December 20, 2019

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For

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report required an extraordinary amount of engagement from multiple individuals. In particular, it would not have been possible without the generous support from the staff of the Hauʻoli Mau Loa Foundation: Janis Reischmann, Brant Chillingworth, and Keahi Makaimoku, as well as the participation of the Hope for Kids ʻElua Partners listed below. A special mahalo also goes out to Dr. Jackie Ng-Osorio, who provided valuable technical assistance in evaluation to several of the Partners. Each individual contributed to multiple phases of the evaluation, and actively participating in evaluation workshops and meetings, provided meaningful input and feedback into the design and implementation of the evaluation, and engaged in collecting and making sense of relevant data. This dedicated group gave valuable guidance to the initiative and their generosity of time and willingness to share their work and wisdom with others was commendable.

Hoʻokuaʻāina - Michele Wilhelm, Kauʻi Nichols

Huliāmahi Education Alliance - Kīhei Nahale-a, Luanna Peterson

Kahua Paʻa Mua, Inc. - David Fuertes, Keoki Noji

Kākoʻo ʻŌiwi - Kanekoa Kukea-Shultz

Kānehūnāmoku Voyaging Academy - Bonnie Kahapeʻa Tanner, Kelea Levy

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 ʻāina-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 ʻElua 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 ʻElua 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 ʻĀina: Increased connection to the ʻāina
Hoʻolako: Improvement in important life skills

Four of the nine ʻElua Partners—Hoʻokuaʻāina, Huliʻamahi Education Alliance (Kākoʻo ʻŌiwi, Paepae o Heʻeia, and Papahana Kuaola), Mālaʻai 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 ʻāina-based programs. These lessons can inform future evaluation efforts of the Hope for Kids ʻElua 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 be 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.