COMMUNITY
SECTOR COUNCIL
of NOVA SCOTIA

CAPACITY BUILDING

LEARNING FRAMEWORK

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Introduction

Nova Scotia's community impact sector is made up of the 6,000+ nonprofits and voluntary organizations filling gaps not covered by businesses or government. They play a critical role in helping to address inequities and to create the conditions for everyone to have the highest quality of life possible. Too often they are working with insufficient resources, including a lack of opportunities to develop the skills and competencies needed to achieve their mission. A core part of the work of the Community Sector Council of Nova Scotia (CSCNS) is to provide capacity building resources to the sector. Over the past six months we conducted an extensive engagement and prototyping process to assess where to focus our efforts. This Learning Framework is based on our findings and outlines our approach going forward. We are excited to share what we learned and what we have planned!

Context

In late 2019 we engaged over 160 leaders across Nova Scotia's community impact sector to shape the ***CSCNS 3-year strategic plan*** (2020-2023). Three main priority areas of work emerged from the process: Educate & Innovate, Collaborate & Activate, and Advocate & Celebrate.

Shortly following the release of our strategic plan, COVID-19 forced major adaptations both within CSCNS and across the sector. Based on two ***COVID-19 impact surveys*** we heard that the sector is facing greater demands with fewer resources, while also increasing collaboration and innovation to meet the needs of communities. The death of George Floyd in 2020 catapulted the Black Lives Matter movement into a period of global consciousness-raising. Calls to action for truth and reconciliation and the discoveries of mass graves at residential schools across Canada have shone a light on Indigenous rights. At the same time, inequities have continued to increase during the pandemic and crises have worsened related to mental health, housing and economic disparities. The need to commit to justice, equity, diversity, decolonization and inclusion (JEDDI) across all that we do has never been greater.

In this new reality, we need to do things differently across the sector. We need new skills, mindsets and ways of being that can help us understand and navigate the complex problems we're facing. In early 2021, we set out to go deeper in our understanding of the sector's capacity needs now. We designed an engagement process with consultant, Brook Thorndycraft from ***Big Waves*** to address the following questions:

- How can CSCNS help the community impact sector increase its impact on complex problems like poverty and injustice?
- What obstacles is the sector facing?
- How can CSCNS support the sector's capacity building needs?
- What root cause issues are standing in the way of impact in the sector?

This Learning Framework outlines our approach to capacity building for community impact organizations. It's divided into three sections: how we listened, what we learned, and how we're going to act. We are so grateful to those who participated, and we are committed to offering learning and networking opportunities based on the insights shared!

HOW WE LISTENED:

OUR ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

We knew it would be important to avoid starting from scratch and to build on past CSCNS sector research such as the _2020 State of the Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector in Nova Scotia_ report. We reviewed existing data, then launched a 4-part engagement and prototyping process to deepen our understanding of current and future capacity needs in the sector. Participants were recruited via the CSCNS email distribution list and social media channels, and we conducted targeted outreach to incorporate diverse perspectives. About 375 people from across the province participated in the process.

> **"So much innovation is happening in the sector that no one hears about. We should hear more of those stories... and learn lessons from successes."**
>
> _- Focus Group participant_

Open Forum
(March 9, 2021 – 28 participants)

A virtual open forum was held to launch the process. Participating attendees identified issues faced by the sector across four levels: individuals, organizations, sector, and broader systems. The following questions were explored:

- What individual factors (skills, capacities, mindsets, behaviours) get in the way of the impact you want to have? Confuse you? Keep you up at night? What do you wish you understood better on an individual level?
- What organizational factors (culture, systems, processes, resources) get in the way of the impact you want to have? Confuse you? Keep you up at night? What do you wish you understood better on an organizational level?
- What sectoral factors get in the way of the impact you want to have (collaboration, silos, coordination)? Confuse you? Keep you up at night? What do you wish you understood better on a sector level?
- What systemic factors get in the way of the impact you want to have (funding models, government issues, local and global changes, etc.)? Confuse you? Keep you up at night? What do you wish you understood better on a systemic level?
- What kinds of support would help you or your organization buildyour capacity in these areas?

Ten initial themes emerged through a coding process: 1) Workload and Burnout; 2) Collaboration; 3) Lack of Resources; 4) Changing Conditions and Complex Problems; 5) Scarcity Mindset; 6) Board and Staff Dynamics; 7) External Sector Relations; 8) Justice, Equity, Decolonization, Diversity and Inclusion; 9) Staffing Issues; and, 10) Funding Models.

Focus Groups
(5 groups between March 24-31 – 15 participants total)

The Open Forum themes informed the design of five online focus groups that encouraged participants to identify their own specific learning and capacity building needs in the face of identified obstacles. Questions included:

- What's getting in the way of your organization being able to have the impact you want to have?
- What kinds of training or learning would help you or your organization build your capacity in these areas?
- If CSCNS is planning to offer 5-10 courses over the next year, what would you want to see them on?

These discussions led to another set of more focused themes linked to where participants felt their organizations would benefit from capacity building: 1) Systems change; 2) Advocacy with funders and government; 3) Partnerships and collaboration; 4) Staff skills for managing an organization; 5) Board skills for managing an organization; 6) Justice, Equity, Decolonization, Diversity and Inclusion; 7) Innovation; 8) Evaluation, reporting and fundraising; 9) Virtual facilitation and team building; 10) Program delivery; 11) Healthy workplaces; and 12) Career development and advancement.

Survey
(March-April - 193 Respondents)

In partnership with _Inspiring Communities_, we designed and administered a 28-question survey to collect demographic information, qualitative and quantitative data. The purpose of this survey was to better understand how to:

- Build capacity in community impact organizations
- Identify skills to overcome barriers and achieve collective impact
- Identify root causes and struggles and develop resources and opportunities to collectively address them

This was an opportunity to hear from a greater range of people about their capacity building needs, as well as preferences for how content is delivered. For detailed information about the survey findings, visit the Sector Capacity Building **_Survey Report_**.

Prototype Cohort Series for Emerging Leaders
(March-June – 10 sessions, 12 participants)

We offered a total of 10 sessions for emerging leaders to test a series/cohort style of learning for a group of emerging sector leaders. Participants applied to be part of the cohort and a leadership coach was engaged to facilitate learning on a variety of topics. We heard again that many would appreciate continued, ongoing learning and support, and ways to continue to connect.

Prototype Cohort Series on Building Burnout Resiliency
(Stream 1: Executive Directors – 5 sessions, March-April – 280 registrants; Stream 2: All Staff Levels – 6 sessions, April-June – 775 registrants)

We offered a total of 11 sessions on the topic of burnout to test a series/cohort style of learning on a critical subject of interest for the sector. Four subject matter experts were engaged to facilitate a variety of aspects of navigating burnout. We heard from many that they would appreciate continued, ongoing learning on the topic as part of a Community of Practice.

> **"I learn so much from stories. I'm not a good traditional learner. I like learning by doing and hearing how other people did things. It's motivating and inspiring. You could tell stories about how people are doing things well…. What are stories about partnerships that formed. More examples of where it's happening across all these topics would be helpful."**
> _- Focus Group participant_

Prototype Capacity Building Workshops
(5, 2-part workshops in May-June, 2021 – 139 participants total)
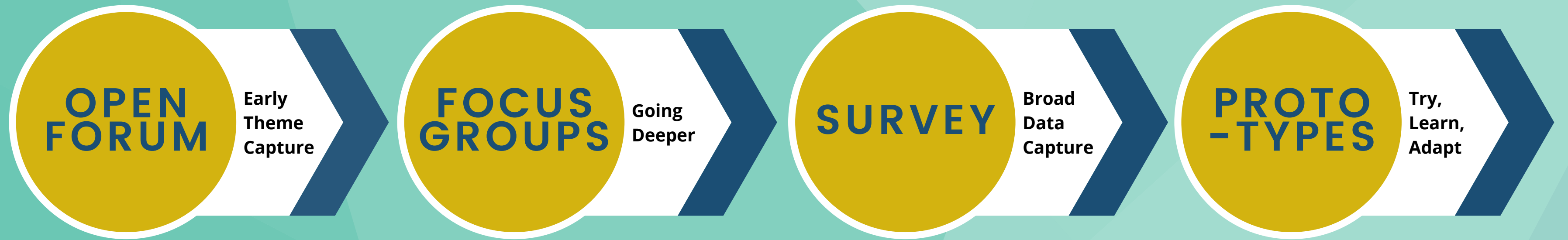
Based on needs expressed in the survey and focus groups, we developed a series of five prototype capacity building workshops in collaboration with Inspiring Communities to experiment with content and to learn more about what resonates. Each training consisted of two, 90-minute online sessions with a presentation of information, small group discussions, and practical tools. Sessions were spaced four weeks apart so that people could apply learning and come back with questions. Topics included:

- **Collaboration and Partnerships:** Developing relationships across shared focus areas with others
- **Planning for Uncertainty:** How to build an agile strategy
- **Evaluating Your Impact:** Measuring and communicating value
- **Influencing Policy Decisions:** Advocating for systems level change
- **Psychological Safety in the Workplace 101**

Feedback revealed that all the topics resonated, and participants indicated they would appreciate a longer series for more in-depth learning.

SUMMARY OF OUR 4-PART SECTOR ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

OPEN FORUM — Early Theme Capture → **FOCUS GROUPS** — Going Deeper → **SURVEY** — Broad Data Capture → **PROTO-TYPES** — Try, Learn, Adapt

Note: For more detail on the engagement process and findings, visit the *Consultant's Report* produced by Big Waves on the CSCNS web site.

WHAT WE LEARNED:

THEMES & PRFERRED APPROACHES

During our engagement process, we collected a huge amount of rich information and data to inform our approach to capacity building. This section outlines identified challenges facing the sector, key content themes that emerged, and what we found about organizational characteristics that affect impact.

Challenges Faced

In both the Open Forum and the survey we asked participants to identify the most important obstacles to achieving impact in the sector. Consistently, funding was mentioned as the most important external challenge that organizations are facing (57% of survey respondents). The increasing complexity of problems faced (47%) and global events such as COVID-19 and climate change (38%) were also rated highly.

From an internal standpoint, top organizational challenges included fundraising and fund diversification (36%), workload and burnout (30%) and scaling/expanding program and service delivery (24%). Other important areas where organizations expressed facing challenges include JEDDI work, collaboration and partnerships, and volunteer recruitment.

Key Content Themes

As noted, a range of themes emerged through the various elements of the sector engagement process. These were identified based on a qualitative coding process and the survey analysis and inform the foundational components of our Learning Framework.

Leadership Skills for Managing Organizations:

Community sector organizations in Nova Scotia are generally smaller than in other parts of the country. 64% of organizations in the sector have fewer than 10 employees, and 8% have no paid staff.[1] As a result, sector leaders find themselves filling multiple organizational roles, from administration to strategy to service delivery. Skill development for current and emerging leaders in the sector is a key priority for our learning framework.

Human Resource Management & Relational Leadership

Human Resources was identified as an area of importance for skill building for many organizations, particularly around policy and process development, addressing staff behaviour, staff recruitment, retention, and advancement. There is a need to develop relational skills including managing the complexities of the role of a leader, relationship building, shifting from managing to leading, and supporting a team doing emotionally difficult work. One of the biggest themes was the need for leadership to develop capacity to support staff to maintain work-life balance and prevent burnout.

Operations Management and Working Virtually

A range of operational capacities requiring skills development were identified including financial management, business skills, and project management. COVID-19 pushed many organizations to move to online program and service delivery overnight – by fall 2020, 83% of organizations reported moving meetings online.[2] The move to working virtually not only affected external programming, but also how internal processes such as financial management, file management, etc. are administered. Participants identified a need for training to engage community through online tools, as well as for new ways of managing communication and maintaining relationships.

Strategic Planning

Strategic planning and activity planning emerged as top training needs in the survey, alongside learning how to pilot and prototype ideas to create the case for new programming. Planning and prioritizing was one of the most frequently named leadership competencies in need of development.

Governance

Issues related to board and staff relationships, clarifying roles, and the difficulties of managing organizations with volunteer boards surfaced several times in the survey and the Open Forum. Governance is also fundamentally linked to all other leadership competencies that came up as priorities.

Creating a Healthy Workplace:

Mental wellbeing and burnout are key concerns in the sector. There is also growing awareness and priority of creating healthy and welcoming workplaces that are reflective of a commitment to addressing tension and inequities.

Addressing Burnout and Mental Health

In response to the question: "What aspects of workplace culture would you like to become better equipped to address?", workload and burnout was the top selection (33%). This is a multi-faceted issue requiring a range of skills related to developing trauma-informed workplaces, dealing with compassion fatigue, tension and conflict management, and addressing unsustainable workloads.

JEDDI Commitments

Practices to integrate JEDDI into the "organizational DNA", as one participant put it, were recognized as one of the most important learning areas where support was needed Some participants expressed a lack of knowledge about what JEDDI means, and while many had an understanding of theory, they are finding it challenging to implement in practice. Some of the learning needs expressed included organizational decolonization and implementation of the TRC Calls to Action, designing internal policies and structures to support JEDDI, and supporting diverse staff.

Psychological Safety

Psychological safety is linked to addressing burnout and integrating JEDDI commitments. It is critical for creating a sense of belonging, space for navigating conflict and tension, and the ability to give and receive feedback. Creating a psychologically healthy workplace relies on people across organizations - but most heavily on leaders and their relational skills, which connects to the first theme. Leaders need to be able to communicate clearly about job expectations and to collaborate with employees to support their success. They also need to be able to model inclusion and respect for all people in the workplace - particularly equity-seeking groups - creating a culture of engagement and respect for everyone. Problem solving and conflict management capacity are critical, as is capacity to respond quickly to any potential threats to employee safety. And finally, leaders need to develop their capacity to make decisions with fairness and integrity with recognition of their own limitations and biases.

Organizational Sustainability:

A longstanding issue in the sector has been the lack of sustainable funding models needed to effectively engage in long-term planning and experimentation for innovation. This theme links to skills needed for developing greater sustainability over time, allowing attention to be placed on the quality and impact of program and service delivery.

Evaluation and Impact Assessment

Evaluation and the collection of data to assess impact are typically driven by funders in the sector. Participants identified the need to develop capacity in this area to measure and raise awareness of the value of the work being done. Exposure to a variety of tools and approaches for impact assessment will be important.

Fundraising

As noted, funding was identified as the most important challenge in the external environment. And, while learning opportunities may not translate directly to new funding models, there are key skills that can be developed to better equip organizations to access needed resources. From an internal standpoint, training and support for grant writing, opportunities for funding diversification, evaluation, and financial management and budgeting are potential areas for capacity building. Externally, training and support around advocacy and relationship building with funders and government are valuable skills for the sector to have.

Succession Planning

The labour force in Nova Scotia is declining and many nonprofits will soon face leadership turnover due to aging demographics. Only 35% of sector organizations have a formal succession plan in place for the ED/CEO and/or Board Chair.[3] While cited less frequently than some of the other subthemes in the qualitative data, we have included it here due to the significant impact that leadership changes have on organizations.

Systems Change:

Capacity for fundamentally shifting existing models and systems through relationships and social innovation is needed if we are to move toward greater sustainability and impact. Systems leadership requires competencies such as the ability to see the larger system, fostering reflective and generative conversations, and shifting focus from reactive problem-solving to co-creating the future.[4]

Collaboration

Working with others through partnerships and other forms of collaboration was identified as a key issue of importance, both as an obstacle and an opportunity. Respondents identified collaboration as essential to being able to meet large scale system change, both in terms of impact on the issues they're trying to address, as well as for exploring new funding and structural models for sustainability.

Communications and Advocacy

59% of survey respondents indicated that it would be helpful to have opportunities to develop skills in the areas of advocacy and influencing policy decision-making. Knowledge of how to be effective in influencing change is needed to ensure the sector's voice is heard by the public and the policymakers.

Innovation for Systems Change

Participants shared feelings of being stuck, and recognized that it is important to find new ways of collaborating and planning. The need to incorporate calculated risk-taking and the time for strategic thinking were identified as areas for improvement in the survey. Developing organizational capacity for seeking out and pursuing new opportunities, taking risks and being innovative will help the sector become more entrepreneurial and adaptive.
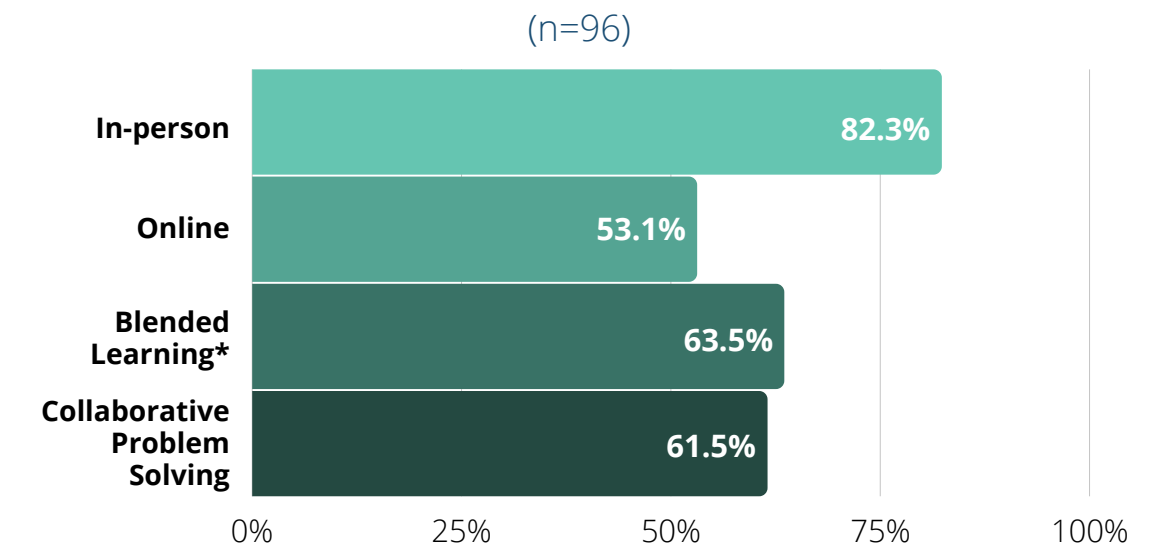
> **"How do we shift systemic issues while also meeting individual needs? We need to provide immediate service but then what is the direct impact? How are we moving people out of poverty?"** *- Focus Group participant*

Preferred Modes of Delivery

Over the past 18 months, learning opportunities have been restricted to online formats due to COVID-19. There are benefits associated with this move to virtual training such as the ability to reach people across the province more easily, attracting high caliber facilitators and reduced time commitments associated with travel, etc. With these advantages, we were curious to know whether we should continue to focus on virtual training or re-introduce in-person opportunities when feasible.

In response to their preferred method of learning and training delivery, survey participants gave the following top four responses:

What mode of learning and delivery methods do you find to be most effective? (Pick all that apply)

(n=96)

Mode	Percentage
In-person	82.3%
Online	53.1%
Blended Learning*	63.5%
Collaborative Problem Solving	61.5%

Blended = a mix of online and in person learning

It is clear from these responses that in-person training is still highly desirable and we will take this into consideration going forward. For learning opportunities that remain online, we will explore how to integrate as much interaction and applied learning as possible, and to offer people opportunities to interact and collaborate around real-world issues.

Feedback collected in our prototyping sessions revealed that people appreciate opportunities to connect with and learn from peers during training. Incorporating breakout groups and interactive discussions are tools we will continue to use as we explore more opportunities to blend network development, peer learning and training.

4 - Senge, P., Hamilton, H., & Kania, J. (2015). The dawn of system leadership. Stanford Social Innovation Review, 13(1), 27-33.

Building Capacity for Impact

At the root of our capacity building efforts is the vision that community impact organizations will be better equipped to address systemic inequities and affect positive social change. In our research process, we also collected information to help us understand behaviours (and the skills behind them) that affect impact in order to prioritize learning opportunities with the greatest potential for influence.

The survey included questions to capture social impact across organizations[5] that covered topics such as improvements in quantity and quality of services and success in meeting goals and objectives. We also asked questions to assess perspectives on the health of workplace cultures, entrepreneurialism and innovation in the organization, characteristics of learning organizations, and organizations' resourcefulness and ability to "make do" with the resources they have at hand. This allowed us to analyze which of these factors increased the organization's desired impact.

We found that having a healthy workplace culture is the strongest predictor of social impact based on the survey results. This aligns with the need identified by the sector for capacity building in this area. Specific elements of a healthy culture that had the greatest effect on impact include respect for others' ideas, role clarity, encouragement to participate in decisions affecting one's work, and being held accountable for actions. Nurturing these behaviours is highly dependent on leadership.

There is also a significant relationship between learning organizations and impact, as well as entrepreneurialism (taking risks, being proactive and innovative) and impact. Furthermore, these organizational characteristics are interconnected and there are significant positive correlations between them, meaning that as the health of the workplace culture increases, so does the likelihood that the organization is learning-focused and entrepreneurial. While resourcefulness did not emerge as a director predictor of impact, it is an important precondition for the other behaviours studied (visit the **Survey Report** for more details on these findings).

Figure 2:
Organizational Characteristics Leading to Impact
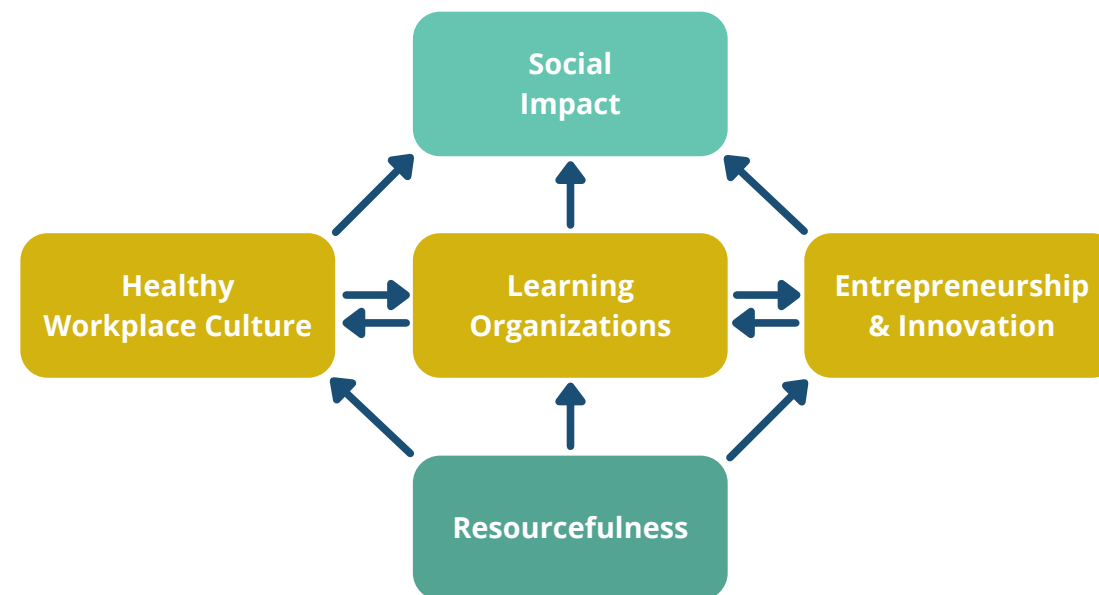
Based on what we heard from the sector and the results of our analysis related to impact, our Learning Framework is grounded in the foundational concept that we need to nurture the skills needed to develop learning organizations through healthy workplaces, innovation for systems change, and managing sustainable operations.

"[I would appreciate] sharing stories and experiences across organizations, for example, meeting with someone and having the opportunity to chat. Meeting and discussing what is going on in their organization or sector around shared problems and struggles, and around innovations and success stories. Like shared experiences around funding. We all come up with different methods about how we can raise money, and sharing those different ideas about how to do that would be helpful to give people different ideas about how to address that for example. Funding especially for the big issues."

- Focus Group participant

5 - Brown, W. A. (2005). Exploring the Association Between Board and Organizational Performance in Nonprofit Organizations. Nonprofit Management and Leadership, 15(3), 317-339.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER:

THE CSCNS LEARNING FRAMEWORK

The Learning Framework outlined in the following sections was developed based on what we heard across our sector engagement and during the prototyping process. It will guide our approach to offering skill building opportunities for the sector going forward. Based on our research and analysis, by investing in these areas, organizations will be better able to achieve the impact they strive for, and staff and volunteers will have better experiences in the workplace.

> **"The social spotlight of 2020 has highlighted the lack of diversity in our organization and challenged us to address issues of inequity and fostering and inclusive work environment."**
>
> *- Survey Respondent*

Our Learning Principles

Based on our values, what we heard, and research conducted by Big Waves, we identified four main principles that will guide our approach to developing training and learning opportunities for the sector:

1

Decolonizing pedagogy and content and integrating justice, equity, diversity, decolonization and inclusion (JEDDI) principles into all trainings.
We will ensure that facilitators have the necessary competencies and life experiences to navigate issues related to JEDDI, such as holding challenging conversations, gently challenging people to shift mindsets, and creating inclusive and accessible training environments.

2

Learning through networks and collaboration.
We will integrate interactive learning experiences and support pathways for participants to move from the training experience into ongoing communities of practice and opportunities for collaboration, mentorship, and networking. Opportunities to collaborate and build relationships through reflection, shared projects, and support for challenging conversations will be prioritized.

3

Experiential and student-centered learning.
We will have an ongoing focus on learning through practice, opportunities to participate in "real world" learning in action, and a recognition that the most effective learning happens througha focus on head, hands, heart, and spirit.

4

Integration of systems thinking, innovation, and collaboration.
We will seek to include opportunities for creativity, innovation, stretch mindset, and meaningful dialogue to cultivate competencies for systems leadership and strategic thinking.

Our approach to capacity building is rooted in the theory organizations will benefit most from developing skills needed to:

- **Nurture healthy workplaces**
- **Cultivate systems change and innovation**
- **Manage sustainable operations**

Content Themes

🔵 Healthy Workplaces:

Organizations that are healthy workplaces actively practice behaviours that cultivate trust-building and spaces of psychological safety. There is an understanding that it is safe to disagree, make mistakes and try new things. Time for reflection is incorporated and feedback is a regular process. Leaders model with humility and a learning mindset, and have strong relational skills. Without a healthy workplace culture, JEDDI efforts are greatly compromised.

Under this theme, we will offer content specifically related to:
- Conflict resolution and holding generative conversations
- JEDDI
- Psychological safety
- Addressing and preventing burnout

🟢 Systems Change & Innovation:

To address systemic inequities, people across the sector need to develop skills for being able to visualize issues at the systems level and refocus efforts from reactive problem-solving to co-creating a different future. Collaboration, strong communications and the ability to adapt based on experience are all needed for widescale change.

Here, we will offer content related to:
- Generating new ideas and risk-taking / experimentation
- Collaboration
- Communications & Advocacy
- Evaluation & Impact Assessment

🟣 Sustainable Operations:

In addition to the relational and creative skills needed to affect change and motivate staff, there are foundational operational elements that need to be in place for organizations to be sustainable. There is a wide range of capacity across leaders in the sector and need for training aimed at implementing efficient and accountable policies and procedures.

Content under this theme will focus on:
- Financial Management
- Governance
- Human Resources Policies and Staff Development
- Fundraising
- Strategic Thinking and Planning

By increasing capacity across these three core areas, organizations will become increasingly learning-oriented. **Learning organizations** have cultures and mindsets of learning, reflection, and growth, through continuous inquiry about what is working well (with celebration), what could be done differently, and how to learn from successes and mistakes (with support). All members of the organization are encouraged and supported to learn and develop, acknowledge what they don't know, creatively explore areas of interest and seek out innovative solutions to complex problems. Leaders model humility and willingness to change, and to create the conditions for everyone in the organization to do the same solutions to complex problems. Leaders model humility and willingness to change and to create the conditions for everyone in the organization to do the same.[67] As a result, there is greater capacity to navigate conflict internally, so people feel respected and appreciated. Role clarity and accountability are present, leading to greater emotional wellbeing and work-life balance. People are more engaged, productivity increases, and retention rates improve.

6 - Aguilar, E. (2016). The art of coaching teams: Building resilient communities that transform schools. John Wiley & Sons.

7 - Taylor Newberry Consulting. (2018). Achieving Greater Impact by Starting with Learning. https://theonn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Achieving-Greater-Impact-by-Starting-with-Learning-September-2018.pdf

How We Will Deliver Content

The final step in determining activities in our Learning Framework is the identification of types of learning methods that we will use for delivering content. Based on our learning principles and the nature of the content we will be offering, we will use a variety of approaches to learning. We will aim to implement a mix of these approaches so there are multiple ways to engage in capacity building based on individual needs and time available.

ONLINE LEARNING / WEBINARS

ONLINE / IN-PERSON WORKSHOPS

PRE-RECORDED COURSE TRAININGS

COHORT-BASED LEARNING

SUPPORTED COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

IDEATION & PROTOYPING SESSIONS

ONLINE LEARNING / WEBINARS

on a variety of topics across the content themes. This format will allow for large group participation and will tend to be more presentation-style content that is primarily about providing information versus skill development (e.g. our recent Decolonization Learning Journey and Black History Learning Journey). Small group breakout discussions may be incorporated from time to time.

ONLINE / IN-PERSON WORKSHOPS

designed for specific skill development. These will likely be longer than a webinar but still require a relatively short time commitment. They will also likely incorporate some presentation-style content with opportunities for discussion and engagement with content.

PRE-RECORDED "COURSE" TRAININGS

for basic or technical skills development that requires less support for integration - for example, how to use particular project planning tools, or basic operational practices. Assignments that encourage self-reflection and integration may be incorporated. These offerings will be accessible online at any time and on an ongoing basis and individuals will be able to participate based on their own time availability.

COHORT-BASED LEARNING

for complex topics and skillsets. Some of these may include opportunities to prototype solutions, depending on capacity and topic area. As much as possible, cohort learning will integrate an experiential approach, as well as access to mentorship, support and community connection.

SUPPORTED COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE (COP)

for any learning or development that would benefit from ongoing practice opportunities, networking, and community support. COPs could include support for collaboration on complex or shared issues, access to mentorship and peer support, and opportunities to share and learn from success storiesin the sector.

IDEATION & PROTOTYPING SESSIONS

to develop capacity for experimentation and innovation. These could take the form of workshops, cohort series', retreats, etc. and will focus on generating new thinking for systems change in the sector, as well as ideas that can be implemented and adapted based on learning. Over time, our goal will be to support applied learning through prototyping to help develop examples for new ways of structuring and working.

As a learning organization, CSCNS will continue to experiment with learning opportunities through shorter-term "prototypes" to learn what resonates and how we can adjust. We will continue use the model of a 2-part series with an introductory session and time to practice skills in between the second session. Based on learnings, we can determine if the topic is well-suited for one of the training opportunities above.

REACH & SCOPE OF LEARNING METHODS

Each of the methods we will use in our approach to learning will offer a different experience for participants. For example, some activities such as online webinars will have much larger audiences and less depth of content than more applied experiences such as cohort-based learning.

Each year we will include a variety of offerings in our activity plan so participants can choose whether to learn at an introductory, "101" level or go deeper with content they're interested in.

AUDIENCE SIZE

Refers to how large the group of participants may be - e.g. webinars and online courses have the broadest reach

DEPTH OF CONTENT

Refers to how advanced participants can expect the interaction with content to be - e.g. small group cohorts will have more time and space to go deeper in their learning

LEARNING METHODS

OUR LEARNING FRAMEWORK

Our Learning Framework is made up of 3 main components:

OUR PRINCIPLES - these will inform our content development across all that we offer

**OUR THEMES** - content related to these topics will be prioritized

OUR METHODS - learning will be delivered via a variety of approaches so participants can engage with the content in a way that works for them

Icons will be colour-coded based on themes so it's clear what method and subject matter will be offered

1 Decolonizing pedagogy and content and integrating JEDDI principles into all trainings.
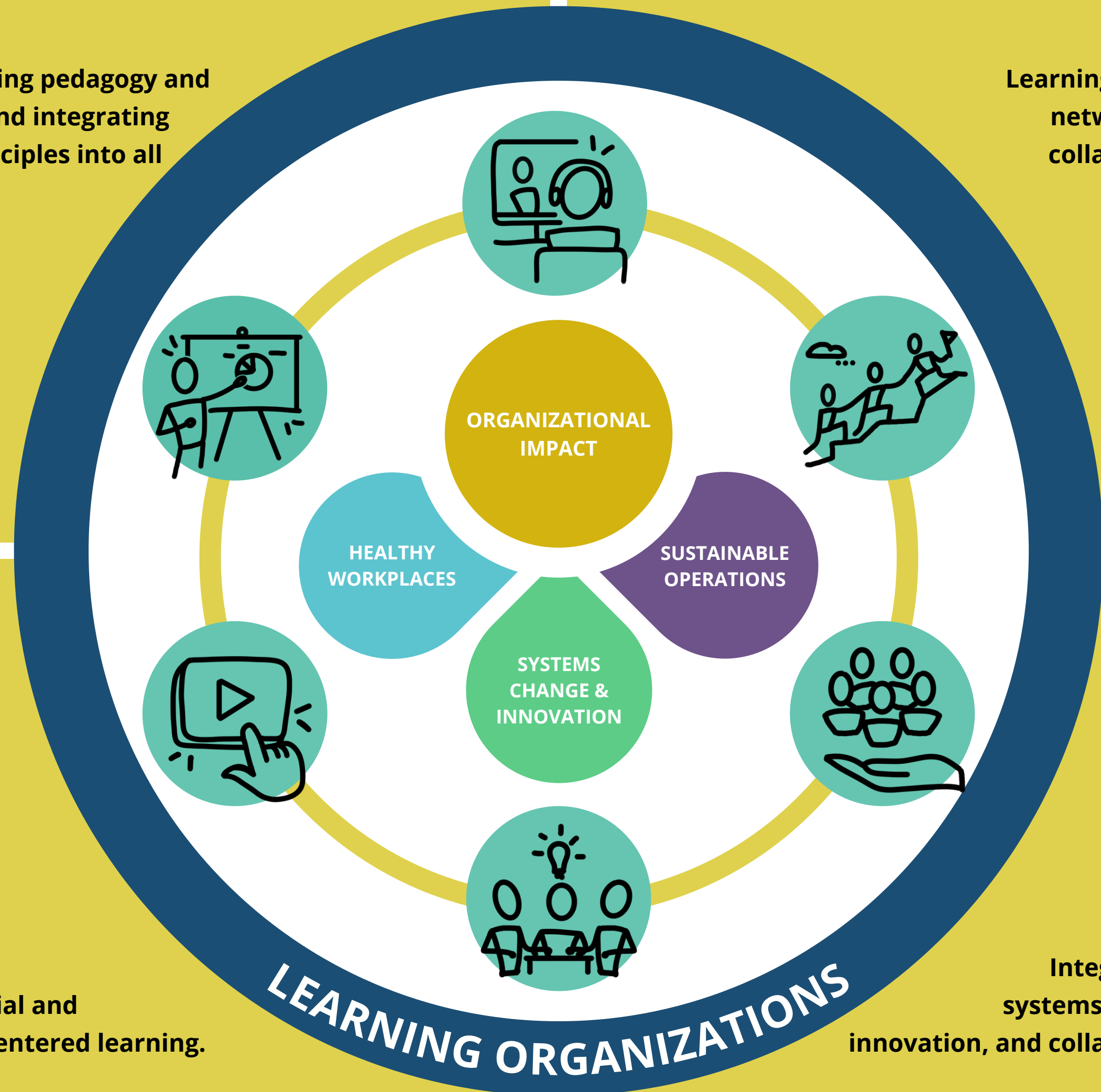
2 Learning through networks and collaboration.

3 Experiential and student-centered learning.

4 Integration of systems thinking, innovation, and collaboration.

LEARNING ORGANIZATIONS

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACT

HEALTHY WORKPLACES

SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS

SYSTEMS CHANGE & INNOVATION

ACTION PLAN

FALL 2021

Activity Plan

We will begin to implement our Learning Framework this fall with a mix of approaches and topics. In this early phase we will be continuing to prototype and learn from our experiences so we can continue to adapt. We will typically offer training between October and June each year and plan for 2-3 sessions of programing. During the coming year (September 2021 – June 2022) we plan to offer a mix of cohort-based learning opportunities, webinars and learning series, and supported communities of practice. We will also be starting to engage content experts to develop pre-recorded course trainings that will be hosted online starting in spring/summer 2022. The visual below provides an overview of what we have planned so far. Stay tuned for registration details and keep in touch to learn more about what we add to the roster over time!

COHORT-BASED LEARNING
- Strategic Planning & Operational Planning
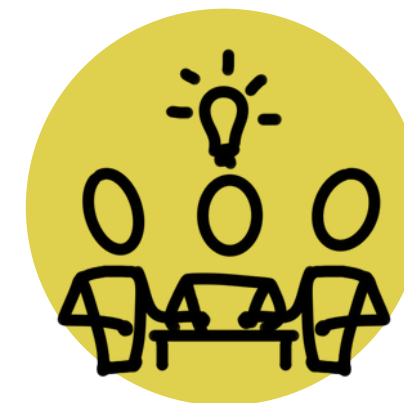- Change Management for Black & Indigenous Leaders

ONLINE / IN-PERSON WORKSHOPS
- Black History Learning Journey Series 2

ONLINE LEARNING / WEBINARS
- CRA Webinar on GST/HST for Nonprofits

SUPPORTED COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE
- ED Network
- Burnout
- Decolonization & Reconciliation

IDEATION & PROTOYPING SESSIONS
- Conflict Resolution
- Trauma-Informed Organizations
- Good Governance

PRE-RECORDED COURSE TRAININGS
- *Visit our Website* for pre-recorded sessions on a variety of topics

● Healthy Workplace ● Systems Change & Innovation ● Sustainable Operations

To register or apply for any of these programs and get updates on new opportunities, *visit our website*!

Conclusion

We are thrilled to have had the experience of learning more deeply about how we can serve the community impact sector through capacity building opportunities. We are committed to continuing to engage, learn and adapt as we implement this Framework to ensure we are effectively meeting organizations' needs. We look forward to continuing on this journey with you!

"**How to change minds - prevent violence against women, prevent MMIW and rape, poverty reduction, prevent racism and classism; being heard and respected.**"

- Survey Respondent

Resources & Further Reading

- Consultant's Report
- Capacity Building Survey Report
- Capacity Building Survey Questions
- Fall Activities - Learn More & Register

Visit us online at **www.csc-ns.ca**