HAU'OLI MAU LOA
FOUNDATION

HOPE FOR KIDS 'ELUA
Evaluation Report
Executive Summary

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For

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Keaukaha One Youth Development	-	Keahi Warfield
Mālaʻai- The Culinary Garden of Waimea Middle School	-	Amanda Rieux, Alethea Lai
MAʻO – Waiʻanae Re-Development Corporation	-	J. Kukui Maunakea-Forth
Paepae o Heʻeia	-	Hiʻilei Kawelo
Papahana Kuaola Māhealani Merryman	-	Keoni Kuoha, Kapalikū Schirman,

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and Purpose

The Hope for Kids Initiative expands opportunities for children in Hawai‘i to build hope and a positive future. It does this by partnering with non-profit community organizations to deliver ‘āina-based education that aims to develop skills important for life, and in the company of a caring adult who sets high expectations and helps them understand and celebrate their culture. The primary purpose of this study was two-fold: to explore and provide preliminary evidence of the collective impact of the Hope for Kids `Elua initiative and to strengthen Partners' organizational capacity in evaluation.

Overview of Strategy

The evaluation comprised several key phases, including an analysis of baseline data to identify key issues and gaps, the development of shared metrics/strategies that applied across varying contexts, and the establishment of shared measures, including specific indicators and approaches. The nine `Elua Partners incorporated the following five Hope for Kids outcomes in their respective missions, services and activities to some extent:

Aloha: Increased knowledge of and appreciation for community
Kuleana: Increased positive feelings about self, including a sense of achievement (hiki)
Mēheuheu: Increased sense of belonging in a cultural continuum (cultural identity)
Mālama ‘Āina: Increased connection to the `āina
Ho‘olako: Improvement in important life skills

Four of the nine `Elua Partners—*Ho‘okua‘āina, Huliāmahi Education Alliance (Kāko‘o ‘Ōiwi, Paepae o He‘eia, and Papahana Kuaola), Māla‘ai Culinary Garden of Waimea Middle School, and RISE Keaukaha One Youth Development*— agreed to serve as pilot sites to incorporate the Hope for Kids evaluation framework within their respective projects. While each of the sites varied in their organizational development, mission, scope, and the age of youth they served, they all were enthusiastic about gathering evidence that Hope for Kids was "working" and eager to strengthen their own capacity in doing evaluation.

Key Results

When looking at the Hope for Kids outcomes across all pilot sites, it is evident that youth at each site demonstrated characteristics of kuleana, mēheuheu, mālama ʻāina, hoʻolako, and aloha.

- Evaluation data was collected directly from youth and indirectly about the youth from staff/adults at each site. A total of 116 youth and 7 adults participated in the pilot evaluation. Having multiple sources of data and methods of data collection was useful in corroborating results and added credibility to the findings.
- On average, nearly **9 out of 10 indicators (85%)** across all 5 outcomes received positive ratings by youth.
- In addition, Partners gained a deeper understanding of evaluation, viewed evaluation as a tool to increase organizational learning and communicate program accomplishments, and valued the intentional focus on linking individual program goals to specific evaluation questions and indicators.

Challenges and Implications

While each of the Partners involved in the pilot was committed to participating in the pilot evaluation and reaped valuable benefits from the process, **limited staff time** (e.g., not having a staff member dedicated to evaluation and assessment) and **competing program priorities** were two key challenges faced by the Partners participating in the pilot study.

This study resulted in a number of lessons that were learned relative to implementing a collective impact evaluation of `āina-based programs. These lessons can inform future evaluation efforts of the Hope for Kids `Elua initiative as well as similar initiatives of other Foundations. Specifically, the five primary implications were:

- Having a supportive **"backbone" organization** to initially facilitate the process;
- Understanding the time and effort involved in laying a **strong foundation**;
- Being open to the **iterative nature** of the evaluative process;
- Focusing on building **organizational capacity in evaluation** while pursuing collective impact; and,
- **Assessing the success** of the initiative based on how partners believe it needs to defined.

Next Steps

While much has been accomplished in the last three years, there is much more to be done. The following are a few of the suggested "next steps" relative to evaluation to undertake in the next year:

- **Revisit the indicators** being used and determine if the indicator (and the information they obtain from it) continues to be relevant to the Partner's mission, if it is worded in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the youth being served, and if it is being collected via the best-fit method (survey, interview, observation, journal, artifact, etc.).
- Determine if additional indicators should be developed or if existing indicators need to be refined so that there is not a preponderance of indicators that address knowledge, skills, or attitudes. In other words, **consider having a balance in the types of indicators**.
- Consider **developing or refining rubrics** that can be used to holistically assess program outcomes from a youth/parent/staff/community perspective.
- Determine the extent to which Partner's evaluation framework is not only **aligned to** Hope for Kids, but to **the Hawai'i Department of Education's Nā Hopena A'o (HĀ) framework**, and/or other cultural evaluation frameworks such as the Aloha Framework (developed by Culturally Responsive Evaluation and Assessment-Hawaii/CREA-Hawaii chapter) and the Kūkulu Kumuhana Native Hawaiian Wellbeing Framework.
- Continue to **build the evaluation capacity of 'Elua Partners** by providing targeted technical assistance in the evaluation phases they desire more assistance: design or instrumentation, data collection, data analysis, and reporting.