number of organizations served. The cycles were differentiated only by timing. Overall, 47 organizations were accepted into one or both cycles and awarded up to \$30,000 each per cycle. Of those, two organizations opted not to participate, leaving a total of 45 participants served over the two cycles.

### **Program Activities**

Upon acceptance, BCS project staff reviewed each application and Point K organizational assessment, and engaged in an initial qualitative interview with each participating organization. This process assessed needs and developed an individualized action-oriented idiosyncratic work-plan for enhancing organizational effectiveness (see a sample in Appendix I). The work-plans suggested specific customized training and technical assistance, offered by the BCS program, based on applications, interviews, and the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool (see Evaluation and Assessment section below), and outlined capacity-building activities associated with awarded funding, if applicable. Organizations worked with BCS staff to ensure participation in the recommended activities, with graduate students monitoring the work plan and reporting to appropriate staff members and the independent evaluator.

Work plans outlined the training, technical assistance, and financial assistance provided to each organization across the five broad areas defined by the grant: 1) organizational development, 2) program development, 3) collaboration and community engagement, 4) leadership development, and 5) evaluation of effectiveness, depending on the specific needs of

the organization. Both training and technical assistance were provided by a team of experts based in three lead partner organizations, with additional local experts called in for specific topics. This team included the current and past directors of UGA's Institute for Nonprofit Organizations, several local nonprofit experts or executive directors with specific areas of expertise, and a project coordinator. In addition, some technical assistance activities were completed by masters-level graduate assistants enrolled in the Managing Nonprofit Organizations Master's degree program and overseen by leadership from the Institute for Nonprofit Organizations.

All BCS participants received both training and technical assistance. Trainings, typically BCS-coordinated workshops with other agencies regarding a specific topic, were held at public locations and designed to include active-learning elements and discussion, rather than lectures. For example, "Board Development: Roles and Responsibilities" outlined both the fiduciary and practical responsibilities of a board of directors, and led discussions regarding participants' experiences with the topic. Another session, led by a local expert and former director of UGA's Institute for Nonprofit Organizations, engaged participants in how to develop a fundraising plan. In a third, a lead staff member of the local HandsOn volunteer program covered volunteer management topics. Overall, 52 training sessions were offered over the two cycles of the program (a full list of trainings can be found in Appendix B).

Technical assistance refers to capacity-building activities implemented in partnership with, and for the benefit of, individual organizations (a full list of activities can be found in Appendix C). For example, several organizations opted to be led through strategic-planning processes, including mission review and the development of multi-year plans. Project staff also worked with individual organizations to develop customized fundraising, evaluation, or

volunteer management plans. In addition, project staff worked with individual organizations to critique and develop marketing materials.

Additionally, most organizations were awarded funding (up to \$30,000 per organization) to complete capacity-building activities, such as specialized training not offered locally, the purchase and training of new fund-tracking or accounting software, or the purchase and installation of computers and systems for use by staff.

Overall, the BCS program worked with 45 community and faith-based nonprofits in northeast Georgia, and awarded a total of \$600,221 in funding, to support capacity-building activities. Organizations engaged in 981 total hours of training (via 52 sessions) and 2,294 hours of technical assistance. The breakdown of these hours per activity area is shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Total Training and Technical Assistance Hours Provided

<b>Critical Area</b>	<b>Training Hours</b>	<b>TA Hours</b>
Organizational Development	456.5	1372.25
Leadership Development	341.5	443
Collaboration and Community Engagement	98	295.5
Evaluation of Effectiveness	45	97.5
Program Development	40	85.75
	<b>981</b>	<b>2294</b>

### **Assessment and Evaluation**

Upon application to the program, organizations self-administered the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool, a multidimensional online organizational assessment (see questions in Appendix A) developed by Innovation Network, Inc. (<http://www.innonet.org>). Upon completion of training and/or technical assistance, each participating organization completed the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool post-intervention measure. Specifically, the pre-test measured overall organizational functioning, using a total organizational developmental stage score that combined seven capacity dimension scores, for organizational

planning, organizational structure, leadership abilities, fundraising practices, finance and accountability, communication practices, and evaluation practices.

Each dimension identified the presence or absence of organizational capacity indicators—either specific activities or use of tools—by the organization. For example, the organizational planning dimension inquired into the presence and scope of a current mission statement, strategic plan, and operational plan. The organizational structure dimension measured an organization’s board, staff, and volunteer structure and training, as well as adherence to standard responsibilities. It also explored the presence and modernity of technology. Leadership abilities centered on the organizational leader’s vision, strategic thinking, and communication styles. The fourth dimension, fundraising practices, included questions about fundraising plans, staff and board responsibility for fundraising, and communication with funders. Finance and accountability focused on budgeting, auditing, diversity of the organization’s fundraising portfolio, and risk management. Communication practices related to marketing and communication plans and materials. Finally, evaluation practices included questions regarding program evaluations, as well as organization-level evaluations based on strategic planning.

The BCS program staff collected and entered the pre- and post-intervention Point K Organizational Assessment Tool responses on an Excel spreadsheet (see the code book in Appendix H for translation). The majority of the questions on the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool ask if the organization has a document or system in place (for example, a strategic plan, volunteer manual, or a fundraising plan). For these types of questions, responses were coded as follows: 1 = Yes, 2 = No, 3 = Don’t Know, 4 = N/A, 5 = In process of creating. For time-related, time quantity (Always, Sometimes, etc.), and multiple-choice questions, numbers were assigned to represent the various responses.

## **BCS Program Data**

Upon review, seven of the 45 participating organizations had left the post-intervention Point K Organizational Assessment tool partially blank or failed to complete it altogether. These were removed from this study, leaving 38 organizations represented in Point K pre-intervention and post-intervention data. A description of these agencies' basic organizational characteristics and respective BCS program cycle(s) can be found in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Organizations Included in BCS Project Data

Cycle		Current Research	Agency Issue Area	PRE-INVOLVEMENT			CURRENT		
1	2			Annual Budget	Employees		Annual Budget	Employees	
					Full Time	Part Time		Full Time	Part Time
X		X	Homeless Services	\$ 498,294	4	11	\$ 600,000	6	7
X		X	Education	\$ 107,000	1	0	*	*	*
X		X	Aging	\$ 3,271,057	44	54	\$ 4,250,000	57	45
X		X	Child Services	\$ 354,000	4	1	\$ 600,000	8	0
X	X	X	Health	\$ 201,000	1	0	\$ 750,000	4	0
X	X	X	Homeless Services	\$ 506,281	2	0	\$ 216,000	2	1
	X	X	Transportation	\$ 18,520	0	1	\$ 90,000	2	0
	X	X	Technology	\$ -	0	0	\$ 27,500	0	0
	X	X	Homeless Services	\$ -	0	0	\$ -	0	0
X			Adult Education	\$ 20,005	0	1			
X			Education	*	*	*			
X			Education	\$ 111,000	2	1			
X			Latinx Services	\$ 35,600	0	1			
X			Education	\$ 138,000	2	0			
X			Child Services	\$ 338,078	6	1			
X			Domestic Violence	\$ 1,005,098	*	*			
X			Financial Assistance	\$ 134,110	0	0			
X			Child Services	\$ 442,211	9	2			
X			Childcare	\$ 549,000	23	9			
X	X		Mental Health & Developmental Disability	\$ 1,254,000	20	0			
X	X		Advocacy	\$ 43,776	0	2			
X	X		Advocacy	\$ 92,000	1	1			
X	X		Disability Services	\$ 527,150	*	*			
X	X		Childcare	\$ 27,900	0	0			
X	X		Employment	\$ 213,360	0	0			
X	X		Economic Development	\$ 275,900	3	4			
	X		Housing	\$ 732,348	2	4			
	X		Education	\$ 37,952	1	0			
	X		Homeless Services	\$ 134,895	0	0			
	X		Education	\$ 71,000	2	0			
	X		Domestic Violence	\$ 674,943	7	4			
	X		Child Services	\$ 1,500,000	22	0			
	X		Child Services	\$ 143,530	3	1			
	X		Substance Abuse	\$ 640,136	5	2			
	X		Financial Assistance & Homeless Services	\$ 975,535	10	4			
	X		Homeless Services	\$ 101,000	1	1			
	X		Financial Assistance & Homeless Services	\$ 30,000	0	1			
	X		Adult Education	\$ 110,000	1	0			
* indicates data that could not be identified									

Chapter 4 will describe the pre- and post-intervention organizational capacity across these 38 agencies, based on BCS Point K data, for the purpose of providing background to this research. Additionally, I engaged a smaller sample of these 38 organizations in further data collection. This wave of subsample data collection, which took place February-October 2019, proceeded in

two parts. First, the organizational leader completed the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool to reflect their present-day organizational capacity; second, the organizational leader participated in an in-depth semi-structured interview regarding organizational capacity. For the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool, I engaged in the same process described above, using the same code book (Appendix H) to code the responses for the subsample.

For this current phase of research, I began with the 38 organizations for which we had data from the BCS project, and engaged those that met the following criteria:

1. Organizations that participated in either one or both cycles of the BCS project, completing both the pre- and post-test assessments;
2. Organizations physically located within and serving Clarke County, GA. This criterion ensured that selected organizations were serving the same semi-urban community;
3. Organizations that had obtained and maintained 501(c)(3) status;
4. Organizations that were in operation at the time of this research study; and
5. Organizations that responded to my request for participation and participated in data collection, including the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool and an in-depth semi-structured interview.

Of the 38 organizations examined in the quantitative portion of this study, 21 met requirements 1 and 2. Of those, 18 organizations also met requirement 4, as three organizations had ceased operations (dissolving or merging) since 2011. Of the 18 organizations that met the above criteria and were approached for participation in this research study, nine responded favorably to my request. It is worth noting that, of the nine organizations that participated in the qualitative, subsample phase of research, seven had experienced at least one change in leadership since the BCS project.

Patton (2002) stated that there are no set rules for the size of the sample when analyzing interviews for qualitative research. Guba and Lincoln (1994) suggested that the researcher continue conducting interviews until the point of saturation, or when the researcher is repeatedly hearing the same data. I found that after the initial six interviews, the interview questions were yielding similar responses, with little new information forthcoming. An additional three interviews were conducted to ensure that the point of saturation had been met.

### **Research Design**

The nature of the research questions guiding this study led me to determine that a mixed-methods research design was most appropriate. Lee asserted that a mixed-methods design allows the researcher to "create a set of complimentary data-gathering activities that compensate for the weakness of individual tactics" (1999, p. 14). The first research question, along with the existing data from the BCS project, lends itself to a quantitative design that provides description of the organizations at three points in time, as shown by their organizational capacity assessments. The second research question is more exploratory in nature, seeking to understand a broader phenomenon that benefits from a qualitative design. According to Merriam and Simpson (2000), "If you want to understand a phenomenon, uncover the meaning a situation has for those involved, or delineate process—how things happen—then a qualitative design would be most appropriate" (p. 99).

Though this study included both quantitative and qualitative portions, as outlined below, the limited number of participants meant that qualitative research and analysis comprised the majority of activity. Lee referred to this as a dominant-less dominant design, where, "within a qualitative study, a small quantitative component is designed into the research (or the reverse)" (Lee, 1999, p. 13). The quantitative research explored the character of the capacity of the original



BCS organizations. The qualitative research outlined below built on this analysis with an exploration into which variables played a role in determining these outcomes.

### **Internal Review Board**

Because new data was being collected for this research, application was made to the University of Georgia Internal Review Board (IRB). The IRB determined the research to be exempt, as it is focused on the organization (not human subjects) and posed nominal threats to those engaging in the study. Interviewees were asked to read and sign an informed consent agreement prior to each interview (see Appendix F), with an option to allow the interview to be audio recorded. All consented.

### **Quantitative Design**

The quantitative portion of my research included univariate analysis of reported data on the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool at two points in time: prior to the BCS intervention (pre-assessment) and immediately following the organization's engagement in BCS (post-assessment). To provide background for the first research question of this study (How does organizational capacity change over time after an intensive capacity building program?), I first describe, in aggregate, the organizational data from the Point K pre-assessment and compare those to Point K post-intervention assessment data. This provides context regarding the state of participating organizations and changes to the seven dimensions on the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool, including organizational planning, organizational structure, leadership abilities, fundraising practices, finance and accountability, communication practices, and evaluation practices. For the subsample research, I collected data for the nine organizations who agreed to participate: these are also described below, in aggregate, to provide an overview of how these organizations have changed over time.

## **Qualitative Design**

For the qualitative portion of my research, I engaged in in-depth, semi-structured interviews with the nine participants who met the selection criteria outlined above. At the core of in-depth interviewing is “an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience” (Seidman, 2013, p. 9). According to Lee, “semi-structured interviews usually have an overarching topic, general themes, targeted issues, and specific questions, with a predetermined sequence for their occurrence...overall, the semi-structured interview should maintain a balance between free-flowing and directed conversation” (1999, p. 62).

To design the interview, I employed three types of linked questions, as posed by Rubin & Rubin (2012):

Main questions assure that the separate parts of a research question are answered. Probes are standard expressions that encourage interviewees to keep talking on the subject, providing examples and details. Follow-up questions ask interviewees to elaborate on key concepts, themes, ideas, or events that they have mentioned to provide the researcher with more depth (p. 6).

In designing the probes, I considered their guidance that

Probes are questions, comments, or gestures used by the interviewer to help manage the conversation. Some probes encourage the interviewee to keep talking on the matter at hand to complete an idea or fill in a missing piece. Others request clarification." (Rubin & Rubin, 2012, p. 118).

As a semi-structured interview, the opportunity for and execution of follow-up questions are determined by the interviewer.

The first interview questions, as outlined in the Interview Guide (Appendix E) were designed to help this researcher understand the role of the interviewee representing each organization, and their knowledge of the history of the organization since 2011. In addition, the initial questions sought to uncover how the organization is different today than it was when the BCS project ended, exploring changes in programming, funding, leadership, and staffing. These are important questions for the research, and also aided in making the interviewee comfortable and establishing them as an expert on their organization.

Next, the questions sought to uncover the interviewee's understanding and perception of organizational capacity by asking them to define it and list its components. Questions regarding the link between organizational capacity and organizational effectiveness were posed as well. For example, participants were asked, "Do organizations perform more effectively when their capacity is 'higher'?"

After broadly asking about changes in capacity across dimension since 2011, I probed to learn how and why capacity has changed. Specifically, I asked which exact changes to capacity have occurred, and whether the changes were caused by specific factors.

Finally, I designed questions regarding the internal and external factors that might be associated with capacity change, including board and staff leadership, internal staffing, external funding availability or requirements, pressure or requirements from state or national parent organizations or isomorphism, and changing nonprofit culture. I completed each interview with an open-ended question, asking for any additional information that the interviewee might find important related to capacity building. Following each interview, I uploaded an audio data file to an online transcription service, which returned a transcript to me within 48 hours.

## **Qualitative Data Analysis**

Qualitative data analysis refers to the process of creating meaning out of the participants' words, or as Merriam (1998) explained, it is "the process of making sense out of the data" (p. 178). Furthermore, in-depth interviews require a high level of data organization and management before performing quantitative analysis (Seidman, 2013). Merriam (2009) explained that an inductive process requires the skill to "think inductively, moving from specific raw data to abstract categories and concepts" (p.17). Therefore, written transcripts were reviewed multiple times prior to systematically coding them according to concepts and themes.

Once I had conducted a critical mass of interviews and collected the transcripts, I dissected the transcript passages according to the question posed. For each question, I designated a tab on an Excel spreadsheet and compiled chunks of data from each interview under the associated tab. As transcriptions became available, I continued this process for each.

For each data entry, I then assigned at least one code describing each general theme area, by entering it in the cell(s) to the right of the excerpt or passage. In this inductive approach, "one begins with a unit of data (any meaningful word, phrase, narrative, etc.) and compares it to another unit of data, and so on, all the while looking for common patterns across the data." (Merriam & Associates, 2002, p. 14). I followed the advice of Rubin & Rubin (2012) who wrote, "early in the process, it is safer to code passages with multiple possible codes rather than make an arbitrary decision and risk losing information you could use" (p. 200). As this topic of research has not—to this point—been explored in the literature,

Concepts and themes emerge from the data without reference to the literature, and they emerge bit by bit as the researcher examines each passage sequentially. Using this approach, you don't select your codes in advance, define and refine them, and then mark

up the text; you find and, if necessary, modify your concepts and themes as you go along" (Rubin & Rubin, 2012, p. 204).

I thus created themes and sub themes as they emerged, by reading and rereading the data and utilizing the constant comparison method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Merriam, 2009), which provides a framework to scan for categories and relationships, compare among categories, and generate meaning to help understand the experiences of the participants. Maykut & Morehouse further noted that "as each new unit of meaning is selected for analysis, it is compared to all other units of meaning and subsequently grouped (categorized and coded) with similar units of meaning" (p. 134). As I coded and categorized themes, I compared and contrasted the data chunks, making notes for pattern similarities and dissimilarities.

Once all interviews were coded, I sorted each tab on the spreadsheet to group themes together. I then read the sort file for each code, and summarized the findings.

### **Trustworthiness**

I employed two primary strategies to bolster the trustworthiness of the study: member checks and peer review. According to Maxwell, member checks are the "single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what participants say and do and the perspective they have on what is going on, as well as being an important way of identifying your own biases and misunderstanding" (2005, p. 111). For this study, I reached out to participants to request clarification on their statements when necessary.

Peer review includes "discussions with colleagues regarding the process of study, the congruency of emerging findings with the raw data, and tentative interpretations" (Merriam, 2009, p.229). For this study, I repeatedly consulted with two colleagues in higher education who specialize in nonprofit organizations to ensure that my interpretations of the data were consistent

with expectations for the field. While discussions were broad in nature, they helped me to define possible intervening variables that appear below, and confirmed the findings as reasonable within nonprofit boundaries.

### **Limitations**

The intent of this study was not to quantify the change in organizational capacity in the studied organizations, but rather to explore the following research questions:

1. How does organizational capacity change after an intensive capacity-building program?
2. What intervening variables impact an organization's ability to continue to increase organizational capacity after an intensive capacity-building program?

Still, there are several threats to the validity and reliability of this research. The research design itself introduces threats related to validity, specifically history, maturation, and attrition. First, history could contribute to confounded results, which occur when "we cannot separate the effects of the independent variable from the possible effects of extraneous variables" (Singleton & Straits, 2010, p. 231). The longitudinal nature of this research means that outside events will have affected the organization and the perception of the reporting individual, and possibly the outcome of the study. For example, over the course of this study, the nonprofit sector has increased reliance on and attention to best practices (including increased engagement in strategic planning, board governance, and evaluation). Participating organizations have likely heeded some of these moves toward professionalization. A second example may be the lack of federal or local funding that supports capacity-building work since the BCS project took place. However, by including only organizations in Clarke County, who have similar local experiences and, to some extent, environmental pressures, I attempted to mitigate these factors.

Maturation is also a concern for this study. Singleton & Straits suggested that "Over a long-term experiment, subjects may grow physically or intellectually, become more rigid or more tolerant...the effects of such maturational factors may be confounded with treatment effects" (2010, p. 231). The longitudinal design may have intensified these effects: the organization may have evolved, and, in some cases, leadership changed, meaning an entirely different individual with a new perspective completed the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool. In terms of mitigation, little could be done. However, I noted leadership changes and explained historical events that may have influenced the organization.

Additionally, differential attrition likely poses a threat to the internal validity of the study. That is, those who do not participate may differ in important ways from the ones who remain in study. (Singleton & Straits, 2010, p. 234). For instance, at least three of the organizations that participated in the BCS project were no longer in operation, and were therefore excluded from the post-test. Furthermore, selective attrition by those who do not consider organizational capacity to be important or worth the time could have skewed results, leaving a sample of only organizations more successful in maintaining capacity since the beginning of the project. Organizations with longer-term leaders, with whom I had relationships in the initial phase of the project, were more likely to respond to the request for follow up. Interestingly, several organizational leaders that I expected to participate did not do so.

However, this study has counterbalancing strengths, and, though small in scale, makes important contributions to the literature. The field has not yet explored longitudinal data surrounding capacity building in nonprofit organizations. In addition, qualitative studies regarding capacity building are scant. As far as I can tell, this study will be the first to analyze leaders' perceptions of organizational capacity.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF PRE- AND POST-INTERVENTION RESEARCH

I utilized univariate analysis to provide background for the first research question of this study:

*How does organizational capacity change over time after an intensive capacity-building*

*program?* Describing aggregate data from the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool at two points in time—pre- and post-intervention—provides context on the participating organizations and the short-term intervention outcomes achieved during the project.

Data and sample indicators were described in each of seven dimensions that align with the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool: Organizational Planning, Organizational Structure, Leadership, Fundraising, Finance and Accountability, Communication, and Evaluation. Pre- and post-intervention results included descriptions and analyses from the 38 qualifying organizations.

BCS staff created workplans for each organization in response to pre-intervention Point K assessments and interviews with each organization's leaders. The workplans carried out by each organization detailed training and technical assistance activities that addressed pre-intervention deficits. Therefore, it was expected, and proved true, that post-intervention results on the Point K assessment were substantially higher than pre-intervention assessment results.

#### **Pre-intervention to Post-intervention Results**

##### **Pre-Intervention**

Of the 38 organizations, 37 (or 97.4%) reported having a written mission statement. The sole organization that did not have a written mission statement prior to engagement in the BCS program was a department within a local school system. More than half (55.3%) had created core



values or were in the process of doing so (10.5%), while 34.2% did not have them or did not know if they had them.

Strategic plans were in place (50.0%) or in the process of being developed (13.6%) for more than half of the organizations prior to their engagement in the BCS project. The remaining 28.6% did not have strategic plans or were unaware of their existence. A little less than half of the organizations (31.6%) had an annual operating work plan or were working on developing one (18.4%). While there was some consistency between strategic plans and operating work plans, more organizations (50%) did not have an annual operating work plan or one in progress.

Table 3.3: Organizational Planning Indicators

Organizational Planning	Pre-Intervention (n=38)					Post-Intervention (n=38)				
	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating
Mission Statement	37 (97.4%)	1 (2.6%)				37 (97.4%)				1 (2.6%)
Core values	21 (55.3%)	10 (26.3%)	2 (5.3%)	1 (2.6%)	4 (10.5%)	28 (73.7%)	5 (13.2%)		1 (2.6%)	4 (10.5%)
Strategic plan	19 (50.0%)	13 (34.2%)	1 (2.6%)		5 (13.2%)	21 (55.3%)	3 (7.9%)			14 (36.9%)
Annual operating plan	12 (36.6%)	18 (47.4%)	1 (2.6%)		7 (18.4%)	21 (55.3%)	6 (15.8%)			11 (28.9%)

## Post-Intervention

Post-intervention, the single organization without a mission statement was in the process of creating one. In terms of organizational core values, 73.7% (up from 55.3%) of organizations had these in place, with another 10.5% in the process of creating them. Just over half (55.3%) had a strategic plan in place, consistent with pre-intervention status. However, another 37% were in the process of creating their strategic plan, up from 13.2% prior to intervention. Similarly, participants had an annual operating work plan either in place (55.3%) or in development (29%).

## Discussion of Organizational Planning Changes

Overall, organizations demonstrated an increase in all areas of organizational planning indicators following the intervention, with the presence of annual plans and strategic plans showing the largest growth. Prior to the intervention, 36.6% of organizations had an annual plan in place, with another 18.4% in the process of creating one (totaling 55% of organizations with a plan in place or in progress). Post-intervention, 55.5% of organizations had an annual plan in place, with another 28.9% in the process of creating one (for a total of 84.2%). The change in pre- to post-intervention totaled 29.2%.

While the proportion of organizations with a strategic plan in place only increased 5.3% (from 50% in pre-intervention to 55.3% in post-intervention), the proportion that reported that they were in process of creating a strategic plan rose 23.7% (from 13.2% in pre-intervention to 36.9% in post-intervention).

This increase demonstrates that organizations desire annual and strategic plans, but may not have had access to (or the resources to access) annual or strategic planning processes. That is, the organizations readily identified (in the development of their individualized workplans) the need to develop long- and short-term organizational goals, and the BCS program offered the resources (facilitators for the planning process, the emphasis on the need for boards and staff to attend to these needs) at no cost to the organizations. The high proportion of organizations opting to leverage this resource may speak to the lack of strategic and annual planning resources in the community and/or their affordability for nonprofits. Alternatively, it may indicate that traditionally under-resourced nonprofits take a ‘day-by-day’ approach to completing tasks and goals; they don’t have the time or capacity to focus on longer-term goals and strategies. As strategic planning is traditionally a board-driven process, I would expect there to be some correlation between board capacity and strategic planning.

## **Organizational Structure**

### **Pre-Intervention**

All (100%) organizations reported having a board of directors, though fewer (21%) reported the existence of stated terms or knew of them. In terms of processes, 63% reported that they conducted board orientations, and only 26.3% utilized a board matrix outlining the ideal makeup of their Board. While 94.7% of organizations reported having bylaws, only 76.3% were confident that the bylaws reflected their organization's current operations at the time.

Just over half (57.9%) affirmed that their board members reviewed the performance of the executive director based on his/her written job description. Of the remaining organizations, 29% reported no, while 10.7% reported that it was not applicable, likely because they did not have an executive director based in the organization. Similarly, in regard to staff job descriptions and evaluations, results likely are skewed by those organizations that do not have staff. For example, 76.3% reported having job descriptions for staff or being in the process of creating them (7.9%), while 15.8% reported no job descriptions. Annual employee performance evaluations were conducted by 60.5% of respondents, with an additional 10.5% indicating that these are in development.

A majority (92.1%) of organizations utilized volunteers, with 39.5% reporting written job descriptions for volunteers, and an equal number with none. The remaining organizations did not know (2.6%), were in the process of creating them (10.5%), or the question was not applicable to their organization (7.9%). Similarly, 34.2% of organizations had developed volunteer handbooks, while 47.4% had not. For 7.9% it was not applicable, and another 7.9% were in the process of developing handbooks.

Just over half (54.1%) had a written policies and procedures manual, compared to 32.4% that did not. The remainder either did not know (2.7%) or were in the process of creating one (10.8%). Regarding basic forms for repetitive tasks (such as time sheets, travel expenses, etc.) most organizations reported using these forms (70.3%) or being in the process of developing them (8.1%).

Table 3.4: Organizational Structure Indicators

Organizational Structure	Pre-Intervention (n=38)					Post-Intervention (n=38)				
	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating
Board of Directors	38 (100.0%)					38 (100.0%)				
Stated terms at election	30 (79.0%)	6 (15.8%)	2 (5.3%)			35 (92.1%)	3 (7.9%)			
Matrix utilized for ideal board composition	10 (26.3%)	25 (65.8%)	2 (5.3%)		1 (2.6%)	29 (76.3%)	6 (15.8%)			3 (7.9%)
Board orientation	24 (63.2%)	12 (31.6%)	2 (5.3%)			32 (84.2%)	6 (15.8%)			
Bylaws	36 (94.7%)	1 (2.6%)			1 (2.6%)	37 (97.4%)	1 (2.6%)			
Executive Director review	22 (57.9%)	11 (29.0%)	1 (2.6%)	4 (10.7%)		30 (78.9%)	8 (21.1%)			
Staff job descriptions	29 (76.3%)	6 (15.8%)			3 (7.9%)	36 (86.8%)	1 (2.6%)		1 (2.6%)	
Staff reviews	23 (60.5%)	10 (26.3%)	1 (2.6%)		4 (10.5%)	23 (60.5%)	6 (15.8%)			9 (23.7%)
Volunteer job descriptions	15 (39.5%)	15 (39.5%)	1 (2.6%)	3 (7.9%)	4 (10.5%)	25 (65.8%)	8 (21.1%)		1 (2.6%)	4 (10.5%)
Policy and Procedure Manual	20 (54.1%)	12 (32.4%)	1 (2.7%)		4 (10.8%)	27 (71.1%)	5 (13.2%)			6 (15.8%)
Forms for repetitive tasks	26 (70.3%)	8 (21.6%)			3 (8.1%)	35 (92.1%)	3 (7.9%)			

## Post-Intervention

In the post intervention phase, 100% of organizations reported still having a board of directors in place. In the post-intervention reporting, approximately 50% more organizations

(76.3%) utilized a matrix to outline the ideal makeup of the board than in the pre-intervention reporting. Similarly, 92.1% of board members had stated terms and 84.2% of organizations offered new board member orientations. Nearly all reported having bylaws, consistent with pre-intervention reporting, and 79% of organizations reported that board members reviewed the performance of the executive director based on his or her written job description, an increase from 57.9% in pre-intervention reporting.

In terms of staff, 86.8% of respondents stated that all staff members have written job descriptions that detail expectations and 10.5% more were in the process of creating these job descriptions. Most (60.5%) conducted employee performance evaluations or were in the process of developing them (23.7%). Just over 71% of reporting organizations had a written manual covering personnel and procedures policies (an increase of 17% over pre-intervention), and 15.8% were in the process of developing one.

Almost all (97.4%) participants utilized volunteers and an increased number (46%) had a volunteer handbook or were in the process of creating one (21.6%). Also, 65.8% had written job descriptions for volunteers (up from 39.5% in pre-intervention reporting), while another 10.5% were in the process of creating them. There was a more than 20% increase in organizations that had created forms for repetitive tasks, from 70.3% pre-intervention to 93.1% post-intervention.

### **Analysis of Organizational Structure Changes**

Because it was likely an “easy fix,” the largest increase in this dimension was the implementation of a matrix for ideal board composition, which leapt from 26.3% in the pre-intervention assessment to 76.3% in post-intervention reporting. Likewise, organizations reported a 21.8% increase in the existence of forms for repetitive tasks (such as travel expense

forms and timesheets). Like the board matrix form, these are highly replicable across organizations and, once shared, can be easily adopted.

However, more complex products were also developed through the BCS project, including volunteer job descriptions and policy and procedure manuals. In terms of volunteer job descriptions, the proportion of organizations who had developed these rose from 39.5% in pre-intervention reporting to 65.8% in post-intervention reporting, an increase of more than 25%. The presence and use of policy and procedure manuals increased from 64.9% of organizations with manuals either in place or in the process of being created to 86.9%, an increase of 22%.

It is interesting to note that process changes occurred as well. For example, there was a 21% increase in the proportion of organizations that implemented board orientations and an identical increase in those that implemented executive director reviews. While forms may be easily created, processes generally require more investment to implement. The increased engagement in processes indicates buy in to the BCS project and its efforts to increase capacity across participating organizations.

## **Leadership**

### **Pre-Intervention**

The Point K Organizational Assessment Tool's leadership dimension asks organizations to rate their leadership on seven skills or competencies (the individual completing the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool was also the organizational leader). In pre-intervention surveys, respondents rated their leadership highly in the categories of 'mission driven' (100%) and 'a strong vision for the organization' (97.3%). However, fewer leaders had a strategy in mind to make his/her vision become real (70.3%). Respondents felt confident in 'success in building relationships, rating "yes" (78.4%) or "somewhat"/sometimes" (combined 16.2%).

Next, 78.4% of participants answered yes in response to whether the leader had an open, participatory communication style, whether their leaders had the ability to motivate employees and other stakeholders, and whether their leader had strong managerial skills. It is interesting to note that for each of these last three questions, less than 6% responded “no.”

Table 3.5: Leadership Skills & Competencies

Leadership	Pre-Intervention (n=38)						Post-Intervention (n=38)				
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Somewhat	Sometimes		Yes	No	Don't Know	Somewhat	Sometimes
Mission focused	37 (100.0%)						38 (100.0%)				
Strong organizational vision	36 (97.3%)			1 (2.7%)			36 (97.4%)		1 (2.6%)		1 (2.6%)
Strategy to realize vision	21 (70.3%)	1 (2.7%)	3 (8.1%)		7 (18.9%)		33 (86.8%)	1 (2.6%)	1 (2.6%)		3 (7.9%)
Relationship building	29 (78.4%)	1 (2.7%)	1 (2.7%)	4 (10.8%)	2 (5.4%)		36 (94.7%)		1 (2.6%)	1 (2.6%)	
Open, participatory communication style	29 (78.4%)	2 (5.4%)		1 (2.7%)	5 (13.5%)		37 (97.4%)		1 (2.6%)		
Motivates others	29 (78.4%)		2 (5.4%)	5 (13.5%)	1 (2.7%)		37 (97.4%)			1 (2.6%)	
Strong managerial skills	26 (70.3%)	2 (5.4%)	2 (5.4%)	6 (16.2%)	1 (2.7%)		34 (89.5%)	1 (2.6%)	1 (2.6%)	2 (5.3%)	

## Post-Intervention

Following the interventions of the BCS project, participating leaders rated themselves again on competencies associated with successful leadership. The full 100% of respondents continued to report that their organizational leader was mission-focused. Almost all (97.4%) also continued to believe that they had a strong vision for the organization. Respondents reported an increase in ‘strategy to realize vision,’ from 70.3% in pre-intervention to 86.8%, with another 7.9% stating that they sometimes had this strategy in mind. The proportion of those reporting that the leader successfully builds relationships jumped from 78.4% to 94.7%.

The proportion responding responded that their leader had an open, participatory communication style increased 19% to 97.4%, and the same number replied that they had the ability to motivate employees and other stakeholders (also an increase of 19%). In post-intervention, 89.5% believed that their leader had strong managerial skills, up from 70.3% in the pre-intervention assessment.

### **Analysis of Leadership Changes**

Overall, leadership skills and capacity improved across the board. Some areas of improvement can be directly tied to trainings offered by the BCS project. For example, the 18.8% increase in leaders with strong managerial skills could be linked to trainings specifically around managing nonprofits offered by the BCS project. Other improvements can be linked to increased capacity in other categories. For example, the increase of 16.5% in leaders who had a strategy to make his/her vision become real could be associated with the increased proportion of organizations with strategic plans in place.

Overall, these findings suggest that leaders feel more confident and capable when their organizational capacity is higher. That is, organizational capacity for these organizations clearly increased over the course of the BCS project, as presented above. Leadership capacity increased in each area, even without trainings specific to each skill or competency.

## **Fundraising**

### **Pre-Intervention**

Prior to engagement in the BCS project, less than a quarter (24.3%) of participant organizations had a fundraising plan, and fewer (5.4%) had fundraising action plans with timelines. Only 21.6% of respondents had a staff member (other than the executive director) whose primary responsibility was fundraising. Furthermore, less than half (46.1%) of the



organizations' boards had fundraising committees and just half reported having fundraising tools (case statements, brochures, sample letters) for board and staff.

Table 3.6: Fundraising Indicators

	Pre-Intervention (n=38)					Post-Intervention (n=38)				
Fundraising	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating
Fundraising plan	9 (24.3%)	21 (56.8%)			7 (18.9%)	18 (47.4%)	9 (23.7%)			11 (29.0%)
Staff member with primary fundraising responsibility (other than Exec. Dir.)	8 (21.6%)	29 (78.4%)				9 (23.7%)	28 (73.7%)		1 (2.6%)	
Board fundraising committee	16 (42.1%)	16 (42.1%)	1 (2.6%)		5 (13.7%)	24 (63.2%)	8 (21.1%)			6 (15.8%)
Fundraising tools	19 (50.0%)	16 (42.1%)			3 (7.9%)	28 (73.7%)	3 (7.9%)			7 (18.4%)

## Post-Intervention

The number of organizations reporting that they had a written fundraising plan rose dramatically following the BCS project, with 47.4% (from 24.3%) stating that they had one, and another 29% in the process of creating one (a 10.1% increase). Still, only 23.7% had a staff member whose primary responsibility was fundraising (other than the executive director).

Just over 63% percent of respondents had a board fundraising committee (up from 42.1%) or were in the process of creating one (15.8%). Also, 73.7% of organizations had fundraising tools (case statements, brochure, sample letters) for board and staff (a 23.7% increase), with another 18.4% in the process of creating these (up from 7.9%).

## Analysis of Fundraising Changes

There were substantial increases in almost all fundraising indicators. Through the BCS project, organizations were supported by BCS staff as they developed fundraising plans (a 23.1%

increase in those who had a plan in place, with another 10.1% increase in those in the process of creating a plan) and fundraising tools (a 23.7% increase in those who had tools in place, with another 10.5% increase in those in the process of creating these tools) that include case statements, brochures, and sample solicitation letters. An additional 21% also developed board fundraising committees over the course of the BCS project. Each of these increases is substantial and demonstrates the interest of organizations in developing their fundraising capacity.

The one area that increased only slightly in terms of fundraising capacity was the addition of staff (other than the executive director) whose primary responsibility was fundraising. Because of the significant investment of resources required to designate a position to fundraising, as well as the relatively short BCS project timeline, it is understandable that this indicator did not increase more than it did (2.1% increase).

## **Finance and Accountability**

### **Pre-Intervention**

Prior to the BCS project, 82% of respondents affirmed that they had an annual operating budget, and less than half (47.4%) expected income to meet or exceed projected expenses in their annual budget. Only 21.1% used multi-year operating budget projections. Most (86.8%) stated that the financial status of their organization was reviewed at least quarterly by the board. About half (47.4%) of the organizations underwent an annual audit. When asked if they had considered their organization's potential risk, about half (55.3%) replied that they had and 84.2% affirmed that that their organization had insurance coverage.

Table 3.7: Finance & Accountability Indicators

	Pre-Intervention (n=38)					Post-Intervention (n=38)				
Finance & Accountability	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating
Annual operating budget	32 (84.2%)	2 (5.3%)	1 (2.6%)		3 (7.9%)	35 (92.1%)	2 (5.3%)			1 (2.6%)
Revenue > expenses	18 (47.4%)	13 (34.2%)	1 (2.6%)	6 (15.8%)		25 (65.8%)	9 (23.7%)	2 (5.3%)	2 (5.3%)	
Quarterly review of finances	33 (86.8%)	5 (13.2%)				32 (84.2%)	6 (15.8%)			
Annual audit	18 (47.4%)	16 (42.1%)	4 (10.5%)			24 (63.2%)	14 (36.8%)			
Consider potential risk	21 (55.3%)	12 (31.6%)	5 (13.2%)			32 (84.2%)	5 (13.2%)	1 (2.6%)		
Insurance coverage	32 (84.2%)	6 (15.8%)				31 (81.6%)	6 (15.8%)			1 (2.6%)

### Post-Intervention

Following their engagement in the BCS project, just over 92% (up from 84.2%) of participants reported that they had an organizational budget, with another 2.6% reporting that they were in the process of creating one. Nearly 66% (up from 47.4%) of organizations expected income to meet or exceed expenses in their current year budget, with 10.5% not sure and 23.7% not expecting that outcome. Post-intervention, 84.2% of respondents stated that their financial status was reviewed at least quarterly by the board (a reduction of 1.6%) and 63.2% stated that their organization was audited annually (an increase of 15.8%). Those reporting organizational insurance coverage went down from 84.2% to 81.6%, with 84.2% (an increase from 55.3% in pre-intervention reporting) reporting that they had explored their organization's potential risk.

### Analysis of Finance and Accountability Changes

Though the finance and accountability dimension of the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool increased overall, some areas lost ground over the course of the BCS project.

Specifically, organizations with insurance coverage decreased by 2.6% and organizations that reviewed their finances at least quarterly decreased by 2.6%. Potential shifts could be explained by some organizations believing that they had appropriate insurance coverage when, in fact, they did not. Likewise, though financials were believed to be reviewed quarterly by the board, a system may not have been in place to ensure this review. Overall, however, organizations developed budgets and increased independent audits over the course of the BCS project.

## Communication

### Pre-Intervention

Prior to their engagement in the BCS project, only 15.8% of organizations reported that they had a marketing and communications plan in place, with another 18.4% stating that they were in the process of creating one. Because so few organizations had a plan in place, only 7.9% stated that they had developed collateral materials based on this marketing and communications plan.

Table 3.8: Communication Indicators

	Pre-Intervention (n=38)						Post-Intervention (n=38)				
Communication	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating		In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating
Marketing plan	6 (15.9%)	24 (63.2%)	1 (2.6%)		7 (18.4%)		11 (29.0%)	12 (31.6%)			15 (39.5%)
Collateral materials based on plan	3 (7.9%)	1 (2.6%)		32 (84.2%)	2 (5.3%)		7 (18.4%)	1 (2.6%)	1 (2.6%)	27 (71.1%)	2 (5.3%)

### Post-Intervention

Post-intervention, 29% reported that their organization had a marketing and communications plan (a 13.1% increase), with another 39.5% stating that they were in the process of creating one (a 20.1% increase). In addition, 23.7% either had developed collateral

materials based on its marketing and communications plan or were in the process of doing so (compared to 13.1% in pre-intervention reporting).

### **Analysis of Communication Changes**

There were substantial increases in both indicators of the communication dimension. However, the proportion of organizations with these indicators in place is still somewhat low, with one at 29% and the other at 18.4%. This may be indicative of nonprofit organizations' tendency to focus on programming rather than marketing. That is, many organizations operating with limited resources would rather invest in direct programming or other 'vital' organizational functions. Marketing and communications, therefore, sometimes take a back seat to these functions.

### **Evaluation**

#### **Pre-Intervention**

In the pre-assessment phase, while just 10.5% of organizations reported having an evaluation plan for the whole organization, close to 40% reported having a logic model and a written program evaluation for at least one of their programs. Around 40% of organizations also evaluated how well its programs achieved their outcomes and how well its programs are implemented.

Table 3.9: Evaluation Indicators

	Pre-Intervention (n=38)					Post-Intervention (n=38)				
Evaluation	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating
Organizational evaluation plan	4 (10.5%)	25 (65.8%)	4 (10.5%)		5 (13.2%)	9 (23.7%)	13 (34.2%)			16 (42.1%)
Logic model for program	15 (39.5%)	19 (50.0%)	3 (7.9%)		1 (2.6%)	21 (55.3%)	7 (18.4%)			10 (26.3%)
Evaluate program outcomes	15 (39.5%)	1 (2.6%)		22 (57.9%)		16 (43.2%)	1 (2.7%)	2 (5.4%)		18 (48.7%)
Evaluate program implementation	14 (36.8%)	2 (2.6%)		22 (57.9%)		17 (46.0%)	2 (5.4%)		18 (48.7%)	

### Post-Intervention

In terms of evaluation, 23.7% (up from 10.5%) of respondents stated that they had an evaluation plan for the whole organization, while another 42.1% (increased from 13.2%) were in the process of creating one following the BCS project. Additionally, 55.3% had a logic model for at least one program and another 26.3% were in the process of creating one (combined proportion of 81.6% compared to combined total of 42.1% in the pre-intervention assessment). Approximately 44% (an increase from 39.5%) of participants reported that they were evaluating their program outcomes, with another 48.7% in the process of creating program outcome evaluations (compared to 0% in the pre-intervention reporting). Finally, the proportion of organizations who evaluated program implementation rose approximately 9% over the course of the BCS Project.

### Analysis of Evaluation Changes

For all indicators, organizations demonstrated increased use of evaluation tools and practices. While the number of organizations with evaluation indicators “in place” rose slightly, the overall number of those working to create plans or practices increased substantially. This

indicates an increased understanding of the importance of evaluation in nonprofit operations over the duration of the BCS project.

### **Overall Discussion of Pre- and Post-Intervention Data**

Overall, the data demonstrates that indicators of organizational capacity in participating organizations significantly increased over the course of the intervention. In each subsection, the percentage of organizations with the identified indicators “in place” grew, and the percentage of those with indicators “not in place” decreased. Furthermore, the percentage of organizations pursuing development of organizational capacity indicators (by indicating “in process of creating”) increased over the course of the BCS project. This suggests that even though the formal project ended, the organizations would continue to develop these resources.

It is also interesting to note that the percentage of indicators across all categories that identified as “don’t know” in the pre-intervention data decreased in the post-intervention data. This indicates a greater awareness among organizational leadership to the presence or absence of organizational capacity indicators. That is, the BCS Project left organizations more attuned to the need for additional elements of organizational capacity—whether it be an independent audit, stronger leadership, enhanced board policies, or something else. By assessing their current state of capacity with the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool, they may have become more aware of what indicators *should be* on their radar. Further, through training and technical assistance activities they were able to develop these components to enhance their overall capacity.

Broadly, organizations saw the most growth in fundraising efforts and infrastructure, with an increase across three of four dimensional measurements. First, the development and use of fundraising plans increased almost twofold, with a total of 24.3% having one in place in the pre-

test compared to 47.4% in the post-test. Likewise, the adoption and implementation of board development committees increased by nearly 21% and use of fundraising tools rose by 23.7%. With limited time and funding, the presence of a dedicated fundraising staff member (other than the executive director) rose the least, only a 2.1%. The attention to the fundraising dimension indicates that nonprofits believe in a strong association between funding levels and mission accomplishment. By increasing funding for their organization, they believe they will be able to deliver their mission and generally perform more effectively. The increases in the board fundraising committee presence are surprising, as it can prove difficult to get board members to cluster for the purposes of fundraising in a short period of time (i.e. over the course of the grant cycle). The sustainability of these efforts will be assessed in the next chapter.

On a related note, the leadership dimension was very highly-rated following the intervention. The “leadership skills and competencies” assessments were self-reported and therefore subjective. As such, it was interesting to see that the self-perceptions of the participating leaders increased so greatly over the course of the BCS project. Each dimension item on the Point K increased from the pre- to post-assessment, with (at most) a 19.2% increase (in those reporting confidence in management skills), followed by a 16.5% increase (in those reporting confidence in having a strategy to realize their vision). The results of this dimension underscore the reality that the BCS project, in addition to building capacity, was successful in making the leaders of these organizations more capable and confident, impacting how they direct their organizations moving forward.

In the next chapter, I will focus on the nine organizations in the research sub-sample. I will answer the question: *How does organizational capacity change over time after an intensive capacity building program?* by studying the organizations’ responses to the Point K



Organizational Assessment in 2019, compared to their earlier responses. In addition, I will present and discuss qualitative data results, seeking to answer the second research question: *What intervening variables impact an organization's ability to increase organizational capacity over time after an intensive capacity building program?*

## CHAPTER 5

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF SUBSAMPLE RESEARCH

In this chapter, I provide snapshots of the nine organizations that participated in the BCS project and my original study in 2019, with a quantitative and qualitative component for each. These organizations met the five requirements outlined in Chapter 3:

1. Organizations that participated in either one or both cycles of the BCS project, completing both the pre- and post-test assessments;
2. Organizations physically located within, and serving, Clarke County, GA. This criterion ensured that selected organizations were serving the same semi-urban community;
3. Organizations that had obtained and maintained 501(c)(3) status;
4. Organizations that were in operation at the time of this research study;
5. And organizations that responded to my request for participation and provided data via the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool and an in-depth semi-structured interview.

This section provides background on the work and make up of these organizations, including perceived changes over time since the BCS project, then tracks changes on the Point K self-assessment. For the current research results, I describe the responses from the nine organizations and divide them into the seven dimension categories. This exploration aids in answering one of two primary research questions: *how does organizational capacity change over time after an intensive capacity building program?* It goes on to discuss the quantitative data and

its implications before turning to the qualitative research yielded from interviews with the current leaders of these organizations. I identify the themes regarding how these organizational leaders define organizational capacity, as well as which components of organizational capacity are most important. Finally, I explore the data gathered to answer the second research question of this study: *what intervening variables impact an organization's ability to continue to increase organizational capacity over time after an intensive capacity-building program?*

### Organizational Snapshots

For background and context, I am providing a summary of the work and structure of each of the organizations selected for the qualitative assessment.

Table 5.1: Organizational Snapshot Data

Organization Name	Interviewed Leader	Leader Position	# of Changes in Leadership	PRE-INVOLVEMENT			CURRENT		
				Annual Budget	Employees		Annual Budget	Employees	
					Full Time	Part Time		Full Time	Part Time
Hope at Home	Kristen	Executive Director	1	\$ 498,294	4	11	\$ 600,000	6	7
Coalition for Family Success	Mark	Executive Director	0	\$ 107,000	1	0	\$650,000	8	0
Aging Well	Ann	Executive Director	1	\$ 3,271,057	44	54	\$4,250,000	57	45
Safe Child	Beth	Executive Director	2	\$ 354,000	4	1	\$ 600,000	8	0
Center for Cancer Support	Jennifer	Executive Director	0	\$ 201,000	1	0	\$ 750,000	4	0
Families Forward	David	Executive Director	3	\$ 506,281	2	0	\$ 216,000	2	1
Safe Cycle	Ethan	Executive Director	1	\$ 18,520	0	1	\$ 90,000	2	0
Digital Equality Now	Kelly	Board Chair	4-5	\$ -	0	0	\$ 27,500	0	0
Homeless Service Network	Ryan	Board Chair	2	\$ -	0	0	\$ 225,000	0	0

### Hope at Home

Hope at Home, founded in 1986, provides shelter and services to families, women, and children. Offering 24-hour emergency shelter at two sites in Athens, as well as transitional shelter options in Athens and surrounding counties, Hope at Home also provides support for

child care, employment services, and wrap-around case management services to their clients. At the time of the BCS project, Hope at Home operated out of one location and supported an annual budget of just under \$500,000, with four full-time and 11 part-time staff. The current executive director, Kristen, was hired in September 2011, just as the BCS project had completed its work with the organization.

Today, the budget is roughly \$600,000 annually, with six full-time and seven part-time employees. The board of directors is comprised of 17 members, including a former client. The organization now operates out of two sites, its original emergency shelter and a second emergency shelter and housing units on the Homeless Service Network campus. When asked how the organization has changed since the BCS Project, the executive director points to the overall growth of programming and staff.

### **Coalition for Family Success/Communities in Schools**

Founded in 1991, Coalition for Family Success/Communities in Schools is a group of organizations that collaborate in Athens-Clarke County to achieve better outcomes for children and families. In pursuit of this goal, Coalition for Family Success/Communities in Schools facilitates strategic planning, locates resources, and builds and supports strategic action teams to operationalize the plan. In addition, the organization places site coordinators within schools to help students and families address issues outside the classroom that impact their success inside the classroom. At the time of the BCS project, the organizational budget was \$107,000, with one full-time employee. The executive director, Mark, has been in his position for 28 years.

Currently, Coalition for Family Success/Communities in Schools has approximately 20 board members, eight full-time (no part-time) staff, and supports a budget of \$650,000. The executive director reports that the board has undergone a transformation since the BCS project,

from a body mostly comprised of agency heads from different key partner organizations (e.g. DFCS, Public Health). These members, he added, were not “interested in traditional nonprofit board roles. They were there because of strategic planning.” Since restructuring, they now have a separate community plan oversight team, and the board has taken on the more traditional roles of fundraising, resource development, public relations, and board development.

### **Aging Well**

Founded in 1967, Aging Well provides essential services to older adults, such as food, transportation, and direct care. In addition, they provide opportunities for personal fulfillment, such as employment, volunteering, and community engagement. At the time of the BCS Project, the organization supported an annual budget of approximately \$3.3 million, with a staff of 44 full-time and 54 part-time employees, and served a 12-county region. The position of executive director has turned over one time since the BCS project.

Currently, Aging Well has an annual budget of \$4.25 million, supports 57-full time and 45 part-time employees, and serves 27 counties in Northeast Georgia. Ann, the executive director, took that role in 2016, and has been on staff since the early 2000s. The board of directors consists of 18 members, which “seems to be a happy spot for us to get the diversity not only in background, but [in] members and things like that.” In the nine years since the BCS project, Ann says, the biggest change in the organization has been branding. As the organization has grown, she has been intent on ensuring that messaging is consistent both internally and externally. Funding has increased over this time, as have expenses.

### **Safe Child**

Founded in 1990, Safe Child is an umbrella organization housing child service programs that protect the children in foster care and work to prevent others from entering the system.

When Safe Child participated in the BCS project, the organization employed four full-time and one part-time employees and supported an annual budget of approximately \$350,000. The position of executive director turned over twice before Beth, who currently holds the role, was hired in 2019, after being on staff since 2008.

Today, Safe Child has a budget of approximately \$600,000 and employs eight staff members. The nine-member board provides oversight for the organization. Beth explains that most of the programs in place at the time of the BCS project were new. Aside from one financially unsound program, these are still in existence and have expanded. Structurally, Beth asserts that there are more board requirements, such as orientation, terms, and term limits. In addition, policies have been updated and more HR and financial systems are in place. Furthermore, Beth states, “the evaluation is something that didn’t exist, moderately exists now, and is definitely a place for growth for us.” Overall, she believes that their organizational capacity has increased over time.

### **Center for Cancer Support**

Founded in 2005, the Center for Cancer Support works to alleviate the financial burden of cancer for patients and their families. The organization provides financial assistance to cancer patients to support basic living expenses, such as rent, utilities, or transportation costs. When the Center for Cancer Support participated in the BCS project, they employed just one full-time employee and supported an annual budget of approximately \$200,000, of which approximately \$40,000 directly supported 133 patients in ten counties. Jennifer, the executive director, has been with the organization since its inception.

Today, the Center for Cancer Support has an annual budget of \$750,000 with four full-time staff. Direct financial assistance now extends to 725 clients in 19 counties, totaling

\$351,000 in the most recent fiscal year (2018). The 16-member board of directors is active; also, though somewhat diverse in terms of profession and gender, they struggle to recruit and maintain ethnically-diverse representation. Jennifer states that she has grown in knowledge, skills, and leadership as the organization has grown, particularly her ability to fundraise and manage staff.

### **Families Forward**

Families Forward, founded in 2004, is the local chapter of a national network of homeless service organizations that provides shelter and support to homeless families in partnership with local faith congregations. At the time of the BCS project, Families Forward supported a budget of approximately \$500,000 annually and a staff of two full-time employees. The executive director was new to the organization and worked with a 12-person board of directors. Since its participation in the BCS project, three different executive directors have led the organization.

Currently, Families Forward works with 42 local, diverse congregations to provide shelter for up to three families at a time. With an annual budget of approximately \$216,000, the staff of two full-time and one part-time positions works with approximately 1,000 volunteers each year. The executive director, David, who has been in his position for three years, is supported by a ten-member board of directors who, he says, are active in the organization and bring skills that support their work. For example, the treasurer has a background in finance, and processes checks, records them in the database, and handles accounts payable. While this benefits the organization greatly, David dreads the day that board members with these skillsets roll off and the organization will have pay staff for these duties instead.

When asked about improvements over time, David points to organizational planning, stating that he and his staff are “needing-to-have-goals-type people.” Also, he is proud of how organizational revenues have diversified during his tenure. When he began, the primary source

of funding was foundation grants. Currently, their funding comes from four roughly equal primary sources (foundations, events, congregations, and individuals). He feels that strong board leadership has been consistent over time.

### **Safe Cycle**

Founded in the early 1990s, Safe Cycle works to build equity in transportation through education, advocacy, and community service. Practically speaking, the organization provides bicycle education for youth and adults and advocates for safer, more pedestrian- and bike-friendly street policies on a local, state, and federal level. Safe Cycle's services include refurbishing donated bikes, which are then distributed to low-income clients of nonprofit organizations. At the time of the BCS project, Safe Cycle employed one part-time employee who completed primarily administrative duties, and had an annual operating budget of approximately \$18,000 and a board of directors of approximately 15 committed volunteers. The organization has had one leadership change since the BCS project occurred.

Currently, Safe Cycle has an annual budget of approximately \$90,000 and employs two full-time employees. The executive director, Ethan, came on board in late 2011, just as the BCS project was ending, and is at the time of writing transitioning to a career in a different community. When asked about organizational changes since the BCS project, Ethan indicated the makeup and responsibilities of staff and board. "I'd say one of the biggest differences, and something we still struggle with, is [originally] I did a lot of the tasks that the volunteer board was doing. And so it's been a lot of a learning process; a little bit of a struggle in figuring out the role of the board." Overall, Ethan believes the organization has grown in terms of visibility in the community, thanks to the growth in staff and committed volunteers.

### **Digital Equality Now Athens**



Digital Equality Now Athens, founded in 2005, is a nonprofit organization, operated entirely by volunteers, that works to reduce the negative impact of e-waste, advocates for free software, and bridges the digital divide. Their hardware refurbishing program accepts outdated or unused technology, refurbishes it, and then sells it in a thrift store at affordable prices or provides it to nonprofits or community groups at low or no cost. At the time of the BCS project, Digital Equality Now Athens had no budget or paid staff, though they refer to 10 committed “volunteer staff.” According to the current chair, Kelly, the leadership of the organization changed four or five times before she took the job in 2016.

Currently, Digital Equality Now Athens has 18 “volunteer staff” who have participated in training for a defined period of time and commit to working in the thrift store for eight hours a month. A board of seven leads the organization and oversees its budget of approximately \$27,000. When asked how the organization has changed since its participation in the BCS project, the current chair could only trace back to 2015, when she was a new volunteer. From her perspective, she says, it is “massively different.... I mean, even down to location. We’ve moved locations, . . . our hours have changed, [and] we have more people than ever.” After several instances of burn-out, the organization decided to place more emphasis on self-care among volunteers and volunteer staff. Also, they have committed to creating more solid and documented systems.

### **Homeless Service Network**

The Homeless Service Network, founded in 2006, is a collaboration and physical co-location of agencies looking to create opportunities for individuals and families experiencing homelessness to find a stable living environment. The organization is made up of the regional behavioral health organization, a local health clinic, an AIDS service organization, a for-profit

child care center, and Hope at Home, a homeless shelter that provides transitional and emergency shelter and services (also a BCS project participant). Collectively, they provide medical care, dental care, outreach and engagement, housing, and financial assistance related to housing, shelter services, and child care. At the time of the BCS project, the physical location of the Homeless Service Network, which houses programs from the collaborating agencies, was under construction. Its programs were either not yet being offered, or operating from the locations of various partner agencies around Athens. The collective operating budget of the Homeless Service Network did not yet exist and no staff were employed through the partnership. The board of directors, comprised of partner agency representatives and community partners, provided direction. The board chair has changed two times since the BCS Project began.

Today, the Homeless Service Network site is in full operation, offering integrated case management services among the partner agencies. The annual budget of approximately \$225,000, contributed from partner agencies, covers facility costs and operating expenses. Each partner organization also fully funds their program-specific activities. While the Homeless Service Network does not employ staff, partner organizations dedicate employees to fulfill Homeless Service Network service functions. The board of directors currently consists of partner agency representatives. Regarding changes since the BCS project, the most obvious is its transition to full operation; it now supports all of the functions that serve its mission. Specifically, board chair Ryan references issues with meeting client demand with limited staffing and funding. “I think our service capacity has also increased,” he said, “but the need and the demand for services . . . has increased so much that it's been difficult to keep up.”

### **Subsample (2019) Capacity Indicators**

With the landscape of pre- and post-intervention agencies established, this chapter now investigates how their organizational capacity fared over time. Nine organizations completed the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool in 2019 for these purposes (eight years after the initial assessment). As described in the methodology section, these organizations represent a sample of those 38 organizations that participated in the BCS project; they include a range of budget points, and some operate with an executive director and some without. For those organizations that did not employ an executive director, the board chair completed the Point K Organizational Assessment and was subsequently interviewed as the organizational leader.

#### **Organizational Planning**

Organizational planning indicators of ‘mission statement in place’ (100%) and ‘core values in place’ (55.6%) were generally consistent over time for the nine organizations in the subsample. These reports both make sense: mission statements and core values are established to sustain for the long term and should not be renewed every few years.

However, subsample organizations reverted to pre-intervention levels (from 55.6% to 33.3%) in the category of ‘annual operating plan in place.’ Interestingly, post-intervention levels of ‘strategic plans’ (100% either ‘in place’ or ‘in the process of creating’) fell to 66.7% ‘in place’ or ‘in the process of creating’ during 2019 reporting. Again, this drop could represent the challenges of access or expense posed by hiring an external facilitator. For the BCS project, the facilitation of both annual and strategic plans were provided without cost as part of the program. However, since both dropped during this period, it may be that neither tool proved as useful as was hoped during the intervention phase, or that the time invested in developing them did not

warrant the outcomes. Alternatively, for this indicator and others, leadership changes could have shifted organizational priorities away from building capacity.

Table 5.2: Organizational Planning Indicators Over Time

	Pre-Intervention (n=9)					Post-Intervention (n=9)					Current (n=9)				
Organizational Planning	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating
Mission Statement	9					9					9				
Core values	4	3	2			5	3			1	5	3	1		
Strategic plan	4	4				4				5	5	3			1
Annual operating plan	2	7				5	2			2	3	6			

## Organizational Structure

The presence of organizational structure indicators remained generally consistent with post-intervention in most cases. For example, ‘board of directors’ (100%), ‘stated terms at election’ (88.9%), ‘board orientation’ (77.8%), ‘by-laws in place’ (100%), ‘staff reviews’ (66.7%), ‘volunteer job descriptions’ (66.7%), ‘policy and procedure manuals’ (66.7%), and ‘forms for repetitive tasks’ (88.9%) were consistent over time: each of these indicators was just a few percentage points higher or lower than in the previous assessment. Many of these indicators (by-laws, job descriptions, policy and procedure manuals, and forms) endure over time once established, even if there are adjustments made to the original product. More surprisingly, the level of board orientations, a procedure rather than a product, was maintained, surviving leadership and organizational changes at both the board and executive director level.

A few indicators on organizational structure were significantly lower at the 2019 assessment. For example, those organizations utilizing a board matrix fell from 66.7% to 44.4% from post-intervention to current, organizations engaging in a review of their executive director fell from nearly 70% to 11.1%, and organizations with staff job descriptions dropped from 88.9% to 66.7%. The declining use of staff job descriptions is surprising, as this written product

should have survived over time. Though existing positions may have evolved and new positions developed, the organizations may have not kept the staff job descriptions up to date. In terms of board matrices and annual director performance reviews, the decrease may be attributed to the rotation of board membership, as these practices were lost over time.

Table 5.3: Organizational Structure Indicators Over Time

Organizational Structure	Pre-Intervention (n=9)					Post-Intervention (n=9)					Current (n=9)				
	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating
Board of Directors	9					9					9				
Stated terms at election	9					9					8	1			
Matrix utilized for ideal board composition	3	5	1			6	2			1	4	4	1		
Board orientation	3					7	2				7	2			
Bylaws	9					9					9				
Executive Director review	5	2	1	1		6	3				1	8			
Staff job descriptions	6	1			2	8				1	6	1		1	1
Staff reviews	5	2	1		1	5	2			2	6	2		1	
Volunteer job descriptions	5	3		1		7	2				6	1	1		1
Policy and Procedure Manual	8	1				7				2	6	3			
Forms for repetitive tasks	6	3				8	1				8	1			

## Leadership

All leaders—in all three reporting periods—consistently reported being mission-focused (100%). Most leaders maintained a strong organizational vision and an open, participatory communication style (both categories dropped only 11% in those reporting “yes”). However, the proportion maintaining the other listed skills or competencies lessened over time. For example, leaders reporting that they had a strategy to fulfill the organizational vision fell from 88.8% (in the post-intervention phase) to 44.4%, with another 44.4% stating “somewhat.” Only 55.6% of respondents replied “yes” to having strong managerial skills in the current research, compared to

89.5% in the post-intervention assessment. Other indicators were similar, with drops over time in the “yes” response, and increases in the “somewhat” or “sometimes” categories.

Two possible explanations emerge for this shift in reported confidence. Either leadership changed in the organization, leaving a less-seasoned professional in charge, or the perceived meanings of the indicators ‘strategy to realize their vision’ or ‘strong managerial skill’ evolved over time.

Table 5.4: Leadership Indicators Over Time

Leadership	Pre-Intervention (n=9)					Post-Intervention (n=9)					Current (n=9)				
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Somewhat	Sometimes	Yes	No	Don't Know	Somewhat	Sometimes	Yes	No	Don't Know	Somewhat	Sometimes
Mission focused	9					9					9				
Strong organizational vision	9					8				1	8			1	
Strategy to realize vision	7			1	1	7				2	4	1		4	
Relationship building	8			1		8			1		7			2	
Open, participatory communication style	8				1	9					8			1	
Motivates others	7		1	1		8			1		6	1		1	1
Strong managerial skills	8		1			8			1		5	1		2	1

## Fundraising

The presence of formal fundraising capacity indicators varied in terms of consistency over time. One-third of the organizations in the sub-sample reported ‘fundraising plan in place’ in the current research, compared to 44.4% in the post-intervention sample. In addition, those with ‘fundraising tools’ (e.g., case statements, brochures, sample letters) for board and staff dropped from 88.9% post-intervention to 33.3%. However, 55.6% of the current sub-sample had a board fundraising committee in place, more than in the pre-intervention assessment (33.3%), but slightly less than the post-intervention assessment (66.7%). For each of these indicators, levels rose from pre- to post-intervention, but fell between post-intervention and current

reporting. Again, this may be due to the difficulty of sustaining a board committee, or to changes in leadership that de-emphasize these tools.

Interestingly, the presence of a staff member with primary fundraising responsibility (other than the executive director) increased to 22.3% in the current time period, from 0% in the pre- and post-intervention reports, indicating an increased capacity in fundraising staff. This tracks with the longer span of time from post-intervention to current research (nine years) compared to that of pre-intervention to post-intervention (< 1 year). One might wonder if having a dedicated staff member leaves the executive director (who completed the Point K assessment) less aware of tools like fundraising plans or case statements.

Table 5.5: Fundraising Indicators Over Time

	Pre-Intervention (n=9)					Post-Intervention (n=9)					Current (n=9)				
	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating
Fundraising plan	3	5			1	4	1			4	3	4	1		1
Staff member with primary fundraising responsibility (other than Exec. Dir.)	0	9				0	9				2	7			
Board fundraising committee	3	4			2	6	3				5	3	1		
Fundraising tools	6	3				8				1	3	4	1		1

### Finance and Accountability

Finance and accountability capacity indicators generally increased in most categories over time. Those organizations with revenues that exceed expenses increased from 66.7% in the post-intervention assessment to 77.8% in the current assessment). Those reporting that their board of directors reviews the finances at least quarterly rose from 88.9% to 100%, and 88.9% report that they consider potential risk and have insurance coverage, slightly up from the post-intervention assessment.

Most organizations maintained an annual operating budget (88.9%), consistent with the 77.8% reported in the post-intervention. Regarding an annual independent audit, those responding that it was ‘in place’ fell from 55.6% (post-intervention) to 44.4%, lower than the pre-intervention rate of 33.3%. Overall, finance and accountability measures improved slightly, with only one area of decrease from post-intervention to current research.

Table 5.6: Finance and Accountability Indicators Over Time

Finance & Accountability	Pre-Intervention (n=9)					Post-Intervention (n=9)					Current (n=9)				
	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating
Annual operating budget	8	1				7	2				8	1			
Revenue > expenses	5	2	1	1		6	1	1	1		7	1	1		
Quarterly review of finances	8	1				8	1				9				
Annual audit	3	5	1			5	4				4	4	1		
Consider potential risk	5	3	1			7	2				8		1		
Insurance coverage	6	3				7	2				8	1			

## Communication

Communication capacity indicators decreased slightly over time, with 33.3% of sub-sample organizations reporting a marketing plan in place in the current research (down from 55.6% post-intervention and from the pre-intervention level of 33.3%). Also, 22.2% of the current sub-sample reported having collateral material based on this marketing plan, a decrease from 44.4% on the post-intervention assessment and 33.3% on the pre-intervention assessment.

These findings lead to two important points. Many of the participating agencies worked with a BCS staff member or student to create marketing plans and materials during the program. Once the program was complete, these tools likely were not updated and/or recreated. First, this may suggest that the organizations considered these items unimportant and/or not worth prioritizing. Second, it could point to a flaw in the way the program was executed. With the BCS



project team taking the lead in developing these documents, the organization did not feel sufficient ownership over the plan or the collateral to keep them current.

Table 5.7: Communication Indicators Over Time

	Pre-Intervention (n=9)						Post-Intervention (n=9)						Current (n=9)				
Communication	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating		In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating		In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating
Marketing plan	3	5			1		5	3			1		3	3	2	1	
Collateral materials based on plan	3			6			4			4	1		2	2	2	3	

## Evaluation

In terms of evaluation capacity indicators, the participating organizations reporting an increase in evaluating program outcomes doubled, to 66.7%. Similarly, 66.7% reported that they evaluate program implementation, compared to 33.3% at post-intervention assessment. Those with an organizational evaluation plan in place remained consistent, at approximately 22.2%. Finally, the use of logic models for programs had decreased, with only 33.3% reporting its use for at least one program, compared to 55.6% in the post-intervention assessment.

One might argue that the sizeable jump in evaluation of program outcomes and implementation was the result of pressure from funders and stakeholders to show results of programming. The general trend towards increased nonprofit accountability grew in the years between post-intervention and current research, requiring these organizations to improve reporting of both outputs and outcomes. The program logic models were initially created by BCS program staff (in concert with the organizations) and their usefulness may have ended with the program. That is, without a funder or stakeholder requirement, it may not have been worth the time to maintain.

Table 5.8: Evaluation Indicators Over Time

Evaluation	Pre-Intervention (n=9)					Post-Intervention (n=9)					Current (n=9)				
	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating
Organizational evaluation plan	2	5	2			2	4			3	2	6	1		
Logic model for program	3	5	1			5	3			1	3	5		1	
Evaluate program outcomes	4			5		3			6		6		1	2	
Evaluate program implementation	4			5		3			6		6		1	2	

### Further Discussion

As demonstrated in the data described in the previous chapter, organizational capacity changed over time immediately after the implementation of the BCS project. Overall, organizations significantly increased in capacity from pre-intervention to post-intervention in all dimensions. The areas that showed the most improvement included development of an annual operating plan (an increase of 18.7%), utilization of a matrix for ideal board composition (an increase of 50%), use of volunteer job descriptions (an increase of 26.3%), a fundraising plan in place (an increase of 23.1%), use of a board fundraising committee (an increase of 21.1%) and fundraising tools (an increase of 23.7%), and considering potential risk to the organization (an increase of 28.9%). Overall, fundraising indicators most broadly increased from pre-intervention to post-intervention levels.

It is interesting to note that increases were seen both in indicators that signaled development of a new product/document (for example, development of job descriptions or a fundraising plan) and *procedural* changes (that is, considering risk to the organization and development and use of fundraising committees). This would indicate that the organizations were committed to developing capacity for the long term, both by developing tools used within the organization (e.g., documents) and by changing the behaviors of stakeholders (staff and

board) and the way of doing business. For example, a board development committee fundamentally changes the way the organization raises revenues, indicating an expected long-term commitment on behalf of staff and board.

Further, over time, one might expect some elements of built capacity to last. For example, mission statements, core values, or staff policies and procedures developed during the BCS project would tend to last: once established, these items require little revision. Also, as mentioned above, procedural or behavioral changes would tend to persist over time: committee development and assumption of leadership roles would generally survive leadership changes.

Overall, in the 8-9 years since the BCS project, the sub-sample indicates that the organizations continued to demonstrate capacity at levels consistently and substantially higher than at the time of pre-intervention assessment. The notable exception is the volunteer board-led Digital Equality Now, which fell in capacity (according to the Point K) in both the pre-intervention to post-intervention period, and again from post-intervention to the current research. Though one might blame this on the nature of an organization administered by a volunteer board, the other results do not support this hypothesis. The only other organization led by a volunteer board is the Homeless Service Network, which grew in capacity over each period, resulting in a current Point K score that was almost double its pre-intervention score. The key differences between these organizations can explain this inconsistency. The Homeless Service Network's volunteer board is led by individuals employed by other nonprofit organizations. Furthermore, Digital Equality Now experienced more than twice the turnovers (4-5) than Homeless Service Network (2). In fact, Digital Equality Now has the most leadership turnovers of any organization in the sample, which is likely the cause of the decrease in capacity over time.

In summary, nearly half of the organizations roughly maintained the capacity they had gained through the BCS project: Hope at Home, Coalition for Family Success, Homeless Service Network, and Families Forward. One increased substantially (Center for Cancer Support), and four decreased substantially (Aging Well, Safe Cycle, Safe Child, and Digital Equality Now). It is important to note that Point K Assessment scores are not scales, or added summaries of results, but rather point-assigned values to chosen responses. Therefore, please do not infer proportional differences when reviewing Table 5.9.

Table 5.9: Overall Scores on Point K Assessment

	Hope at Home	Coalition for Family Success	Aging Well	Homeless Service Network	Safe Cycle	Center for Cancer Support	Safe Child	Digital Equality Now	Families Forward
Pre-Intervention Overall	94.00	135.00	146.00	41.00	67.00	99.00	112.00	81.00	86.00
Post-Intervention Overall	112.00	150.00	151.00	79.00	92.00	114.00	136.00	75.00	93.00
Current Overall	109.00	147.00	123.00	83.00	79.00	143.00	108.00	57.00	99.00

The two participating organizations (Coalition for Family Success and Center for Cancer Support) that had no change in leadership since the BCS Project took place experienced insignificant change or positive change in their BCS overall score from post-assessment to the current research. For Coalition for Family Success, the score fell only three points, attributable to the post-intervention (and current) score being so high: at that level, slight decreases in indicators are logical. For the Center for Cancer Support, the score significantly increased from the post-intervention assessment to the current research. I attribute both of these to the consistency in leadership: the lessons from the BCS project stayed with the leaders over time and they continued to build the capacity of their organizations beyond the project period. In the absence of

nonprofit literature that specifically addresses leadership tenure as a predictor of success, these results suggest that consistent leadership contributes to the maintenance or increase of capacity in nonprofit organizations.

Organizations that experienced only one leadership change (Hope at Home, Aging Well, and Safe Cycle), varied in this regard. Hope at Home, whose executive director turned over just after the BCS project ended, assessed at generally the same level across time. Aging Well's current executive director was present during the BCS project as a staff member. Though their score fell significantly over time, this may be due differing attitudes between the two directors. The previous director seemed to be more optimistic in her assessment of the organization, while the current, based on her interview, seems more analytical and technical in her understanding of organizational capacity. Safe Cycle's new director also holds a more sophisticated understanding of organizational capacity than his predecessor.

Organizational budget seemed to have no effect on the change of capacity over time in these organizations. Those with the highest (Aging Well) and the lowest budgets (Digital Equality Now) decreased in their overall capacity score. Center for Cancer Support, whose budget is near the highest, increased in overall score. Hope at Home, Coalition for Family Success, and Safe Child all have budgets that hover around \$600,000 annually but produced varying results over time in terms of capacity.

Overall, as expected, these results suggest that leadership is the biggest predictor of change in capacity over time. Long-term leadership, as seen in Center for Cancer Support and Coalition for Family Success, coincides with maintained or increased capacity. Additionally, as the Point K was a self-assessment, the leader's grasp of capacity-related issues affected the

scoring. Neither budget nor organizational size appears to serve as an intervening variable of organizational capacity over time.

It is interesting to note that, when asked to compare their post-test organizational capacity to that in the current research, most leaders believed their capacity to be the same or greater at the present time. A few acknowledged that dips may have occurred over the years (i.e. during changes in leadership or drops in funding), but for the most part all were optimistic that their organizational capacity was higher. They expressed confidence in their job performance and higher budgets in the current research phase, compared to that of their predecessors, and felt that they had advanced their organizations in terms of programming, fundraising, record-keeping, and staff and board culture: therefore, their capacities were, of course, higher than ever.

### **Subsample Qualitative Findings and Analysis**

In the next section, I explore and analyze the findings of the qualitative interviews conducted with current leaders of each of the nine subsample organizations. Interviews provided a format to explore the questions of how leaders define organizational capacity, what components comprise organizational capacity, and why the results of the Point K assessments may have changed over time.

#### **Defining Organizational Capacity**

In an interview format, each organizational leader was asked how they would define organizational capacity. In the responses, the two dominant themes emerged:

1. the ability to accomplish the organizational mission or vision or organizational effectiveness
2. having the resources to provide services

To begin, Aging Well Executive Director Ann linked organizational capacity to organizational success and strategy. She said, “When I think about if organizational capacity’s high, it just kind of makes me take a deep breath...so I think when we have high organizational capacity it’s easier for us to truly take the time to be strategic, to evaluate, to invest.” She linked organizational capacity to organizational effectiveness, adding, “I guess I think of capacity also as your ability to manage, your ability to meet needs, your volume of people served, clients served, and range of services offered . . . [and] how effective [you are] in providing those services.”

Kelly, from Digital Equality Now, also spoke to higher capacity increasing effectiveness, “I’m sure if structural stuff was in place we would be better at fulfilling our mission. I am so, so sure of it.” This echoes the statements of Ann and Kelly, as well as the literature: organizations engage in capacity building activities in order to build effectiveness and further their mission (McPhee & Bare, 2001; Wing, 2004; Christensen & Gazley, 2008; DeVita et al, 2001; Leake et al., 2007; Eisinger, 2002).

Three long-time nonprofit executive directors connected the two dominant themes. Organizational capacity can be defined in terms of both organizational effectiveness and organizational resources. Mark, from Coalition for Family Success/Communities in Schools defined organizational capacity as, “having the resources to implement or to pursue the mission.” Kristen (Hope at Home) also linked organizational capacity to mission and funding. “I think about our ability to implement our mission [and] to implement our services and our efficacy,” she said. “If we have the infrastructure and money to provide services.” Similarly, Jennifer from the Center for Cancer Support connected infrastructure, revenue, and programs as keys to organizational effectiveness, stating:

I imagine organizational capacity is the capacity to fulfill your vision, right? Your abilities to work in that direction. The ability of the organization to sustain its resources, to provide effective services and to provide effective means of revenue that will enable it to make a direct, positive, effective impact on the population that it's going to serve...I don't think I can think about organizational capacity without thinking of the infrastructure, fundraising, and program.

Ryan, the Homeless Service Network's board chair (who is also a nonprofit grant writer) linked funding to organizational impact:

If your organization has a higher capacity to provide the services, then you can make more of an impact within your population of focus or your geographic area of focus, then you can demonstrate that your organization should be receiving these funds as opposed to another organization who might be struggling or making less of an impact.

However, though organizations with more impact typically receive more funding, much depends on the capacity to market and communicate that impact. Without a quality fundraiser, staff, or board capable of relaying that impact to the broader community, revenues may suffer.

Further, a recurring theme throughout the qualitative research suggests that nonprofit leaders were hesitant to separate operational matters (funding, programs, etc.) from capacity matters (structures, strategies, etc.). In their minds, the operational components were the much more important of the two. However, while funding is core to the operation of programs, it is only tangentially linked to operational effectiveness. An organization can be effective (or ineffective) with varying degrees of funding. So while funding is an important part of nonprofit operations, I would not assert that it should define the concept.



Finally, Ethan from Safe Cycle specifically referenced human resources, defining organizational capacity as “...the people hours that we have to implement the programs that we like. I think about all the other programs that an organization like ours could start, get in place, [and] expand if we had more people hours, more human hours to do it.” Though one might interpret this to suggest that staff funding would enable higher capacity, Safe Cycle is a dominantly volunteer-run organization, and would benefit from higher volunteer capacity. This distinction is critical in understanding how Ethan defines capacity, indicating a structural capacity issue rather than a funding issue.

Overall, in terms of defining organizational capacity, most organizational leaders were consistent with the current literature in terms of linking the concept to organizational effectiveness. However, as Kapacu et al. (2011) pointed out, the concept of organizational capacity is linked much more directly to “organizational knowledge, systems, and processes” than most organizational leaders acknowledged in their interviews. They spoke of its link to fulfilling the mission and expanding programs, they did not make distinct the point that capacity is structural in nature. Focusing on the resource development component of organizational capacity assumes that more money directly equates to expanded, but the components of capacity require attention and development. Rather than just adding programming, building capacity requires intentional attention to organizational processes, procedures, and structural elements, such as those included in the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool.

### **Key Components of Organizational Capacity**

Organizational leaders from the nine organizations were also asked to identify the most important components or dimensions of organizational capacity. In doing so, they identified the dimensions included on the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool as well as others, including:

1. Funding/Fundraising
2. Planning
3. Finance and accountability
4. Human resources
5. Institutional knowledge
6. Partnerships/Collaboration
7. Evaluation

Consistent with the above definitions of organizational capacity, fundraising (and having adequate resources) was by far the most acknowledged key component. According to Beth, “None of this can happen without finances. Everything is important on here, but if you don’t have the money, then you really can’t do it. The rest of it isn’t gonna happen.” Mark, from Coalition for Family Success/Communities in Schools, echoed these sentiments: “I mean, you have to have good business practices and financial accountability and oversight and all of those good things, but if you don’t have the money you can’t do the programs.”

David, of Families Forward, further linked fundraising to program delivery, getting to the core of how capacity was defined by most leaders in this study:

The more funding that you have, I think the more that you can do . . . I see that funding piece as being really critical...if we had twice the budget we currently have, you know we could do a lot more.”

He echoes the earlier relationship between funding and effectiveness, again without expressing the equally important role of structures, processes, and strategies for mission fulfillment and evaluation. Growing in capacity requires time and knowledge as well as funding.

Organizational planning was also identified as an important component of capacity. Both David of Families Forward and Ethan of Safe Cycle cited it as a “critical” piece of building organizational capacity in their organizations. Ann of Aging Well touted planning as the most important element of organizational capacity,

Organizational planning, for me, is incredibly important. A plan begins with your mission statement and your purpose and your value statement. And I think, again, making sure that is just the core of what you’re doing...And again, I mean, I feel so strongly about everyone knowing what that plan is, and everybody’s on the same road to get there...I think your ability to plan and communicate that plan. I think your ability to plan based on your mission, your values, your priorities, and then communicate that to all, I think is probably the core of organizational capacity.

Interestingly, as adamant as Ann was about organizational planning, Aging Well does not have a strategic plan in place. Though the organization’s board, staff, and capacity have developed significantly since the departure of the last director, growth has been gradual and the board has not been able to work together on a strategic plan. The board needed to “strengthen and boost the capacity” and define roles before determining “how [it], as a collective, works towards mutual goals. And then [take] what they’ve learned and [have] the capacity to work on a strategic plan.” I use this example to point out Ann’s strong grasp of organizational capacity. However, the Point K assessment for the current research shows a significant drop in capacity for Aging Well. While she said in the interview that she believed she has increased capacity over time, this deeper understanding may have affected her completion of the assessment.

Finance and accountability were mentioned by almost all organizational leaders as key components of organizational capacity, almost as assumptions. Kristen, of Hope at Home, stated,

“I think finance and accountability is a given across the board in order to operate.” Ryan, of Homeless Service Network, agreed, stating that having strong financial evaluation, fiscal procedures, and operational procedures are “top areas of focus.” Across the board, finance and accountability rose to the top as key components of organizational capacity, perhaps because the components listed in the Point K are standard operating procedures of nonprofits in the present world. They need an annual budget, insurance policies, and an annual audit to operate and to fundraise. The finance and accountability scores for all organizations were high, suggesting that most agencies see the importance of this dimension.

Human resources, though not directly included on the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool, was identified by a number of those interviewed. This component emerged in three forms: staff competency and morale, skill and ability in managing staff, and avoiding burnout. Kristen, from Hope at Home emphasized that, along with funding, staff is the most vital ingredient for effective program delivery:

You have to have the funding and you have to have the staff and the morale, the teamwork . . . You have to have the caring competent professionals and you have to have funding to pay them . . . The culture of the organization and the quality of the staff, I think that’s crucial.

Beth, from Safe Child, agreed that having the correct people on board is important. However, she furthered the argument by asserting that the leader of the organization orchestrates the teamwork that Kristen mentioned:

HR is not on this list and I know for me that’s a huge struggle and just how to do it well . . . the hiring, the firing, the making sure that staff is communicating to work effectively. The reprimands or the accolades, the making sure that the paperwork, the health

insurance, the paperwork for health insurance. How my brain works, I forget that all the time. It just doesn't, I'm like, oh God, I need to put out this letter now. . . Like money. I have no problem handling [money] and that makes sense to me. But HR, I was like, isn't it done now? So I struggle with it. And I think also letting go that they may or may not like each other. . . [and] they're not gonna like me. . . how does a small business of eight people function when people are not liking each other?

Finally, regarding human resources, David (Families Forward) spoke to the realities of leading a small organization with a small staff. He stated:

Staff is also key. You know, in a small organization you have, you know, 100 different needs. But you probably have a staff that can probably, is really proficient at only a percentage of those needs. As well as...I mean quite frankly I'm reaching the point of burnout. And so, a part of that, and my board knows this, but part of that is there are just, there are things that I have to deal with that take a lot of energy from me. And if there was a way to have somebody else, who then handle that, and I worked on my strengths, then I'd be less likely to burn out.

Each of these three elements of human resources contributes to organizational capacity. First, organizational culture—though difficult to measure or assess—is key to ensuring that the executive director's commitment to capacity is carried throughout the organization. The management of the organization, though a structural and strategic matter rather than operational, advances this cause as well. Finally, an executive director's mismanagement of self and the resulting burnout are common phenomena in nonprofits.

Executive burnout and turnover lead into another important component. Institutional knowledge and succession planning, though not included on the Point K Organizational

Assessment Tool, was identified as key by two of the interviewed leaders. Interestingly, both were the sole executive directors over the lifetime of their organizations. Jennifer (Center for Cancer Support) said:

one term that I've used a lot... because I've been here since the beginning and nothing was really put in place, I think it's just that capacity is institutional knowledge. So it's not mine, it's the Center for Cancer Support's. I mean that leads to succession planning a little bit, too. But institutional knowledge is the capacity. I mean it's so, so, so important that you have those models in place and that you don't just put it on a shelf.

Mark, of Coalition for Family Success/Communities in Schools, agreed that succession planning is a component that is often neglected in a high turnover profession. "Probably one of the things that I need to pay more attention to [is] a succession plan, that kind of thing," he said. "But . . .if a truck ran over me, it would be hard for people to figure it out."

Also missing from the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool, partnerships and collaboration were identified as key components of organizational capacity as well. In each case, the partnerships were tied to funding or funding relationships. For example, Mark (Coalition for Family Success/Communities in Schools) spoke of changes in leadership among key partners that influence program practices and funding. David (Families Forward) cited the dissolution of another nonprofit that previously provided funding for child care for the families in their programs. The partner nonprofit is no longer in operation, but the dollars raised by that nonprofit from the community have not been redirected to Families Forward. As a result, the capacity of Families Forward to provide those services to the community are now limited. Finally, Ryan from Homeless Service Network related the benefits of collaboration to fundraising. "The opportunity, I think within, when you're discussing organizational capacity, again, I think is how

you can brag about how you're leveraging resources, what partnerships do you have and how that helps you stretch the dollar out there."

Finally, leaders spoke of the importance of evaluation to fundraising, as well as to informing the delivery of effective programming. Ryan (Homeless Service Network) discussed the importance of evaluation in its various forms, as well as the constraints that make it difficult:

I think evaluation is probably a strong component. Ongoing, either outcome and/or process depending on what it is that we want to look at...having a strong evaluation plan. You can set up a great evaluation plan and look at, 'Okay, we're going to be looking at this and we're going to do some pre- and post-tests and we're going to do all of this great stuff. We're going to do some focus groups.' But after you say all that...that's where I've made that mistake in the past going 'yeah we're going to do this and this and this.' And then when we actually do it we're like, 'holy crap, we should have funded an entire position to do this.' Because we can't, I don't have the time. And then unfortunately we turn to our direct support staff who's doing all this and ask them to collect data on top of that. And that's when we run into a lot of problems.

Overall, though the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool presents as comprehensive in evaluating organizational capacity, the subsample respondents considered human resources, institutional knowledge/succession planning, and collaboration to be important components as well. As described in the literature review, Krause et al. (2014) found that, across a study of 24 tools measuring organizational capacity, Governance/Leadership/Management was the only consistent measure. It is interesting to note that leadership was not mentioned in the interviews.

### **Reasons for Change in Capacity**

As shown in Chapter 4, using the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool as a measure, the capacity of these organizations increased somewhat consistently following their participation in the BCS project. However, there were varying results in the follow up time from the post-test to the current research. This section will explore reasons for those changes. The second research question of this study is: *what intervening variables impact an organization's ability to continue to increase organizational capacity over time after an intensive capacity-building program?* In an effort to answer this question, I asked each organizational leader about factors that had contributed to changes in their organizational capacity. The results included both internal and external factors listed, and then described and analyzed, below:

1. Executive Director leadership
2. Board Advocates/Champions
3. Lack of Funding (detrimental effect)
4. Access to Training via Technology

While those interviewed acknowledged both staff and board leadership as variables in building organizational capacity, they considered staff leadership the more dominant force (in organizations with an executive director). Staff leadership has been more direct and intentional, while board leadership around advancing organizational capacity has been more complicit.

Kristen (Hope at Home) said:

I think having an executive director that's stable and solid and has provided staff leadership that's been needed and been the liaison, and having some board members that were determined to work with me and help make that happen...I provided the leadership that has looked at what the organization needed and built that team, and created the staff morale and culture and led the organization to adapt to the funding changes...It's all on



me. It's all on me and the staff team. The board provides governance in terms of reviewing financials and helping with fundraising, and changes in direction are certainly presented to the board and voted on, but they follow my leadership.

David (Families Forward) agreed. "I think part of it is definitely the person in the executive director seat, I would say. I don't want to toot my own horn, but I do know that, I mean, for example, finances and accountability are very important to me." As a result, he pays close attention to creating systems and infrastructure in place to maintain those.

Beth from Safe Child agreed that staff leadership is responsible for changes and adaptations in organizational capacity over time:

It's hard for me. I think I'm a horrible boss. I wish I didn't think that way on a regular basis, but I do. So it's tough, but yeah, it wouldn't be growing if we weren't doing all the things. We wouldn't be where we are if I hadn't gotten all that money. And we wouldn't be where we are if we didn't have the staff that we have now. We wouldn't be adding another staff. We wouldn't be saying this behavior isn't acceptable anymore because before all these kinds of fiddley-faddley behaviors were acceptable and now it's like, no, you can't get away with that anymore.

Each of these three responses indicates that staff leadership, in the form of an executive director, is largely responsible for the building of organizational capacity over time. Kristen points again to the director's responsibility in shaping the staff and staff morale: all decisions go back to the executive director who, ultimately, is responsible for the state of the organization. While she acknowledges that board has some impact on organizational capacity, the buck stops with her. In nine years, she has cycled through board and staff members and likely retains the perception that she is the core of the organization.

David and Beth acknowledged specific components (finance and accountability or human resource procedures, for example) that they have focused on to improve the capacity of the organizations they represent. David's focus on finance and accountability, his area of strength, helps him lead his agency to a better state, as does Beth's more challenging attention to human resources.

It is somewhat confounding, then, that the Point K assessment results for leadership dip slightly in the current research. If executive directors are, in fact, responsible for increasing the capacity of an organization through their leadership, and leadership metrics fell, are directors wrong, or are they just humble? I will note that the three directors quoted above, though longstanding, were not the ones who took the Point K for the initial research.

Beth also acknowledged board participation in increasing capacity, showing a greater willingness to be structured, committing to more engagement to staff and community outreach, and supporting fundraising efforts. Ethan noted that some board members have supported the movement forward in some areas, but not in others.

How do we keep this sustainable? How do we move forward? How do we grow? How do we expand and start to look forward again? There have been champions on the board...(but) I would say there have never been champions on the board for internal organizational capacity.

As a result, the organization has lagged in developing internal policy.

Others note that that their board, either as a whole or as a single champion, has moved the needle on organizational capacity. Mark from Coalition for Family Success/Communities in Schools recruited a single champion onto the board, which led to further key recruitment and a

commitment to grow board capacity. The result was a “refresh” of the board with some “real, young, energetic, and pretty successful people.”

Ann (Aging Well) credits her board with maintaining the effective operations of the organization during and after a leadership change. “We had some very strong board champions along the way that just kept leading the charge that leadership is different, leadership is different, leadership is different. We have to trust.” As a result, she continued, community partners and donors continued their support of the organization during an otherwise unstable time.

Ethan alone acknowledged that boards *lacking* a strong advocate for organizational capacity are prone to suffer in building that capacity. The others identified one or more board advocates who supported the development of capacity building blocks, such as Mark’s energetic recruit who brought other like-minded champions on board: these dynamic actors attract others of their kind. As for Ann, the credibility of her organization was at risk with funders, supporters, and donors after a poor performance by the previous executive director. Were it not for the strength of reputation and activity of her board members in support of the organization, its outcome may have been in question. Further, according to Ann, the previous director’s performance motivated the board to invest in stronger elements of capacity, such as planning, policy, and communication, to ensure her success.

Externally, funding, and the ability to adapt to funding changes, is the single most-reported reason for change in organizational capacity among the subsample participants. Ryan (Homeless Service Network) explained:

We had a plan around [funding] and then the funding shifted. And so [the partners] have struggled a little bit with the services. I think, as a nonprofit, and speaking [to] the capacity to be successful, adaptability is such a key component in that. And us being able

to change [in response] to the changing funding streams. [We] struggle a little bit too.

Adapting to changing funding streams and priorities does not necessarily mean changing operations to fit within the landscapes of current funding, if that makes any sense.

As mentioned above, funding partnerships and community partnerships can help (or hinder) an organization's capacity to deliver effective programs. They also are important in responding and adapting to funding changes. Ann (Aging Well) recalled a significant change in funding several years ago with one program that could have severely restricted the program's scope. "It just so happened that we had that partnership with [two local community agencies]. And they were able to fill the gaps so we didn't have to suffer service gaps."

Beth (Safe Child) also credits funding increases for growing their capacity to deliver programs. "To fully move, you have to have money and you have got to have people...So we got money. We had money for staff, we had money for raises for staff, we had money to move part-time to full-time." As a result, she said, the programs that were fragile have grown, and the organization with them.

As noted in the previous section, funding can influence whether investments in capacity can be made. It is important to point out that the BCS program was part of a stimulus package that accompanied a recession. The economy was on an upswing that supported the growth of most organizations in the sample. One might expect organizational capacity to grow along with these agencies. However, we see that most indicators on the Point K were relatively stable, with a few organizations realizing a reduction in capacity. These results suggest that the funding growth experienced by most of these agencies was directed to programming and not to capacity-building efforts, and with good cause. Circumstances raised expectations for programming

outcomes, but there was no formal programming or structure to support or fund continued capacity growth.

Technology is another external variable that has supported these organizations' ability to increase or maintain capacity over time. Many spoke of webinars that enable staff to engage in professional development at a lower expense than with out-of-town conferences. As Beth (Safe Child) asserted, "...somebody's on a webinar all the time. And so I can get more access to state things easier; I don't have to travel for it." Though no one believed webinars to be equal to in-person training, Kristen (Hope at Home) is grateful for the opportunity:

As a smaller nonprofit, our budget ...was incredibly limited. And it has been really frustrating because it has only been within the last couple years—even with the resources in this community—that there have been formal professional development trainings offered in this community at an affordable rate.

Again, technology has provided an additional avenue for training on elements of capacity. However, without formal capacity-building programs to support its development, it is challenging for agencies to pull their staff from program-specific activities to spend time on capacity-related training. After all, these agencies are being evaluated and funded based on their program outcomes, not measures of their internal capacity. While I believe that one contributes to the other, it's a harder sell to these nonprofit leaders who are balancing budgets and time to achieve program goals.

### **Further Discussion**

The findings above introduce several points of discussion. First, utilizing organizational effectiveness theory to explain nonprofit organizational capacity building is supported by the findings of this dissertation. Local nonprofit leaders and scholars alike agree that capacity

building is for the purpose of increasing organizational effectiveness (Light, 2004). However, by resting on the perceptions of a single stakeholder in each organization, this study (by design), does not further the work of Herman and Renz (2004). These scholars posited that organizational effectiveness is not a single reality, but a more complicated matter that takes into account multiple stakeholders with differing visions of the concept. Nor was it able to support alternative theories of organizational effectiveness identified in the literature (Daft, 2010; Sowa et al. 2004). This will be noted as an area for further research in the concluding chapter of this research study.

However, these findings do evoke Wing's (2004) question: should capacity building efforts should focus on the organization or the individual? The single organization (Center for Cancer Support) that increased their capacity substantially over time maintained the same leader for the entire period, implying that leadership is an important variable over time. Similarly, the organization that underwent multiple leadership changes suffered on the Point K, reinforcing the negative impact of leadership on an organization's ability to maintain capacity. Further, most organizations had at least one change in leadership over the term of this study. As a result, I assert that these efforts should focus on the organization, rather than the individual.

This recommendation comes with two footnotes. First, the BCS project was dually focused on the individual and the organization in its delivery methods. While organizational leadership was most prominently involved in the training, technical assistance, development of materials, and funding portions of the project, other staff also played a role. Materials (fundraising plans, marketing plans, board matrices, etc.) were developed for the organization as a whole and sometimes produced by staff other than the organizational leader. This dual approach may have mitigated some negative change in capacity for participating organizations.

Secondly, this approach assumes that the organization itself reaps all benefits of capacity-building efforts. An alternative perspective could consider the nonprofit sector to be the beneficiary, and with that, individual focus still makes sense. That is, organizational turnover, though on the whole negative for the agency, sends trained leaders (most likely) to another nonprofit organization. A rising tide raises all ships.

If executive director leadership is a key intervening variable affecting capacity over time, as described above, then it should influence delivery systems within capacity-building work. Herman and Heimovics (1990) defined the nonprofit staff leader as the individual perceived to be centrally responsible for outcomes, making him or her key in the capacity-building process (p. 171). They argued that effective CEOs provide leadership for their boards and the organization; in doing so, they can increase critical investment in capacity-building efforts.

In the absence of (or in addition to) an executive director, the literature deems the board responsible for the effectiveness of an organization (Herman & Renz, 2000, 2004, 2008; Bradshaw, Murray, & Wolpin, 1992). However, scholars largely consider the role of the board as a unit, not as individual advocates for organizational effectiveness. In this research, by contrast, organizational leaders asserted that individual board members pushed for increased capacity and effectiveness.

The literature around funding and nonprofit effectiveness is, interestingly, lacking, perhaps because the relationship is a forgone conclusion. Again, however, additional funding is generally routed not toward the capacity or effectiveness of the organization, but to the expansion of programs and services. Though one might argue that furthering the mission through programming increases the effectiveness of the organization, how can we measure that efficacy without evaluation? Increased programming does not necessarily equal effective programming.

The literature also neglects the impact of technology on organizational effectiveness. Though the subsample interviewees tended to agree, when prompted, that technology has increased their capacity, there was not a lot of enthusiasm about it. My initial assumption was that organizations would be excited to have access to training and webinars via technology that otherwise would be too expensive or hard to identify. However, while those organizations that engage in webinars appreciated them as training opportunities, they did not consider them to be as valuable as an in-person session.

Another takeaway from the interview process that informs the research is that organizational leaders struggled to distinguish capacity building from programming. Many responses returned to the theme of programming; their explanations, even in relation to organizational capacity-specific questions, were tied to programs and services, rather than to structural organizational effectiveness. That is, they were eager to talk about the details of their client profiles, specific services, and individual staff experiences, but did not tie these back to the structural capacity that supports programming and day-to-day operations.

Additionally, organizational leaders responded to prompts about intervening variables that might influence capacity—leadership (staff and board), funding, and technology—but struggled to identify any additional variables that might play a role. Since alternative variables are missing from the literature, I had hoped that this study’s interview process would uncover some, but they did not arise.

These blind spots in leadership inform a couple of inferences. First, these organizational leaders were too engrossed in day-to-day operations to see the bigger picture. Heifetz and Linsky (2002) proposed that a leader should lead “from the dance floor” but also be able to lead “from the balcony,” at a distance from the daily push and pull of the organization (p. 53). The leaders



interviewed for this study are leading from the dance floor, but seemed to have trouble getting up on the balcony to take in the full view.

Second, the organizational leaders that I interviewed rarely think about organizational capacity. If they stray to program topics during an interview specifically about organizational capacity, then it must not play a large part in their thinking on any given day. What would motivate these leaders to consider the concept? During the BCS project, leaders talked about how important capacity was to the success of their organizations, but since the nonprofit opportunities to expand capacity have dried up, consideration for its importance has gone with it.

Additionally, each organization interviewed for this research stated that, although dimensions of capacity may have risen or fallen over time, their overall capacity was greater at the time of the interview than it was nine years previously. It is safe to say that each organization has a higher budget now, and is likely performing more broadly in terms of programs and services. However, as we can see from the data, only one organization actually increased their capacity substantially over this period: four were substantially the same over time, and four others decreased in capacity. This suggests that they believed that since their programs and services were broader in 2019 that their capacity must be as well. But how reliable, then, is the Point K assessment—or any self-administered assessment—if the subject can cause such broad swings in ratings?

I ask this for a few reasons. First, my personal knowledge of the interviewees established that three of them were great optimists, with a ‘glass half full’ approach. The leaders of Coalition for Family Success, Safe Child, and Aging Well were, at the time of the BCS project, high scorers on the Point K assessment tool. Coalition for Family Success, with its long-term executive director, maintained a high score over time. This makes sense as the score did not have

much room to increase. For Safe Child and Aging Well, the scores decreased from near the top of the scale to mid-range. I attribute this to the change in leadership: the new directors were more measured and critical than their predecessors. While the Point K is not a scaled assessment, I find that several of its measures leave room for interpretation.

For example, the leadership section, most notably, is entirely subjective, with items like, “Does your leader have a strong vision for the organization?” rated with “yes,” “no,” or “somewhat.” Another reads, “Does your leader successfully build relationships inside and outside of the organization?” with the same response options. Note that the assessment is completed by the organizational leader. Other sections are more objective, though even the most objective question has room for subjectivity. For example, in the fundraising section, a question is “Does your organization review and revise the fundraising action plan and corresponding timeline?” The response options include “yes,” “no,” “in the process of creating,” or “Don’t know.” Organizational leaders could perceive reviewing and revising as something completed over the past year, or the past five years, or more. Depending the nature of the leader, an organization could score more or less on identical questions.

The literature introduces a plethora of nonprofit organizational assessment tools—both qualitative and quantitative—and I am sure that all have some level of subjectivity (Krishnaveni & Aravamudhan, 2013; Krause, Bryant & Bhatia, 2014). After all, who knows an organization better than its leader and, at the same time, who is more subjective? Overall, I believe that the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool was a good one for this project. It allowed the organizations online access to the tool, which was important in enabling each organization to take the assessment multiple times (pre- and post- intervention). It also outlined several key dimensions of organizational capacity and enabled the organizations to assess in each of these

dimensions in a timely and efficient manner. Finally, it allowed comparison over time from the pre- to the post-intervention assessments, and later for this research.

Based on the pre-post assessment data, I conclude that the BCS project was largely effective in increasing the capacity of nonprofit organizations involved in the project. The evidence in Chapter 4 established that capacity had increased over the short term for these organizations. The variables that aided this short-term effect included little turnover in leadership, diverse delivery methods (technical assistance, training, assistance with work products, funding, etc.), and the process designed by the BCS project team to engage with these agencies and their organizational leaders.

The long-term effects of the project are somewhat less clear. However, it is encouraging to note that all but one organization showed an increase in their Point K assessment scores from pre-intervention to the most recent research. This demonstrates that at least some of the capacity built in with the BCS project has endured over time.

However, a comparison of BCS post-assessment with this 2019 data paints a different picture, showing varying results in the ability of these organizations to hold on to the capacity built over the length of the project. Only one organization (with the long-term leader) increased capacity substantially over this period. Three additional organizations generally maintained their capacity over time and four organizations significantly lost capacity over time. Additionally, a few organizations dissolved over the same time period.

The conclusions are two-fold. First, organizational leadership plays a role in maintaining organizational capacity over time. The two organizations with sustained leadership over the course of the research either increased or maintained capacity. This is critical: leadership tends to turn over often in nonprofit organizations, and we are seeing that this can have a detrimental

effect on the ability to sustain capacity. Second, organizational budget or size does not seem to have an effect on the ability of an organization to sustain capacity over time. In this subsample, organizations in the same budget range showed varying abilities to sustain capacity.

It can also be concluded, through the qualitative interviews held with organizational leaders, that the definition of organizational capacity in the field mirrors that of organization capacity in the literature—it is all tied to organizational effectiveness. Organizational effectiveness theory is strongly linked to organizational capacity and capacity-building efforts. Also, those dimensions of capacity identified in the literature are consistent with those identified by nonprofit leaders during interviews. However, nonprofit leaders also identified human resources, institutional knowledge, and partnerships/collaboration as important dimensions in building organizational capacity.

Finally, multiple intervening variables affect organizational capacity over time. First, the ability of leadership to build an organizational culture conducive to capacity is vital to its sustainability or growth. A second intervening variable is the presence or lack of a champion on the board of directors that supports the development of capacity dimensions, which can help an organization to move forward in developing capacity, according to those interviewed. Third, funding is an important variable. When funding is not available for capacity-building efforts, or even for general programming, capacity can founder. Lastly, the use of technology, while less supported, is nevertheless an intervening variable that allows nonprofit organizations access to capacity-building training, leading to increased knowledge among staff of both programming and capacity.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

In this study, I utilized existing and new research, employing univariate and qualitative analysis to answer two research questions:

1. *How does organizational capacity change over time after an intensive capacity building program?*
2. *What intervening variables impact an organization's ability to continue to increase organizational capacity over time after an intensive capacity building program?*

This final chapter presents and summarizes the findings of my research, and examines its importance to the broader literature on nonprofit organizations. Finally, I identify implications for future research and practice in this area.

Analysis of the quantitative data revealed significant and substantive increases in self-reported Point K organizational capacity indicators immediately following engagement in the BCS project. Overall, the data demonstrates that participating organizations significantly increased the presence of indicators of organizational capacity over the course of the intervention. In each subsection, marked increases in the percentage of organizations with the identified indicators “in place” were identified, and the percentage of indicators “not in place” were decreased. Furthermore, the percentage of organizations pursuing development of organizational capacity indicators (by indicating “in process of creating”) increased over the course of the BCS project. This suggests that even though the formal BCS project ended, the organizations would continue to develop these resources over time.

In the collection of current research, the nine organizations who completed the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool in 2019 had mixed assessment scores. The organizations in the subsample still showed higher scores on the current research than in pre-intervention. However, the subsample showed mixed results regarding change in Point K scores from post-intervention to present. Those organizations who maintained the same organizational leader in the interim showed an increase or sustaining of organizational capacity level. Those organizations that had multiple turnovers in leadership from the time of the BCS project to present day showed consistent or reduced scores on the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool.

Findings from the qualitative semi-structured in-depth interviews with leaders of the nine organizations in the study aligned with existing literature regarding definitions of organizational capacity, as well as components that make up organizational capacity. In defining organizational capacity, the most common themes were: 1. the ability to accomplish the organizational mission or vision (organizational effectiveness), and 2. having the resources to provide services. This research underscored the link between organizational capacity and organizational effectiveness theory. However, the multi-stakeholder model of organizational effectiveness was not reinforced through this study, as the sole stakeholder interviewed was the organizational leader.

The organizational leaders also defined which components are important in comprising capacity for an organization. They identified seven components, both inclusive and complementary of those detailed in the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool. These seven elements are: 1. Funding/Fundraising, 2. Planning, 3. Finance and accountability, 4. Human resources, 5. Institutional knowledge, 6. Partnerships, and 7. Evaluation. The leaders identified fundraising as the most important of these: they agreed that without fundraising, the organizational mission could never be realized.

Finally, the interviews yielded information regarding why the organizational capacity may have shifted over time. Participants in the study asserted that there are four primary reasons for changes in organizational capacity over time, including: 1. Staff leadership, 2. Board leadership, 3. Funding, and 4. Technology. Of these four intervening variables, staff leadership and funding rose to the top as the most important variables influencing capacity over time.

Finally, the study found that organizational leaders tend to confound discussion or understanding of capacity with services or programs. There tended to be a lack of comprehension or separation between the two concepts, showing that preoccupation with day-to-day service issues distracts them from big picture elements such as infrastructure and capacity. From this fact, one can infer that capacity does not weigh heavily on their minds and that, in the absence of being involved in a capacity building program, capacity issues may fall by the wayside. The result, of course, is that the organizational ability to achieve its mission, and flex through times of expansion or contraction, is mitigated.

### **Implications for Research**

Existing literature neglects the long-term effects of organizational capacity programs. This research study fills that gap by providing a longitudinal study on the subject, though the dearth of scholarship makes it difficult to situate these results. I look forward to more studies that evaluate the long-term implications of organizational involvement in a capacity-building program.

Additionally, literature specific to the nonprofit sector was generally found to be lacking. Research on intervening variables affecting capacity was non-existent in the field, and could be developed further. Through this research I supported the theory that organizational effectiveness

is connected to capacity building. I would suggest that further research be conducted around what makes an organization effective, specifically in relation to organizational capacity.

Literature examining nonprofit boards and effectiveness exists; however, it refers to the entirety of a board, rather than the actions of individual members. This study found that individual board member advocacy is an intervening variable for organizational capacity. It would be interesting to see additional research conducted on individual board member skills or activities, and how these characteristics could further organizational effectiveness in the organizations with which they work.

Based on this research, additional work should look specifically at the tenure of leadership that results in stronger organizational capacity. This study found that leaders who were present during the initial organizational capacity building project fared the best in increasing or sustaining capacity over time. Future research should examine organizations outside of a capacity-building project to see if organizational leaders improve capacity over time, and, more specifically, if their tenure impacts the effectiveness of the organization.

Additionally, it would be interesting to see research that explores the effectiveness of these organizations in meeting their missions. Though, as discussed in the literature review section, it is difficult to define outcomes for meeting an organization's mission, I would recommend that this link between organizational effectiveness and development of organizational capacity be researched further. At this point, the research has not been able to definitively say that higher capacity leads to higher outcomes.

Finally, a future study should follow the leader of the organization who was present during the capacity-building efforts, in addition to the organization. By assessing the leader who received the majority of the intervention's focus, the researcher could identify whether the



individual experiences a change in his or her understanding of capacity, rather than solely checking for benefits to the organization.

### **Implications for Practice**

The findings within this research point to a few implications for future practice within the nonprofit sector. First, the BCS project was successful in increasing the capacity of the participating organizations over the term of the project, as indicated on the Point K Organizational Assessment Tool. This means that capacity-building projects utilizing the BCS model are efficacious. I would suggest that this model, which develops workplans collaboratively and then completes them through a combined delivery system using technical assistance, training, product development, and funding, is highly effective in developing capacity over the mid-term (1-2 years), and even in the long term, as Point K scores exceeded pre-intervention scores in the follow up research. Funding of additional models would be beneficial to the nonprofit sector and enable further work in this area.

Second, work products (e.g., marketing plans and fundraising plans) should be completed by organizational staff, rather than project support staff, to ensure long-term investment in these products. While, these products were created collaboratively during the BCS project, we see that their use was not carried forward in the long term after the project ended. The organizations that benefited from the development of these products were not adequately involved in their creation, and therefore did not learn the skills or invest in the importance of their development. In future projects, I suggest this change.

Next, organizational capacity building should continue to focus on the organizational leadership, even though that leader is at risk of leaving and taking the lessons with them. In the qualitative interviews for this research, we heard about the importance of the leader's role in

building organizational capacity. In most organizations, this is the key individual who influences the decision to deepen capacity, or even pay attention to it. A board champion was also identified as a key influencer of capacity. By focusing capacity building efforts on the organizational leader and the board, the nonprofit sector is ensuring continuation of commitment to capacity, even though those individuals may move to alternate nonprofits.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

With the growing role of nonprofit organizations in delivering services around the nation, it is increasingly important for these organizations to maintain the capacity to fulfill their mission. While funding has been scarce for organizations to build capacity, we look to the long-term effectiveness of capacity-building programs for sustained progress. According to this study, the organizations involved in capacity-building efforts do tend to sustain increased capacity after an intense intervention. The Point K assessment that the organizations utilized prior to intervention revealed higher scores post-intervention, and nine years later they remained above pre-intervention levels. Organizational leadership was the dominant intervening variable affecting the ability to sustain or increase capacity in the long term.

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## APPENDIX A

### POINT K ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT TOOL

ORGANIZATIONAL PLANNING								
Does your organization have a written mission statement?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know				
When was your organization's current mission statement created?	Within 1 year	1-2 years ago	More than 2 years ago	Don't know				
How often is your mission statement reviewed and revised?	Semi-annually	Annually	Every 2 or more years	Never	Don't know			
Is your organization guided by a written set of core values?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know				
Does your organization have a written strategic plan?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know				

	Which of the following elements are included in the strategic plan?	Organizational Goals	Organizational Objectives	How clients will be affected as a result of the objectives	The resources necessary to carry out the objectives	The number of items/products the activities will produce	Multi-year budgets to support plan implementation	
	Does your organization have an annual operating work plan?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
	Does your organization's annual operating work plan have a timeline?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE</b>								
	Does your organization have a Board of Directors?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
	Does your organization have a board matrix that outlines the ideal makeup of the Board?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			

Are board members' terms stated at the time of their election?	Yes	No	Don't Know				
Does your organization offer new board members a board orientation?	Yes	No	Don't Know				
Does your Board of Directors have a Chair or President?	Yes	No	Don't Know				
Is your Board Chair or President also the Executive Director?	Yes	No	Don't Know				
Do board members review the performance of the Executive Director based on his/her written job description?	Yes	No	Don't Know	Our Executive Director doesn't have a written job description			
Does your organization have written bylaws?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
Do your bylaws reflect your organization's current operations?	Yes	No	Don't Know				
Does the entire staff meet at regular intervals?	Yes	No	Don't Know				

	Do all staff members have written job descriptions that detail expectations?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
	Are employee performance evaluations conducted?	Yes	No	In process of implementing	Don't know			
	Does your organization use the help of volunteers?	Yes	No	We are considering it	Don't know			
	Does your organization have written job descriptions for volunteers?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
	Do volunteers receive a volunteer handbook?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
	Does your organization have any computers?	Yes	No	In process of acquiring	Don't know			
	Do all staff members have individual computers?	Yes	No	Don't know				
	Do all staff members have individual desktop internet access?	Yes	No	Don't know				

	Do all staff members have individual email addresses?	Yes	No	Don't know				
	Does your organization have a local area network (LAN)?	Yes	No	Don't know				
	Does your organization use virus protection software?	Yes	No	Don't know				
	Does your organization routinely back up its computers?	Yes	No	Don't know				
	Does your organization have a website?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
	Does your organization have a phone system?	Yes	No	Don't know				
	Does your organization have a voice mail?	Yes	No	Don't know				
	Does your organization have fax machine (or computers with fax capabilities)?	Yes	No	Don't know				

	Does your organization use a basic set of forms for repetitive tasks (e.g., time sheets, travel expenses, regular staff reports)?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
	Does your organization have a written personnel manual covering personnel policy?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
<b>LEADERSHIP</b>								
	Would you say that your leader is mission-focused?	Yes	No	Somewhat				
	Does your leader have a strong vision for the organization?	Yes	No	Somewhat				
	Does your leader have a strategy in mind to make his or her vision become real?	Yes	No	Somewhat				
	Does your leader successfully build relationships inside and outside the organization?	Yes	No	Somewhat				
	Does your leader have an open, participatory communication style?	Yes	No	Somewhat				

	Does your leader have the ability to motivate employees and other stakeholders?	Yes	No	Somewhat				
	Does your leader have strong managerial skills?	Yes	No	Somewhat				
<b>FUNDRAISING</b>								
	Does your organization have a written fundraising plan?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
	How often is your fundraising plan reviewed or revised?	Quarterly	Semi-annually	Annually	Every 2 years	Don't know		
	Does your organization have a fundraising action plan and corresponding timeline to support its fundraising plan?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
	Does your organization review and revise the fundraising action plan and corresponding timeline?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			

	Does your organization have at least one staff member whose primary responsibility is fundraising (other than the Executive Director)?	Yes	No	Don't know				
	Does your organization have a process in place for writing grant proposals?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
	For each of the strategies listed, please indicate whether your organization's primary fundraising staff person uses that strategy to build fundraising relationships.	Writing grant applications	Sending draft proposals to funders	Meeting with funders	Attending conferences with funders	Other		
	Does your board have a fundraising committee?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
	Do fundraising tools (case statements, brochures, sample letters) exist for board and staff?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			



Does your organization prepare regular updates (budgets, expenses, annual report, etc.) for funders and donors on funding received?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
How often does your organization evaluate the extent to which it has met its fundraising goals?	Quarterly	Semi-annually	Annually	Every 2 years	Don't know		
<b>FINANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY</b>							
Does your organization have an annual operating budget?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
Does expected income meet or exceed projected expenses in this year's budget?	Yes	No	Don't know				
Does your organization use multi-year operating budget projections?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			

Please provide the approximate percentage of your organization's annual revenue derived from Federal funding								
Please provide the approximate percentage of your organization's annual revenue derived from State funding								
Please provide the approximate percentage of your organization's annual revenue derived from Local public funding								
Please provide the approximate percentage of your organization's annual revenue derived from Individuals								
Please provide the approximate percentage of your organization's annual revenue derived from Foundations								

	Please provide the approximate percentage of your organization's annual revenue derived from Corporations							
	Please provide the approximate percentage of your organization's annual revenue derived from Special Events/annual fundraisers							
	Please provide the approximate percentage of your organization's annual revenue derived from Earned Revenue (i.e., fee for service, membership, interest income)							
	Please provide the approximate percentage of your organization's annual revenue derived from Other							
	Are invoices normally paid within 30 days?	Yes	No	Don't know				

	Does your organization have insurance coverage?	Yes	No	Don't know				
	Does your organization have a written pay scale?	Yes	No	Don't know				
	Have you considered your organization's potential risk?	Yes	No	Don't know				
	Is the financial status of your organization reviewed at least quarterly by the board?	Yes	No	Don't know				
	Is your organization audited annually?	Yes	No	Don't know				
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>								
	Does your organization have a marketing and communications plan?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
	Is your organization tracking the effects of its marketing and communications plan?	Yes	No	In process of implementing	Don't know			

	Has your organization developed collateral materials based on its marketing and communications plan?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
<b>EVALUATION</b>								
	Does your organization have an evaluation plan for the whole organization (based on the strategic plan if you have one)?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
	Does your organization have a logic model for any of your programs?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
	Does your organization have a written program evaluation plan for any of its programs?	Yes	No	In process of creating	Don't know			
	Does your organization evaluate how well its programs achieve their outcomes?	Yes	No	Don't know				

	Does your organization evaluate how well its programs are implemented?	Yes	No	Don't know				
	Which of the following data collection strategies does your organization currently use?	Survey/Questionnaires	Interviews	Document review	Observation	Focus groups	Case studies	Test of knowledge, skill or performance

## APPENDIX B

### TRAINING SUMMARY

<b>Date</b>	<b>Training Title</b>	<b>Trainer</b>
3/5/10	Grant Writing	Michelle Carney
3/16/10	Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards	Tom Holland
3/23/10	Effective Fundraising	Tom Holland
3/30/10	Introduction to Strategic Planning	Tom Holland
4/8/10	Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations	Donna Bliss
4/13/10	Organizational Communication	Tom Holland
4/19/10	Volunteer Management	Art Ordoqui
5/6/10	Program Evaluation	Michelle Carney
5/11/10	Financial Reporting Systems	Amanda Farmer
5/13/10	Legal Issues for Nonprofits	Rachel Spears
5/19/10	Inter-Organizational Collaboration	Tom Holland
5/25/10	Board Development: Roles & Responsibilities	Tom Holland
5/26/10	Board Development	Tom Holland
6/3/10	Leadership Development, Part I	Tom Holland
6/15/10	Creating Low-Cost, Effective Training	Jeanne Sanderson
6/23/10	Board Development	Tom Holland & Pat Peterson
6/25/10	Financial Reporting Systems II	Amanda Farmer
6/29/10	Case Management	Sarah Himmelheber
7/8/10	Social Media	Nicole Holubar
7/15/10	Planned Giving	Tom Holland
7/21/10	Leadership Development, Part II	Tom Holland
8/19/10	Nonprofit Financial Budgeting	Amanda Farmer
8/20/10	Board Development: Roles & Responsibilities (Greene Co.)	Tom Holland
8/25/10	The Effective Chairperson	Tom Holland & Julie Meehan
9/29/10	Organizational Assessment	Tom Holland
10/6/10	SOAR Case Management Training	Ed Moore
11/9/10	Conflict Management 101	Liz Loescher
11/17/10	Grant Writing	Michelle Carney
12/6/10	Basic Board Responsibilities	Julie Meehan & Pat Peterson
1/13/11	Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations	Martin Matheny

1/27/11	Nonprofit Technology	Michael McGough
2/2/11	Conflict Management 102	Liz Loescher
2/17/11	Strategic Planning	Tom Holland
2/22/11	Fundraising, Part I	Tom Holland
3/1/11	Fundraising, Part II	Tom Holland
3/24/11	Organizational Communication	Tom Holland
4/7/11	Leadership & Management Part I	Tom Holland
4/13/11	Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards	Jennifer Cantwell & Pat Peterson
4/18/11	Service Learning/Internships	S. Wilder, M. Carney, C. Nossett
5/4/11	Volunteer Mgt Training	Dawn Aiello
5/9/11	Nonprofit Financial Systems	Amanda Farmer
5/17/11	Social Media I	Michael McGough & Amanda Newsom
5/24/11	Social Media II	Michael McGough & Amanda Newsom
6/13/11	Advocacy by Human Service Nonprofits	Marcela Mellinger
6/23/11	Legal Issues for Nonprofits	Rachel Spears
6/29/11	Leadership & Mgt, Part 2: Managing People	Tom Holland
7/14/11	Planned Giving	Tom Holland & Kelly Holloway
7/20/11	Effective Presentations	Sue Lawrence
7/25/11	Intro to Project Mgt Software	Pavich, Cantwell, Earnest, Underwood
7/26/11	Basic Board Responsibilities (Winder)	Jennifer Cantwell & Pat Peterson
8/2/11	Organizational Assessment	Tom Holland
8/23/11	Effective Board Chair	Don DeMaria & Julie Meehan



## APPENDIX C

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES

Technical assistance activities provided to the sub-grantee organizations were any one or a combination of activities as follows:

#### *Organizational Development*

- Create a staff performance review process
- Create a strategic plan
- Create financial management procedures/improve internal controls
- Create job descriptions
- Create marketing materials
- Create/revise organizational identity
- Create/update an annual report
- Implement a new accounting system
- Implement a new budgeting process
- Implement a staff performance review process
- Implement new financial management procedures
- Incorporate as a legally recognized organization
- Install IT infrastructure
- Obtain 501(c)(3) status with the IRS
- Create a revenue development plan
- Identify potential funding sources

- Implement donor tracking software
- Provide revenue development training to staff
- Interview
- Create work plan
- Review/modify work plan
- Present work plan
- Create or Update Communication Systems
- Create, Update or Formalize Organizational Structure
- Create or Update Organizational Policies & Procedures
- Create or Revision Marketing Plan or Marketing Tools
- Project Management (budgeting, managing financial award, reporting, etc)

#### *Program Development*

- Analyze outcome data/evaluate effectiveness of current services
- Collect information related to service recipient outcomes
- Collect information related to service recipient satisfaction
- Create an outcome measurement plan
- Obtain program-related equipment and durable supplies
- Research and develop new programs or services
- Take steps to expand current services to new geographic area
- Take steps to increase the effectiveness of existing services
- Take steps to increase the number of clients served in existing geographic area
- Take steps to increase the number or scope of services
- Take steps to reach an underserved population in existing geographic area

### *Collaboration & Community Engagement*

- Assess effectiveness of existing collaborative efforts
- Conduct assessment of community needs
- Create a map/inventory of community assets
- Create action plan for coordinating/collaborating
- Create or update a brochure
- Create or update a website
- Create processes for collaborating with partners
- Develop new strategic partnerships
- Establish partnership agreements
- Make presentations to community groups
- Develop social media presence
- Create, Update and/or Distribute organizational materials

### *Leadership Development*

- Create a volunteer management plan
- Create a volunteer recruitment plan
- Create board policies
- Create an executive succession plan
- Engage an executive coach
- Implement a volunteer management plan
- Provide management/leadership training to staff
- Provide training/written information for board of directors
- Recruit board members

- Recruit volunteers (non-board)
- Provide training to Staff or Volunteers

*Evaluation of Effectiveness*

- Implement systems to keep information related to client needs, referral sources, and services provided
- Implement systems to keep records on service recipient satisfaction and/or service recipient outcomes
- Collect information related to service recipient outcomes
- Collect information related to service recipient satisfaction

## APPENDIX D

### ORGANIZATIONS TO BE APPROACHED FOR PARTICIPATION

<b>Athens Nonprofit Programs</b>	<b>Cycle 1</b>	<b>Cycle 2</b>	<b>ED/BOD Chair</b>		<b>Lx</b>
<b>Athens Area Homeless Shelter</b>	1		Shea	Post	X
<b>Athens Clarke County Family Connection/Communities in Schools</b>	1		Tim	Johnson	
<b>Athens Clarke Literacy Council</b>	1		Carol	Cofer	~
<b>Athens Community Council on Aging</b>	1		Eve	Anthony	X
<b>Athens Land Trust</b>		2	Heather	Benham	X
<b>Athens Resource Center for the Homeless</b>		2	Evan	Mills	~
<b>Athens Urban Ministries</b>	1		Soloman	Smothers	X
<b>BikeAthens</b>		2	Tyler	Dewey	X
<b>Cancer Foundation of Northeast Georgia</b>	1	2	Kimberly	Liebowitz	
<b>Casa de Amistad</b>	1		Alex	Borges	X
<b>Children First</b>	1		Susie	Weller	X
<b>Economic Justice Coalition</b>	1	2	Linda	Lloyd	~
<b>Free IT Athens</b>		2	Charlie	Coile	~
<b>Georgia Clients Council</b>	1	2	Ovita	Thorton	
<b>Interfaith Hospitality Network</b>	1	2	Davin	Welter	X
<b>Multiple Choices Center for Independent Living</b>	1	2	Robin	Oliver	X
<b>Prevent Child Abuse Athens</b>	1		David	Earnest	X
<b>Project Safe</b>	1		Joan	Prittie	
<b>The Salvation Army of Athens</b>		2	Erik	Henry	X

X indicates that staff leadership has changed since the BCS project

~ indicates that contact listed is the Board Chair, as there is no Executive Director

## APPENDIX E

### INTERVIEW GUIDE

#### **Nonprofit Capacity Study**

1. Welcome and review purpose and scope of study: Thank you so much for taking time out of your busy schedule to meet with me and share your experiences with nonprofit organizations. The purpose of this study is to identify the longitudinal change in organizational capacity after an intensive capacity building program and explore the intervening variables that influenced the changes.

This interview will take between 60-90 minutes and I will be audio-recording the interview for analysis. I may get back in touch with you if I need clarification on anything that you share during the interview.

To protect your confidentiality, I will be assigning both you and the organization in which you serve (and those where you have previously served) pseudonyms for the analysis. No individually identifying information will be used when reporting the results from this interview or the overall study.

If at any time you are not comfortable with answering a question or need clarification, please just let me know. If you would like to withdraw from the study completely, you can ask to have all of the information that can be identified as yours to be removed from the study, or destroyed.

2. Discuss general plan for interview.
3. Explain confidentiality, sign consent forms, and answer questions about forms.
4. Ask participant if they agree to be audio-recorded.
5. Begin interview.
6. We are going to start with an organizational assessment, called the Point K organizational assessment tool. This is the same tool that you or somebody from your organization completed for the BCS project around 2010. [Use Appendix A]
7. Thank them for completing Point K.
8. Now we will engage in the less structured portion of our meeting:
  - a. What is your current position with [organization name] and when did you begin working with [organization]?
  - i. Please give me an overview of your organization and its work.
    1. What is your total organizational budget today?

2. How many staff do you employ?
3. How many Board members do you have?
- ii. How is your organization different today than it was in 2011? [If unfamiliar about the state of the organization in 2011, the interviewer will identify the earliest point that the interviewee is familiar and adapt the following questions to that date.]
  1. How is the organizational programming different today than it was in 2011?
  2. How has your funding changed over that time?
  3. How has your organizational leadership changed over that time?
  4. How has your staffing changed over that time?

b. When you think of the phrase “organizational capacity” what comes to mind?

- i. When you think of organizational capacity, what indicators might indicate that an organization has more or less capacity?
  1. Which measures on the Point K do you think are most important in indicating an organization’s capacity?
  2. Are there measures not included on the Point K that you think should be included?
- ii. What effect does organizational capacity have on an organization?
  1. Do organizations perform more effectively when their capacity is “higher”? In what ways?
  2. What other benefits might an organization realize when their capacity is “higher”?
  3. What are the key factors related to capacity that would help an organization be more successful in achieving effectiveness?
  4. Which do you believe to be most directly linked to organizational effectiveness?

c. How has your organizational capacity has changed since 2011 when your organization last engaged in the Point K? [If unfamiliar about the state of the organization in 2011, the interviewer will identify the earliest point that the interviewee is familiar and adapt the following questions to that date.]

- i. Considering the seven areas identified in the Point K tool (show handout with seven subscales) which specific areas do you believe your organization to have **increased** in capacity since 2011?
  1. How has your organization changed in these areas over time? (i.e., has it been a steady incline or punctuated by certain events?)
  2. Do you believe that the changes in capacity over time were caused by specific factors? Please explain what those factors are.
  3. What additional capacity building activities has your organization participated in since 2011?

- a. What factors contributed to your engagement in these activities?
    - b. Were these activities specifically funded?
  - ii. In which specific areas do you believe your organization has **decreased** in capacity since 2011?
    1. How has your organization changed in these areas over time? (i.e., has it been a steady decline or punctuated by certain events?)
    2. Do you believe that the changes in capacity over time were caused by specific factors? Please explain what those factors are.
  - iii. In which specific areas do you believe you are approximately the same in terms of capacity since 2011?
    1. What factors helped you to maintain capacity in these areas?
- d. Have there been any internal factors contributed to changes in the organization's organizational capacity?
  - i. How do you believe the leadership of the organization has affected your organizational capacity?
    1. What changes have you experienced in staff leadership (CEO or Executive Director)? In what ways did your capacity change with each leader?
    2. How has your board leadership played a role in changing organizational capacity?
      - a. Have champions existed on your board that support capacity building? Tell me about them.
      - b. Have board members deterred staff from investing in capacity building? Tell me about them.
    3. Which has had more influence on organizational capacity: the board or staff leadership? How?
    4. What role do each play in driving organizational capacity development?
  - ii. How do you believe the internal staffing of the organization has affected your organizational capacity?
    1. How have staffing levels had an effect on your ability to engage in capacity building activities?
    2. Have champions existed on your staff that support capacity building? Tell me about them.
    3. Have staff deterred leadership from investing in capacity building? Tell me about them.
- e. Have there been any external environmental factors that contributed to changes in the organization's organizational capacity? For example, the recovery from the recession, pressure or requirements from state or national parent organizations, local



training or capacity activity availability, partnerships with UGA, changing nonprofit culture that might expect more professionalized/ enhanced capacity)?

- i. Has funding has affected your organizational capacity?
    1. Have you experienced significant changes in funding since 2011?
    2. How did your organizational capacity activities increase or decrease with these changes?
    3. Have funder requirements for specific items or practices related to capacity changed at all? How?
    4. Tell me about any funding specifically for capacity building measures that you have encountered. Are the opportunities from local sources or otherwise? What do they specifically support?
  - ii. Has technology affected your organizational capacity? How?
  - iii. Have you noticed any change in other local or national organizations in regard to their capacity in the past several years?
    1. If yes, what kind of change?
    2. If yes, how does this impact your desire to change your capacity?
9. Final question: Is there anything that we haven't talked about organizational capacity that you think is important for me to consider?
10. Wrap-up and answer any participant questions
11. Conclusion and thank-you: This concludes our interview. Thank you so much for sharing your knowledge and experiences with me. I will be in touch with you in the next few months to share some of the emerging overall themes from all of the interviews and to ask for your feedback on those themes. The feedback process should take about 15 minutes of your time.

## APPENDIX F

### INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

#### **Nonprofit Capacity Study**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to participate in a research study about nonprofit organizational capacity. This research is being conducted by Julie Meehan, a Ph.D. candidate from the Department of Public Administration and Policy in the School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Georgia (jlmeehan@uga.edu ) under the direction of Dr. Rebecca Nesbit, a Professor in the Department of Public Administration and Policy in the School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Georgia (nesbit7@uga.edu ). I understand that my participation is voluntary. I can refuse to participate or stop taking part at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty or loss to benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. If I decide to withdraw from the study, I can ask to have all of the information that can be identified as mine to be removed from the study, or destroyed.

The purpose of this study is to identify the longitudinal change in organizational capacity after an intensive capacity building program and explore the intervening variables that influenced the changes. Individually identifiable information gathered will be kept confidential.

If I choose to participate in this study, I can expect the following:

1. I will be asked to answer questions about organizational capacity. It will take approximately 1.5 hours to answer these questions.
2. My responses to the questions will be audio-recorded as a means to capture the data, and then transcribed. The audio recordings will be deleted within 6 months after the interview is transcribed.
3. I, and the organization in which I serve, will be assigned pseudonyms at the time of data transcription, and no individually identifiable information about me, or provided by me during the research, will be shared with others.
4. The researcher may contact me to clarify information provided during the interview. This will take no more than 15 minutes.
5. Once the researcher has completed data analysis, I will be asked to review themes identified from the study and provide feedback. This review will take approximately 15 minutes.
6. The researchers connected with this project will protect my private information, and will keep this confidential by securing all information connected to me in a locked file cabinet in the office of Julie Meehan, or on a password protected computer.
7. The researcher will use direct quotes from the interview in reports, presentations, and publications; however, the quotes will be attributed to the pseudonym assigned to me for

the study. Pseudonyms for organizations and individual names will be also used in direct quotes to further protect confidentiality.

Potential benefits of participation are that these questions may help me reflect upon my organization's current and past capacity levels and the components that build capacity. It is hoped that this study will identify best practices to contribute to sustained organizational capacity. No risks are expected, although I may experience some mild discomfort while speaking about my organizational history. I have the option of refusing to answer any question at any time without giving any reason.

Please provide initials below if you agree to have this interview audio recorded or not. You may still participate in this study even if you are not willing to have the interview recorded.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not want to have this interview recorded.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am willing to have this interview recorded.

The researcher will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project.

To voluntarily agree to take part in this study, you must sign on the line below. Your signature below indicates that you have read or had read to you this entire consent form, and have had all of your questions answered.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Researcher	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Signature	Date

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 212 Tucker Hall, 310 East Campus Road, Athens, Georgia 30602; Telephone 706-542-3199; Email [IRB@uga.edu](mailto:IRB@uga.edu).

## APPENDIX G

### PRE- POST-COMPARISON

	Pre-Involvement						Post-Involvement				
	In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating		In Place	Not in Place	Don't Know	N/A	In Process of Creating
Organizational Planning											
Mission Statement	97.4%	2.6%					97.4%				2.6%
Core values	55.3%	26.3%	5.3%	2.6%	10.5%		73.7%	13.2%	10.8%	24.3%	8.1%
Strategic plan	50.0%	34.2%	2.6%	0.0%	13.2%		55.3%	7.9%			36.9%
Annual operating plan	36.6%	47.4%	2.6%	0.0%	18.4%		55.3%	15.8%			28.9%
Organizational Structure											
Board of Directors	100.0%						100.0%				
Stated terms at election	79.0%	15.8%	5.3%				92.1%	7.9%			
Matrix utilized for ideal board composition	26.3%	65.8%	5.3%		2.6%		76.3%	15.8%			7.9%
Board orientation	63.2%	31.6%	5.3%				84.2%	15.8%			
Bylaws	94.7%	2.6%			2.6%		97.3%	2.7%			

Executive Director review	57.9%	29.0%	2.6%	10.7%		78.9%	21.1%			
Staff job descriptions	76.3%	15.8%			7.9%	86.8%	2.6%		2.6%	
Staff reviews	60.5%	26.3%	2.6%		10.5%	60.5%	15.8%			23.7%
Volunteer job descriptions	39.5%	39.5%	2.6%	7.9%	10.5%	65.8%	21.1%		2.6%	10.5%
Policy and Procedure Manual	54.1%	32.4%	2.7%		10.8%	71.1%	13.2%			15.8%
Forms for repetitive tasks	70.3%	21.6%			8.1%	92.1%	7.9%			
Fundraising										
Fundraising plan	24.3%	56.8%			18.9%	47.4%	23.7%			29.0%
Staff member with primary fundraising responsibility (other than Exec. Dir.)	21.6%	78.4%				23.7%	73.7%		2.6%	
Board fundraising committee	42.1%	42.1%			13.7%	63.2%	21.1%			15.8%
Fundraising tools	50.0%	42.1%			7.9%	73.7%	7.9%			18.4%
Finance & Accountability										
Annual operating budget	84.2%	5.3%	2.6%		7.9%	92.1%	5.3%			2.6%
Revenue > expenses	47.4%	34.2%	2.6%	15.8%		65.8%	23.7%	5.3%	5.3%	
Quarterly review of finances	86.8%	13.2%				84.2%	15.8%			
Annual audit	47.4%	42.1%	10.5%			63.2%	36.8%			
Consider potential risk	55.3%	31.6%	13.2%			84.2%	13.2%	2.6%		
Insurance coverage	84.2%	15.8%				81.6%	15.8%			2.6%

Communication												
Marketing plan	15.9%	63.2%	2.6%		18.4%		29.0%	31.6%				39.5%
Collateral materials based on plan	7.9%	2.6%		84.2%	5.3%		18.4%	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%		6.3%
Evaluation												
Organizational evaluation plan	10.5%	65.8%	10.5%		13.2%		23.7%	34.2%				42.1%
Logic model for program	39.5%	50.0%	79.0%		2.6%		55.3%	18.4%				26.3%
Evaluate program outcomes	39.5%	26.0%		57.9%			43.2%	2.7%	5.4%			48.7%
Evaluate program implementation	39.5%	52.0%		57.9%			46.0%	5.4%		48.7%		
Leadership												
Mission focused	100.0%						100.0%					
Strong organizational vision	97.3%			2.7%			97.4%		2.6%			2.6%
Strategy to realize vision	70.3%	2.7%	8.1%		18.9%		86.8%	2.6%	2.6%			7.9%
Relationship building	78.4%	2.7%	2.7%	10.8%	5.4%		94.7%		2.6%	2.6%		
Open, participatory communication style	78.4%	5.4%		2.7%	13.5%		97.4%		2.6%			
Motivate others	78.4%		5.4%	13.5%	2.7%		97.4%			2.6%		
Strong managerial skills	70.3%	5.4%	5.4%	16.2%	2.7%		89.5%	2.6%	2.6%	5.3%		

APPENDIX H  
DATA CODE BOOK

POINT K ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT TOOL CODEBOOK										
ORGANIZATIONAL PLANNING										
#		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	99
1	Does your organization have a written mission statement?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating				
2	When was your organization's current mission statement created?	Within 1 year	1-2 years ago	More than 2 years ago	Don't know					

3	How often is your mission statement reviewed and revised?	Semi-annually	Annually	Every 2 or more years	Never	Don't know					
4	is your organization guided by a written set of core values?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
5	Does your organization have a written strategic plan?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
6	Which of the following elements are included in the strategic plan?	Organizational Goals	Organizational Objectives	How clients will be affected as a result of the objectives	The resources necessary to carry out the objectives	The number of items/products the activities will produce	Multi-year budgets to support plan implementation		none of these		



7	Does your organization have an annual operating work plan?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
8	Does your organization's annual operating work plan have a timeline?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE</b>											
#		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>99</b>	
	Does your organization have a Board of Directors?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					

	Does your organization have a board matrix that outlines the ideal makeup of the Board?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Are board members' terms stated at the time of their election?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a						
	Does your organization offer new board members a board orientation?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Does your Board of Directors have a Chair or President?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					

Is your Board Chair or President also the Executive Director?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
Do board members review the performance of the Executive Director based on his/her written job description?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
Does your organization have written bylaws?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
Do your bylaws reflect your organization's current operations?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					

	Does the entire staff meet at regular intervals?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Do all staff members have written job descriptions that detail expectations?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Are employee performance evaluations conducted?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Does your organization use the help of volunteers?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Does your organization have written job descriptions for volunteers?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					

	Do volunteers receive a volunteer handbook?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Does your organization have any computers?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Do all staff members have individual computers?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Do all staff members have individual desktop internet access?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Do all staff members have individual email addresses?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					

	Does your organization have a local area network (LAN)?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Does your organization use virus protection software?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Does your organization routinely back up its computers?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Does your organization have a website?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Does your organization have a phone system?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					

	Does your organization have a voice mail?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Does your organization have fax machine (or computers with fax capabilities)?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Does your organization use a basic set of forms for repetitive tasks (e.g., time sheets, travel expenses, regular staff reports)?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					

	Does your organization have a written personnel manual covering personnel policy?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
<b>LEADERSHIP</b>											
#		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>				
	Would you say that your leader is mission-focused?	Yes	No	Don't Know	Somewhat	Sometimes	N/A				
	Does your leader have a strong vision for the organization?	Yes	No	Don't Know	Somewhat	Sometimes	N/A				



	Does your leader have a strategy in mind to make his or her vision become real?	Yes	No	Don't Know	Somewhat	Sometimes	N/A				
	Does your leader successfully build relationships inside and outside the organization?	Yes	No	Don't Know	Somewhat	Sometimes	N/A				
	Does your leader have an open, participatory communication style?	Yes	No	Don't Know	Somewhat	Sometimes	N/A				

	Does your leader have the ability to motivate employees and other stakeholders?	Yes	No	Don't Know	Somewhat	Sometimes	N/A				
	Does your leader have strong managerial skills?	Yes	No	Don't Know	Somewhat	Sometimes	N/A				
<b>FUNDRAISING</b>											
#		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>		<b>99</b>	
	Does your organization have a written fundraising plan?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					

	How often is your fundraising plan reviewed or revised?	Quarterly	Annually	Semi-Annually	More than 2 Years	Don't know	Never			n/a	
	Does your organization have a fundraising action plan and corresponding timeline to support its fundraising plan?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Does your organization review and revise the fundraising action plan and corresponding timeline?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating				n/a	

	Does your organization have at least one staff member whose primary responsibility is fundraising (other than the Executive Director)?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Does your organization have a process in place for writing grant proposals?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					

	For each of the strategies listed, please indicate whether your organization's primary fundraising staff person uses that strategy to build fundraising relationships.	Writing grant applications	Sending draft proposals to funders	Meeting with funders	Attending conferences with funders	Other	none of these	all of these		n/a	
	Does your board have a fundraising committee?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Do fundraising tools (case statements, brochures, sample letters) exist for board and staff?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					

	Does your organization prepare regular updates (budgets, expenses, annual report, etc.) for funders and donors on funding received?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	How often does your organization evaluate the extent to which it has met its fundraising goals?	Quarterly	Annually	Semi-Annually	More than 2 Years	Don't know	Never				
<b>FINANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY</b>											
#		1	2	3	4						

	Does your organization have an annual operating budget?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Does expected income meet or exceed projected expenses in this year's budget?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Does your organization use multi-year operating budget projections?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					

Please provide the approximate percentage of your organization's annual revenue derived from Federal funding											
Please provide the approximate percentage of your organization's annual revenue derived from State funding											
Please provide the approximate percentage of your organization's annual revenue derived from Local public funding											



Please provide the approximate percentage of your organization's annual revenue derived from Individuals											
Please provide the approximate percentage of your organization's annual revenue derived from Foundations											
Please provide the approximate percentage of your organization's annual revenue derived from Corporations											

Please provide the approximate percentage of your organization's annual revenue derived from Special Events/annual fundraisers											
Please provide the approximate percentage of your organization's annual revenue derived from Earned Revenue (i.e., fee for service, membership, interest income)											

	Please provide the approximate percentage of your organization's annual revenue derived from Other										
	Are invoices normally paid within 30 days?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Does your organization have insurance coverage?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Does your organization have a written pay scale?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Have you considered your organization's potential risk?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					

	Is the financial status of your organization reviewed at least quarterly by the board?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Is your organization audited annually?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>											
#		1	2	3	4						
	Does your organization have a marketing and communication plan?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					

	Is your organization tracking the effects of its marketing and communication s plan?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Has your organization developed collateral materials based on its marketing and communication s plan?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
<b>EVALUATION</b>											
#		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>		

	Does your organization have an evaluation plan for the whole organization (based on the strategic plan if you have one)?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Does your organization have a logic model for any of your programs?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Does your organization have a written program evaluation plan for any of its programs?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					

	Does your organization evaluate how well its programs achieve their outcomes?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Does your organization evaluate how well its programs are implemented?	Yes	No	Don't know	n/a	In process of creating					
	Which of the following data collection strategies does your organization currently use?	Survey/Questionnaires	Interviews	Document review	Observation	Focus groups	Case studies	Test of knowledge, skill or performance	Other		

## APPENDIX I

### SAMPLE WORK PLAN

**Building Community Services that Grow Local Economies (BCS)  
Training and Technical Assistance Work Plan**

Revision:  
Updated:

Workplan activities are divided into five critical capacity building areas:  
Leadership Development, Organizational Development, Program Development, Collaboration & Community Engagement, Evaluation of Effectiveness  
See the BCS Policies & Procedures for more information.

**Organization Name: REDACTED**

Leadership Development				# of Hours		Est. Date of Comp.	BCS Funds	Inkind Value
SCF Allowable Activity	BCS Activity	Trainer / TA Provider	Organizational Participants	Training	TA			
Provide training/written information for board of directors	Attend Training: Board Roles and Responsibilities	Dr. Tom Holland	Administrator and Board members	2		TBD		\$100
Provide training/written information for board of directors	Define board roles, responsibilities, and orientation process	Kate Pavich (GA)	Board members		2	3/31/2011		\$100
Provide training/written information for board of directors	Assist with developing a Board Matrix and recruitment strategies	Kate Pavich (GA)	ED and Board Members		2	3/31/2011		\$100
Provide training/written information for board of directors	Attend Training: Effective Board Chair	Dr Tom Holland & Julie Meehan	Board Chair	2		TBD		\$100
Financial Award: Other: Provide training to staff/volunteers	Bike safety course and materials	Jennifer Cantwell					\$600	

Organizational Development				# of Hours		Est. Date of Comp.	BCS Funds	Inkind Value
SCF Allowable Activity	BCS Activity	Trainer / TA Provider	Organizational Participants	Training	TA			



Create a Strategic Plan	Session to follow-up and implement Strategic Plan	Dr. Tom Holland	Full board		2	1/27/2011		\$200
Implement new financial management procedures	Attend Training: Financial Reporting Parts I and II	Amanda Farmer	Board Treasurer; Board member	4		TBD		\$200
Implement new financial management procedures	Attend Training: Financial Budgeting	Amanda Farmer	Board Treasurer; Board member	2		TBD		\$100
Create a revenue development plan		Dr Holland's Fundraising Class	Staff and Board members		4	6/30/2011		\$200
Provide revenue development training to staff	Attend Training: Effective Fundraising	Dr. Tom Holland's Fundraising Class	Board Members	2		TBD		\$100
Other: Create or update Communication System	Create Internal Communications Plan	Kate Pavich	Staff and Board members		3	8/31/2011		\$300
Financial Award: Install IT Infrastructure	Computer and scanner	Jennifer Cantwell					\$1,200	
Financial Award: Identify potential funding sources		Jennifer Cantwell					\$600	

Program Development				# of Hours		Est. Date of Comp.	BCS Funds	Inkind Value
SCF Allowable Activity	BCS Activity	Trainer / TA Provider	Organizational Participants	Training	TA			
Financial Award: Take steps to increase the effectiveness of existing services	Athens transit route map redesign	Jennifer Cantwell					\$900	
Financial Award: Research and develop new programs or services	Neighborhood traffic calming/complete street initiative	Jennifer Cantwell					\$2,000	

Collaboration and Community Engagement				# of Hours		Est. Date of Comp.	BCS Funds	Inkind Value
SCF Allowable Activity	BCS Activity	Trainer / TA Provider	Organizational Participants	Training	TA			
Other: Develop or Revise Marketing Plan/Tool	Attend Training: Marketing for Nonprofits	Martin Matheny	Administrator and Board members	2		1/13/2011		\$100
Financial Award: Create or update a website	Hosting fees and consultant	Jennifer Cantwell					\$3,000	
Financial Award: Other: Create, Update, or Distribute Organizational Materials	Stickers, brochures, ad space	Jennifer Cantwell					\$1,400	
Financial Award: Make presentations to community groups	Presentation board	Jennifer Cantwell					\$300	

Evaluation of Effectiveness				# of Hours		Est. Date of Comp.	BCS Funds	Inkind Value
SCF Allowable Activity	BCS Activity	Trainer / TA Provider	Organizational Participants	Training	TA			
Create an outcome measurement plan	Attend TA sessions: Program Evaluation	Dr. Michelle Carney	Administrator plus one		9	Feb 4, 11, 18		\$900
<p>Presented to and discussed with: Executive Director &amp; entire Board</p> <p>BCS Staff: Pat Peterson &amp; Jennifer Cantwell &amp; Elizabeth Barnard</p> <p>Date: 12/8/10</p>						<b>Summary</b> Total BCS Funds: \$10,000 Total Training Hours: 14 Total TA Hours: 22 Total Inkind Value: \$2,500		

# APPENDIX J

## BUDGET AND STAFF

Organization	Cycle		Current Research	Agency Issue Area	PRE-INVOLVEMENT			CURRENT		
	1	2			Annual Budget	Employees		Annual Budget	Employees	
						FT	PT		FT	PT
Athens Area Homeless Shelter	X		X	Homeless Services	\$ 498,294	4	11	\$ 600,000	6	7
Athens Clarke County Family Connection/Communities in Schools	X		X	Education	\$ 107,000	1	0	*	*	*
Athens Community Council on Aging	X		X	Aging	\$ 3,271,057	44	54	\$ 4,250,000	57	45
Children First	X		X	Child Services	\$ 354,000	4	1	\$ 600,000	8	0
Cancer Foundation of Northeast Georgia	X	X	X	Health	\$ 201,000	1	0	\$ 750,000	4	0
Interfaith Hospitality Network	X	X	X	Homeless Services	\$ 506,281	2	0	\$ 216,000	2	1
Bike Athens		X	X	Transportation	\$ 18,520	0	1	\$ 90,000	2	0
Free IT Athens		X	X	Technology	\$ -	0	0	\$ 27,500	0	0
Athens Resource Center for the Homeless		X	X	Homeless Services	\$ -	0	0	\$ 225,000	0	0
Athens Clarke Literacy Council	X			Adult Education	\$ 20,005	0	1			
ATLAS	X			Education	*	*	*			
Barrow County Family Connection/Communities in Schools	X			Education	\$ 111,000	2	1			

Casa de Amistad	X			Latinx Services	\$ 35,600	0	1			
Community Partnership of Elbert County	X			Education	\$ 138,000	2	0			
Prevent Child Abuse Athens	X			Child Services	\$ 338,078	6	1			
Project Safe	X			Domestic Violence	\$ 1,005,098	*	*			
St. Vincent DePaul	X			Financial Assistance	\$ 134,110	0	0			
The Tree House	X			Child Services	\$ 442,211	9	2			
Waseca	X			Childcare	\$ 549,000	23	9			
Advantage Behavioral Health	X	X		Mental Health & Developmental Disability	\$ 1,254,000	20	0			
Economic Justice Coalition	X	X		Advocacy	\$ 43,776	0	2			
Georgia Clients Council	X	X		Advocacy	\$ 92,000	1	1			
Multiple Choices Center for Independent Living	X	X		Disability Services	\$ 527,150	*	*			
Nancy Travis Hope for Babies	X	X		Childcare	\$ 27,900	0	0			
Northeast Georgia Career Services Center	X	X		Employment	\$ 213,360	0	0			
Northeast Georgia Community Development Corporation (Wings of Faith)	X	X		Economic Development	\$ 275,900	3	4			
Athens Land Trust, Inc.		X		Housing	\$ 732,348	2	4			
Axiom Student Mall, Inc.		X		Education	\$ 37,952	1	0			
Bigger Vision		X		Homeless Services	\$ 134,895	0	0			
Jackson County Family Connection		X		Education	\$ 71,000	2	0			

Peace Place		X		Domestic Violence	\$ 674,943	7	4			
Penfield Christian Homes		X		Child Services	\$ 1,500,000	22	0			
Piedmont CASA, Inc.		X		Child Services	\$ 143,530	3	1			
Project ADAM Community		X		Substance Abuse	\$ 640,136	5	2			
The Salvation Army		X		Financial Assistance & Homeless Services	\$ 975,535	10	4			
The Stable Foundation		X		Homeless Services	\$ 101,000	1	1			
Total Community Outreach, Inc.		X		Financial Assistance & Homeless Services	\$ 30,000	0	1			
Winder-Barrow Coalition for Adult and Continuing Education		X		Adult Education	\$ 110,000	1	0			

\* indicates data that could not be identified

\* indicates data that could not be  
located

## APPENDIX K

### TIMELINE

<b>Dec. 2009</b>	Cycle One RFP for Participation Released
<b>Jan. 2010</b>	Cycle One Proposals & Pre-Intervention Point K Due
<b>Feb. 2010</b>	Cycle One Proposals Reviewed & Selections Made
<b>Feb. 2010</b>	Interviews Conducted for Needs Assessments
<b>March 2010</b>	Training & Technical Assistance Work Plans Completed
<b>March 2010</b>	Cycle One Training & Technical Assistance Begins
<b>September 2010</b>	Cycle One Training & Technical Assistance Ends
<b>September 2010</b>	Cycle One Post-Intervention Point K
<b>September 2010</b>	Cycle Two RFP for Participation Released
<b>October 2010</b>	Cycle Two Proposals & Pre-Intervention Point K Due
<b>October 2010</b>	Cycle Two Proposals Reviewed and Selections Made
<b>November 2010</b>	Interviews Conducted for Needs Assessments
<b>December 2010</b>	Training & Technical Assistance Work Plans Completed
<b>December 2010</b>	Cycle Two Training & Technical Assistance Begins
<b>August 2011</b>	Cycle Two Training & Technical Assistance Ends
<b>August 2011</b>	Cycle Two Post-Intervention Point K
<b>February 2019</b>	Current Research Point K & Interviews Begin
<b>August 2019</b>	Current Research Point K & Interviews End