



# VANCOUVER COASTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY FOOD ACTION INITIATIVE

EVALUATION REPORT

OCTOBER 2011





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PREPARED BY THE SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH COUNCIL OF BRITISH  
COLUMBIA (SPARC BC) AND TONY BECK

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SOCIAL PLANNING AND  
RESEARCH COUNCIL OF BC  
4445 NORFOLK STREET  
BURNABY, BC

WWW.SPARC.BC.CA  
INFO@SPARC.BC.CA  
TEL: 604-718-7733





# VANCOUVER COASTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY FOOD ACTION INITIATIVE

## EVALUATION REPORT

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## Acknowledgements

The Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) Community Food Action Initiative (CFAI) evaluation was funded by VCH and was supported by the following Advisory Committee members:

- Joanne Bays (Co-Chair, City of Vancouver Food Policy Council)
- Margaret Broughton (Community Nutritionist, VCH)
- Dayna Chapman (Coordinator, Bella Coola Valley Sustainable Agriculture Society)
- Deepthi Jayatilaka (Provincial Manager, Food Security, PHSA)
- James Lu (Medical Health Officer, VCH Richmond Health Service Delivery Area)
- Ian Marcuse (Coordinator, Grandview Woodland Food Connection)
- David Parkinson (Coordinator, Powell River Food Security Project)
- Marla Steinberg (Director of Evaluation, CAPTURE Project)

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- Alida Reid (Hailika'as Heiltsuk Health Centre)
- Joyce Rock & Melanie Spence (Right to Food Network, Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House Society)

Finally, we express our sincere thanks to all interview participants and survey respondents.

The research and recommendations are the responsibility of SPARC BC and Tony Beck and do not necessarily reflect the views of the reviewers, advisors, collaborators or VCH.



# Executive summary

This report presents the findings of an evaluation of the Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) Community Food Action Initiative (CFAI), a health promotion initiative that supports community-led solutions to improve food security in VCH communities. The VCH CFAI has funded 'ground-up' approaches to improving food security in VCH communities with a focus on vulnerable populations since 2005.

The findings of this independent evaluation demonstrate that the VCH CFAI has met its objectives. It is a valued source of core funding and has catalyzed hundreds of classes, workshops, celebrations, gardens, community kitchens, partnerships and learning events for thousands of people in rural and urban communities in the VCH region.

## Context, key questions and scope

As a provincial program, the CFAI is funded by the Ministry of Health, coordinated by the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), implemented by Regional Health Authorities and carried out by community coordinators and nutritionists across BC. This evaluation focuses exclusively on CFAI's results in VCH's service region.

The VCH CFAI is based on a supported community development model where structural supports and linkages are provided by VCH to each of the funded communities beyond their annual funding allotment. The VCH Regional Coordinator of Healthy Communities and Food Security (Regional Food Security Lead) plays this supportive role.

The evaluation asked: Has the VCH CFAI achieved its objectives thus far and what are the processes that have led to these objectives being met or not met? With the guidance of a nine member advisory committee, the evaluation team undertook the review of VCH's CFAI programmes in eight communities: Vancouver, Richmond, North Shore, Sea to Sky corridor, Lower Sunshine Coast, Powell River, Bella Bella and Bella Coola. The team collected data for the evaluation utilizing the following methods: a review of related program documents, forty interviews with community stakeholders, eight interviews with regional stakeholders, two focus groups and an online and paper survey completed by 290 participants and volunteers.

The evaluation focused on assessing the results of the VCH CFAI in its four objective areas:

1. Access to local healthy food;
2. Community capacity to address food security;
3. Development and use of policy that supports community food security; and
4. Awareness about food security and increased food knowledge and skills.<sup>1</sup>

Key findings from each objective area are summarized in the following sections.

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<sup>1</sup> The CFAI presents "awareness about food security" and "food knowledge and skills" as two distinct objectives. They were merged for the purpose of this evaluation.



## Access to local healthy food: Key findings

Increasing direct access to healthy food for community members was supported through a variety of CFAI programs and activities, such as: community gardens, community kitchens, community supported agriculture, good food boxes, bulk buying clubs, potlucks and community meals, donations to food banks, fruit and harvest sharing programs, as well as farmers' and pocket markets.

### *Program strengths*

- Survey respondents and interview participants rated their satisfaction with the CFAI efforts to increase access to local healthy food highly, at **4.2 and 4.0 out of 5 respectively (i.e., good).**<sup>2</sup>
- 93 percent of interview participants felt there had been adequate focus on increasing access to food for vulnerable populations.
- Survey respondents with gross annual household incomes of less than \$30,000 were just as likely to report an increase in access to healthy food as those with higher incomes.
- The CFAI has spurred innovative approaches to bridging the immediate food needs of vulnerable populations to longer-term capacity building projects that support dignified access to healthy food. These projects may serve as models for other communities.

### *Areas for improvement*

- Some interview participants noted that it is difficult to facilitate the inclusion of vulnerable population groups in healthy food projects due to systemic barriers to participation. Barriers identified include poverty, lack of transport, lack of childcare, timing of programmes, awareness of programmes and trust. While these systemic barriers are of a size and complexity that are greater than CFAI's mandate, their existence challenges the effectiveness of food access programs for vulnerable populations.
- With limited resources and diverse community needs, some coordinators and stakeholders reported on the challenge of transitioning from service delivery to empowerment modes<sup>3</sup> of increasing access to food for vulnerable populations. This was particularly the case in mixed-income areas.

<sup>2</sup> In the five point scale: 1 = poor; 2 = unsatisfactory; 3 = satisfactory; 4 = good; 5 = outstanding

<sup>3</sup> This evaluation differentiates between a service delivery mode and an empowerment mode of addressing food access issues for vulnerable populations. By the former we mean a programme mode where vulnerable populations are passive recipients of external support (e.g., as is the case with some food banks). By the latter we mean a programme mode whereby vulnerable groups are active participants in the making of society, for example through education on the right to food, or training on how to grow food and move towards self-sufficiency. The evaluation also recognises that it is not always possible to make a clear-cut distinction between these two modes.

## Community capacity to address food security: Key findings

A wide variety of capacity building activities have resulted from the CFAI funding, including: food forums, public speaking events, movie nights, garden tours, community kitchens, cooking classes, food skills workshops, gardening and seed saving training, harvest calendars, local farm maps, festivals, school projects, community gardens and inter-generational/cross-cultural meals and more.

### *Program strengths*

- Survey respondents reported that the CFAI increased their capacity to address food security; 60 percent reported feeling “they can make more of a difference” and 26 percent felt they were more of a leader as a result of their participation in activities.
- Interview participants rated their satisfaction with the CFAI’s efforts to support community capacity building at **4.1 out of 5 (i.e., good)**<sup>4</sup>.
- All communities involved First Nations groups in capacity building activities. Areas with sizeable First Nations populations had many First Nations volunteers and participants.
- Types of capacity developed include: capacity of residents to grow and process their own food; capacity of stakeholders to develop and strengthen networks; capacity of CFAI-funded organizations and coordinators to organize and lead food security programmes; spin-off programmes that were inspired by CFAI work to take on food security programmes of their own; as well as leadership development.
- To date, the estimated total value of leveraged funds<sup>5</sup> exceeds 1.1 million dollars, nearly matching the 1.2 million dollars invested in the VCH CFAI since 2005. ***The ratio of funds leveraged to funds invested is 1.1 : 1.2.***

### *Areas for improvement*

- Capacity building activities have not yet formed local food systems that are sustainable without external support. Capacity building activities are contributing to local food security but it takes time to create sustainable infrastructure and leadership.
- Capacity building could be more effective with more financial support. Many community members have developed the skills and interest to take on projects but lack the support.
- Only 26 percent of interview participants thought vulnerable populations had gained greater voice and more confidence as a result of the CFAI-funded activities. Ongoing support to build the capacity of vulnerable populations to address food security issues is needed.

<sup>4</sup> Survey respondents were not asked to rate overall satisfaction, but rather rated their increased capacity.

<sup>5</sup> Both financial funds and in-kind funds are included in the estimate of funds leveraged,



## Development and use of policy that supports community food security: Key Findings

Advancements in policy development are being facilitated by the CFAI funding, largely at the local level. Types of policy work undertaken in communities include the addition of food security goals in Official Community Plans, parlay with local Mayor and Council, coordinated food policy forums, development of food charters, new waste management systems and more. Policy work is brought to the regional and provincial levels by the VCH Regional Food Security Lead.

### *Program strengths*

- 61 percent of all survey respondents reported becoming more interested in developing food security policies, and 43 percent reported feeling more capable of lobbying for or developing food security policies as a result of their participation in CFAI-funded programmes. Low-income survey respondents<sup>6</sup> reported similar rates; 67 percent reported increased interest in developing food security policies and 40 percent reporting feeling more capable of lobbying for or developing food security policies as a result of their participation in CFAI-funded programmes.
- The supported community development model provides structural supports to coordinators who are interested in taking food security policy to the provincial or regional level. This model is at the heart of the success of VCH CFAI.
- 67 percent of community stakeholders think the CFAI has supported the development and use of policy to support food security.

### *Areas for improvement*


- Interview participants rated the development and use of policy that supports food security as **3.6 out of 5 (i.e., between satisfactory and good)**<sup>7</sup>, still a positive rating, though the lowest rating across the four CFAI objectives.
- Several interview participants felt vulnerable groups have for the most part not been involved at the policy making level to the degree they could be. To facilitate the involvement of vulnerable populations in policy development activities, coordinators would require more time and resources.
- Numerous survey respondents selected “not sure” in response to policy-related questions. Uncertainty may be indicative of the need for more education about what food policies are and how they can be developed.

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<sup>6</sup> Low-income respondents include those reporting an annual gross household income less than \$30,000.

<sup>7</sup> Survey respondents were not asked to rate overall efforts to develop and use policy, but were rather asked to report on their own increased interest or participation in policy development.





## Awareness about food security and increased food knowledge and skills: Key findings

A clear increase in awareness about food security as well as food knowledge and skills was documented in all communities, including for vulnerable populations.

### *Program strengths*

- Of those who were asked, interview participants unanimously agreed there is greater awareness in the community about food security than there was five years ago.
- On average, interview participants rated the CFAI's effectiveness in increasing food security awareness and knowledge about food a **4 out of 5 (i.e., good)**.<sup>8</sup>
- 92 percent of survey respondents reported knowing more about food security or sustainable food systems as a result of their involvement in CFAI funded activities. Increased awareness about food security was reported across all income categories.
- 86 percent of web survey respondents agreed that increased food skills have helped them eat better and/or live a healthier lifestyle.
- Many survey respondents provided examples of how they have shared their food skills with others. Respondents in the lowest household income bracket were the most vocal in sharing examples.

### *Areas for improvement*

- Survey respondents reported the lowest level of knowledge about food security policies at **3.4 out of 5 (i.e., satisfactory)**.

Overall, the evaluation team found that the VCH CFAI has achieved its intended objectives. A relatively small amount of funding has catalyzed hundreds of classes, workshops, celebrations, garden projects, community kitchens, partnerships and learning events for thousands of people in rural and urban communities. The CFAI has become a valued source of core funding to address food security issues in the VCH region.

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<sup>8</sup> Survey respondents were not asked to rate the effectiveness of the CFAI efforts to increase awareness and knowledge, but were asked to report on their own increased awareness and knowledge.



## Cross-cutting themes and considerations for program sustainability: Key findings

In addition to findings in each objective area, the following cross-cutting themes emerged as significant in affecting the initiative sustainability over time:

- Community coordinators have in many ways become the “face of food security” and are integral in leveraging funds and reaching out to vulnerable groups. Supporting the coordinators equates to supporting the CFAI.
- Coordinators learn from each other. Inter-community contact between coordinators is valued, particularly when it is clearly directed and focused on specific topics.
- Balancing the twin foci of supporting food security for both the general population and vulnerable populations can present challenges given the CFAI’s limited funds.
- Strong connections between each objective area strengthens the program. Coordinators find good ways to balance program activities and make linkages between them.
- The existing planning and reporting mechanisms are excellent, particularly in the application of Outcome Measurement Frameworks and progress reports.
- Ongoing engagement and capacity building with First Nations communities strengthens the program.
- Food policy work is being advanced at both local and regional levels. Policy related to the health sector and other sectors (e.g., commercial food sector) was identified as particularly valuable in increasing access to healthy food.

The evaluation team sees the VCH CFAI moving into the future with great strength, especially given the alignment between the CFAI’s objectives and the goals of the Healthy Families BC provincial health promotion initiative.<sup>9</sup> As the CFAI moves ahead, the following areas merit consideration as they impact the sustainability of the program:

- Support for coordinators who may be in danger of burn out;
- Long-term support plans to strengthen partnerships and make networks sustainable;
- Housing the CFAI work in existing community organizations; and
- Regional allocation of funding to balance the reduced opportunities available in remote communities.

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## Recommended future directions

The CFAI has helped turn food security into an important public policy issue in our region. But there is still work ahead. Recommendations are extended in three areas: design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and policy development.

### *Design and implementation*

1. Provide additional investment in order to ensure that coordinators, nutritionists and community developers have adequate capacity to work with vulnerable populations.
2. Review VCH's CFAI objectives in a one day planning session with community coordinators, VCH nutritionists and VCH Community Developers.
3. Explore the potential for greater interchange with commercial food outlets to ensure that locally-produced and healthy food is readily available for purchase by all.
4. Explore the potential for using funding to create sub-regional food hubs, particularly in remote and rural communities.
5. Review regional funding distribution and make clear the rationale for such decisions.
6. Consider non-material incentives for community coordinators, for example supporting attendance at the BC Food Systems Network annual meeting, and establishing a system of self-funded interns to support their work.
7. Increase collaboration and partnership with First Nations to promote indigenous understandings of food security and food systems change.

### *Monitoring and evaluation*

8. Synthesize good practices in the CFAI that already support access of vulnerable populations to local, healthy food in a dignified manner. Share this information.
9. Review progress report format and consider adding questions about how programmes specifically support vulnerable populations in each of CFAI's objective areas.
10. Review the outcomes of this evaluation and reiterate (if required) the VCH-specific OMF to realign activities, outcomes and indicators with VCH priorities.

### *Policy development*

11. Hone VCH capacity to support the CFAI's policy focus to ensure that new policies will lead to the systemic changes envisaged by the programme.
12. Consider influencing Provincial policy in a more coordinated, collaborative fashion.
13. Consider policy forums with vulnerable groups, recognising the challenges to this.
14. Train coordinators on meanings and methods of policy development.



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# 1. Introduction

This report presents evaluation results of the Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) Community Food Action Initiative (CFAI) – a health promotion initiative that supports community-led solutions to improve food security in BC. Established in 2005, the CFAI is funded by the BC Ministry of Health, coordinated by the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), implemented by Regional Health Authorities and carried out by coordinators in communities across BC. This evaluation focuses exclusively on the CFAI's results in VCH's service region.

VCH administers the CFAI funding through the Sharon Martin Community Health Fund (SMART Fund) to eight CFAI communities in the VCH region. Each community completed an environmental scan, a food system assessment and gap analysis and a three-year action plan. The eight communities are Vancouver, Richmond, North Shore, Sea to Sky corridor, Sunshine Coast, Powell River, Bella Bella and Bella Coola.

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the degree to which the CFAI has achieved its stated objectives in the eight communities that received CFAI funding. This report is divided into six sections. Following this introduction, the evaluation methods are described. The third section provides a review of food security work in BC in order to contextualize evaluation findings. The fourth section contains findings organized by programme component (access to local healthy food; capacity building; policy development; and food knowledge and skills). The fifth section discusses cross-cutting themes that emerged from the evaluation as well as considerations for program sustainability. In the concluding section, we outline findings-based recommendations. A bibliography and the appendices are located at the documents' end.



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## 2. Methodologies

The evaluation used a utilization-focused framework, with a focus on intended use by intended users.<sup>10</sup> A mixed method approach was employed which included a review of program documents, interviews, focus groups and a survey to ensure the necessary degree of impartiality during the evaluation process. Overall there was a high level of congruence between the main new data sources – interviews with community and regional level stakeholders, focus groups, and the survey. This suggests the results of the evaluation are valid and reliable.

Below, each component of the evaluation governance and evaluation methods are described.

### **Advisory Committee**

A nine member Advisory Committee was formed to provide guidance to the evaluation team. The committee included a diverse range of stakeholders, including:

- Community Nutritionist;
- Medical Health Officer;
- Representative from the Provincial Health Services Authority;
- VCH CFAI-funded Community Coordinators;
- Representatives from food security working groups and networks; and
- External evaluator.

The committee was active in shaping the evaluation's approach and logic model. Three meetings were held at seminal stages in the research project, at project kick-off to discuss the evaluation approach and design, before fieldwork to confirm the logic model and discuss pilot results, and during fieldwork wrap-up to discuss preliminary results and analysis. The committee was also provided opportunity to offer feedback on the draft final report.

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<sup>10</sup> Utilization-Focused Evaluation (U-FE) is a participatory evaluation approach that has been shown to promote follow up to evaluation recommendations. In U-FE, users are people with a direct, identifiable stake in the evaluation and are active participants in the evaluation process.



## Overview of food security in BC

A review of background materials was undertaken to develop an understanding of the VCH CFAI funded programmes in each of the different sites and to identify common units of analysis to measure results across sites. Relevant background and programme materials included outcome measurement frameworks (OMFs), community food security action plans, policies, progress reports (reports submitted to VCH by funded organisations reviewing progress to date), foundational CFAI reports and the provincial-level CFAI evaluation. Materials were provided by VCH and community coordinators.

## Logic Model and other Evaluation Tools


Prior to implementing the CFAI, VCH developed an Outcome Measurement Framework (OMF) that identified five objectives to accomplish the goal to increase food security for the population served by VCH. The objectives in the logic model are to increase:

- 1) Awareness about food security;
- 2) Access to local healthy food;
- 3) Food knowledge and skills;
- 4) Community capacity to address local food security; and
- 5) Development and use of policy that supports community food security.

For the purposes of this evaluation, we have collapsed the first and third objectives into one because of the significant conceptual overlap between the two objectives.

A revised logic model for the VCH CFAI was developed for this evaluation, which informed the data collection instruments. Appendices A-D contain the complete evaluation logic model and related instruments.





The VCH CFAI logic model was developed based on the OMF, outcomes and indicators drawn from the Ministry of Health's Model Food Security Paper, SMART Fund's Splash and Ripple Guide<sup>11</sup>, PHSA's Implementing Food Security Indicators and other material. Measurement tools and indicators were matched to outcomes identified in the logic model.<sup>12</sup> Interview and survey questions were based on these indicators and measures, as well as the 2008 evaluation of CFAI conducted on behalf of the PHSA. Questions to address impact in the community, local health areas, other sectors and local First Nations or Aboriginal groups were also included. Gadja's model for measuring the integration of networks (Appendix E) was utilized to measure varying experiences of integration, partnership and cooperation.

### **Pilot Site**

Stakeholder interviews and participant surveys were piloted prior to fielding. The community coordinator for the Grandview Woodland Food Connection (GWFC) assisted the team through this Vancouver-based pilot. For the pilot, six stakeholder interviews were conducted and ten surveys fielded. Pilot participants were asked to provide feedback on the utility and ease-of-use of the evaluation tools. Changes based on feedback were incorporated into the evaluation plan and instruments.

### **Collaboration with Community Coordinators**

Community coordinators were key to the success of this evaluation. Coordinators were contacted early in the evaluation to collect information about the programme, discuss the evaluation approach and request support. As possible, the evaluation team attempted to meet with coordinators in person to share information about the project in order to create a clear line of communication. All coordinators corresponded with at least one member of the evaluation team. Coordinators contributed to the evaluation in several ways. They:

- Shared documents and background material;
- Tallied funds leveraged by their organisation;
- Connected the evaluation team to key stakeholders for interviews;
- Distributed the survey to programme participants and volunteers; and
- Were available to answer questions and provide clarification.

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<sup>11</sup> *Splash and Ripple: A SMART Fund Guide to Using Outcomes to Design and Manage Community Health Activities.*

<sup>12</sup> Outputs are currently reported on in Progress Reports submitted to VCH by community coordinators and are not the focus of this evaluation.

## Interviews with Community-level Stakeholders

The evaluation team completed forty interviews with community stakeholders.

Category of Stakeholder	# interviewed
Health (health authority)	10
Government (municipal, regional and provincial)	7
Other (agriculture)	5
Other (food security)	5
Environmental preservation nonprofit organisation	4
Social development nonprofit organisation	3
Education	2
Economic development nonprofit organisation	1
First Nations representative	1
Other (granting agency)	1
Other (housing)	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>

In an effort to reduce the potential for bias, the team tried to reach out to individuals who were less connected to the coordinators or VCH. Interviews were conducted either in-person or over the telephone and lasted between 35 minutes and 1.5 hours.

## Participant, Volunteer and Grant Recipient Survey

To collect the perspectives of CFAI end-users, a survey was administered to programme participants, volunteers and grant recipients<sup>13</sup> in each of the communities. Survey questions were based on the provincial evaluation's survey instrument, interview questions and the indicators identified in the logic model. The survey was piloted with ten respondents. After incorporating edits, the survey was fielded for 6 weeks.

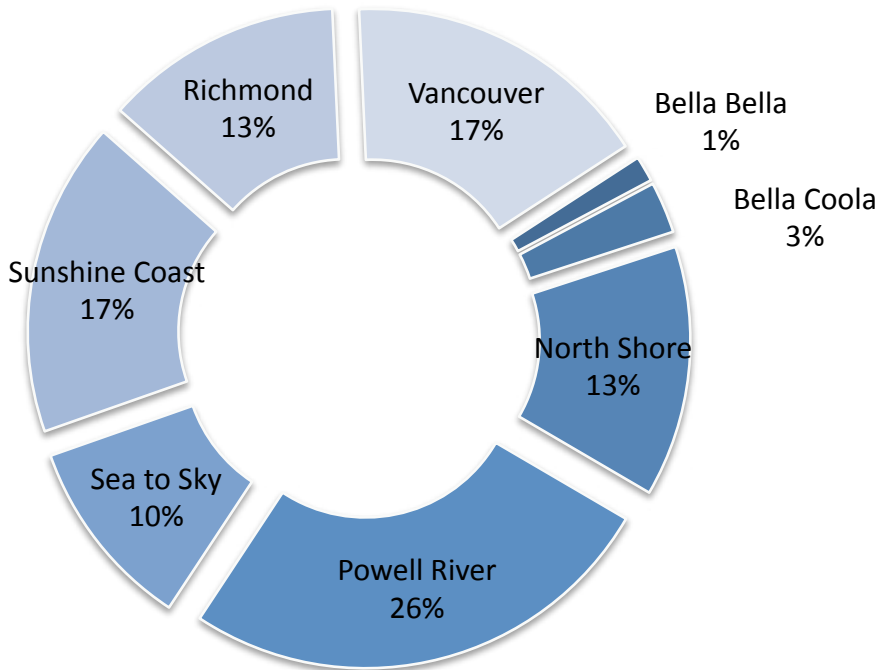
Responses were collected from 290 survey respondents in total, the majority (272) of which were collected online via Survey Monkey. To mitigate concerns that an online survey might be hard to access for some, hard copies of the survey with business-reply envelopes were sent to coordinators who sought an alternative to the web-based version. The hard copy survey was modified to work without skip logic and to be shorter. Bella Coola, Bella Bella, Squamish and Vancouver utilized the paper survey.

<sup>13</sup> The North Shore Neighbourhood House's Edible Garden Project administers small grants to support local organizations and individuals in launching initiatives to support food security in their community.

Surveys were generally administered via community coordinators. An invite email was drafted on behalf of coordinators, who then sent the email to their participant and volunteer contact lists. An accurate count of the number of individuals who were sent an invite to complete the survey cannot be captured as invitations to complete the survey were sent by community coordinators and may have then been forwarded to other contacts. Coordinators were asked to submit the number of volunteer, participant and grant recipients to whom they could send the surveys. With the exception of Bella Bella, Bella Coola and the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House, coordinators in funded communities generally identified between 100 and 150 contacts. We estimate the total number of individuals invited to participate in the survey to be around 850, for an estimated response rate of 34%, which the evaluation team considers as broadly representative.

As shown in Figure 1, respondents from Powell River completed the largest share of surveys (26%). Similar numbers of responses were collected from the Sunshine Coast (17%), Vancouver (17%), the North Shore (13%), Richmond (13%) and the Sea to Sky region (10%). Comparatively few responses were returned from Bella Bella (4 responses) and Bella Coola (8 responses). Low response rates from Bella Bella and Bella Coola reflect the smaller population sizes of these communities as well as lack of internet access.

Figure 1: Share of survey responses by VCH CFAI-funded communities



Participants or service users made up 58 percent of the respondents, volunteers 34 percent and grant recipients 8 percent. The following table highlights some of the main demographic characteristics of survey respondents who chose to share information:

Select characteristics of survey respondents who provided information	
Female respondents	78 percent
Households earning \$30,000 a year or less before tax	35 percent
Respondents born outside Canada	28 percent
Visible, cultural or linguistic minority	15 percent
Respondents with physical or mental disability	6 percent
First Nations, Métis or Inuit respondents	3 percent
Average age of respondents	50 years old

The majority of female respondents suggest that food security work, as is true for volunteer work as a whole, has a significant gender component.

While a quarter of survey respondents preferred not to provide information on income, more than one third of those who did provide information reported earning a gross yearly household income of less than \$30,000.

Yearly Gross Household Income Range	%
0 to less than 30K	35%
30 to less than 60K	27%
60 to less than 90K	20%
90 to less than 150K	15%
150K and above	4%
Total	100%

The significant share of survey respondents in the lowest income category provides an analytical advantage in interpreting impacts for vulnerable populations.

**Focus Groups**

Focus groups were conducted in two communities: North Vancouver and Bella Coola. Six community gardeners in the North Shore and eight local farmers in Bella Coola participated in the focus groups. They were utilized to focus on specific elements of the CFAI programming, as well as to highlight the CFAI’s applications in remote and semi-urban environments. Questions from the interview tool guided the focus groups.



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## Interviews with Regional-level Stakeholders

To collect information regarding the overall direction of VCH's CFAI and ensure an impartial view was reflected in the evaluation, eight interviews were conducted with regional-level stakeholders. Regional-level interview participants were recommended to the evaluation team by VCH and also recruited independently in order to collect a variety of perspectives. Regional-level interview participants included Executive Directors and managers from a variety of health institutions as well as academics and Aboriginal leaders. When the evaluation refers to stakeholder interviews, this includes both at the community and regional level, as there was a high degree of congruity between these two sources.

## Analysis and Synthesis

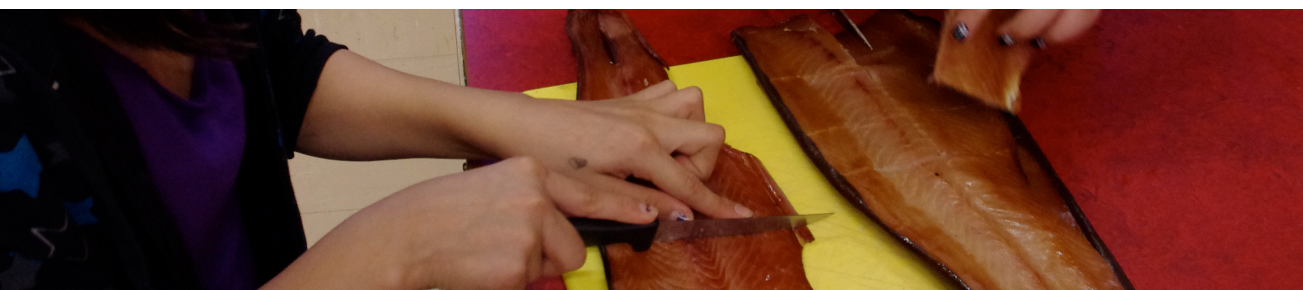
Analysis and synthesis of the following data was compiled for this report:

- Information on food security in BC;
- Survey results;
- Stakeholder interviews;
- Regional-level interviews; and
- Case studies of two communities.

Analysis was categorized along the following four objective areas:

1. Access to local healthy food;
2. Community capacity to address food security;
3. Development and use of policy that supports community food security; and
4. Awareness about food security and increased food knowledge and skills.

The same categories are used in the presentation of results in this report.



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## 3. Overview of food security in BC

The CFAI was introduced during an important galvanizing period for the food security movement in BC. In 2004-05, numerous groups were pushing to make food insecurity and food systems part of policy decision-making processes. The CFAI's implementation reflects an effort to provide the formal supports necessary to transform an emergent movement into programmes and policies. As such, the results of CFAI are not easily separated from the work being done by agencies, initiatives and citizens not associated with the CFAI. The push for food security continues to grow, and the socio-political dimensions of that movement are ever changing. This review serves to contextualize the VCH CFAI within broader food security activity. The food security movement in BC is so extensive it was not possible to delineate its various elements in this evaluation report.

### **Community Food Security and CFAI in Context**

#### *Community Food Security*

Community food security is generally understood as the development of community food systems in which food production, processing, distribution and consumption are integrated to enhance the environmental, economic, social and nutritional health of a specific place. The PHSA definition is: 'Community Food Security exists when all community residents obtain a safe, personally acceptable nutritious diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes healthy choices, community self-reliance and equal access for everyone.'

Food security is essentially the idea that people should have reliable access to local nutritious food (PHSA, 2006). The term, originally coined to describe food scarcity or famine, now reflects more broadly the role of food in human society including its cultural importance, in spurring economic vitality and job creation, in influencing our ecological systems, in affecting the livability of neighborhoods and in the physical design of our surroundings. "Everybody eats," a common refrain in the food security movement, epitomizes the ability for food to act as a bridge across diverse social issues (Kazmeiowski, 2010).

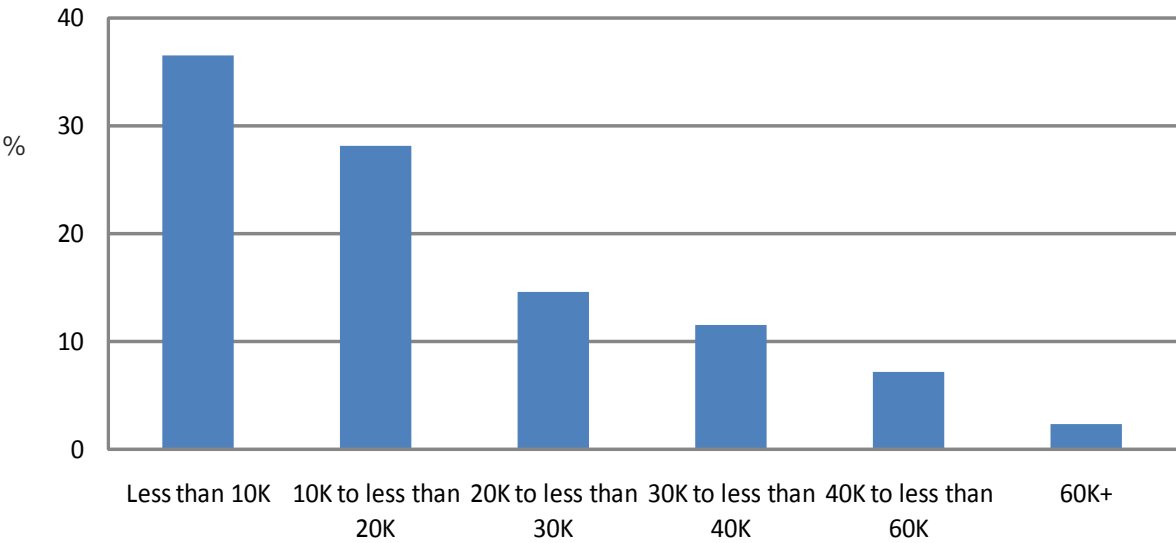
#### *Food Security and Health in British Columbia*

The past ten years have seen food and food security initiatives become an important locus for thought and practice related to planning for long-term community health and vitality. Food security is increasingly framed as a social determinant of health, where "any barrier, break or weakness along the food system can undermine the ability of the population to access safe, nutritious food, which can then undermine the health and wellness of the population" (BC Provincial Health Officer, 2006).

Within the last eight years, the food security movement has gained support from public authorities. Evidence connecting food to population health has been important in garnering support for public food security initiatives. The Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) completed a specific focus on nutrition in 2004. Data from the CCHS Cycle 2.2 Nutrition (Health Canada, 2004) indicated that 51.8 percent of BC households were consuming at least five servings of fruit and vegetables per day. The 2004 British Columbia Nutrition Survey determined that 64.5 percent of adult British Columbians did not meet the recommended minimum intake of fruit and vegetables. In the CCHS's measure of food security<sup>14</sup>, 10.4 percent of BC households were food insecure which is slightly higher than the national average of 9.2 percent.


In the Provincial Health Officer's 2010 report on prevention and sustainable health care, analysis of CCHS data shows that food insecurity is greatest in northwest B.C., Central Vancouver Island, the Kootenay/Boundary region and southern B.C. Fraser East (Kendall, 2010). The report also links food insecurity to income categories (see Figure 2 below).

Figure 2: Percentage of food insecure households by income category



Source: Office of the Provincial Health Officer and Corporate Support 2010, data from Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey 2007/08.

<sup>14</sup> In the CCHS, food insecure households reported more than one sign of problems accessing food due to a lack of money during the previous year. These signs may have included one or more household members cutting the size of meals, skipping meals or not eating for a whole day.



Over one-third of households in the lowest income category experienced food insecurity in 2004. The incidence of food insecurity in households in the highest income category is less than two percent. There is a clear connection between income security and food security. A low income is the best predictor of food insecurity. Low-income households will experience increased difficulty in accessing and preparing healthy foods due to transportation and service limitations (e.g., lack of grocers carrying a quality fresh produce and prevalence of cheap fast food). Low income households may also have poor cooking facilities (e.g., no fridge, limited storage, etc.). Individuals with functional impairments or those living in remote communities may also experience physical barriers to accessing healthy food.

The Provincial Health Officer (2006) identified the following households as likely to experience food insecurity in BC: low-income households; recipients of income assistance; single parents; Aboriginal persons; seniors on fixed incomes; women in food-insecure households; some immigrant and religious subgroups; and people living in rural and remote communities. The list is a familiar play back of those British Columbians most likely to be living in poverty.

#### *Provincial policy context*

As food security became a recognised component of public health, it became further embedded in provincial health initiatives. BC's public health policies now include food security as a key public health priority and food security is one of twenty-one public health model core programs that all BC health authorities are required to act on. Regional Health Authorities are now responsible for developing, implementing and monitoring a food security performance improvement plan.

The Model Core Program Paper on food security published in 2006 by the Ministry of Health highlighted promising practices in the implementation of food security programmes, including:

- Strategic planning (based on needs assessments and current capacities) to establish comprehensive food policies which incorporate a continuum of food security programmes and services;
- Intersectoral partnerships with the food industry, agricultural sector, schools and social agencies to promote community food security programmes;
- Community capacity building education, workshops and support to help establish partnerships; and
- A public awareness campaign to increase information and understanding of food security measures and healthy eating practices.



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The Model Core Program was used as guidance material during VCH's CFAI development and suggested practices are reflected in the CFAI through several means, including:

- Requirement for communities to complete a needs assessments or asset inventory and action plan prior to receiving CFAI funding;
- Prioritization of community capacity building as a key objective; and
- Prioritization of awareness and knowledge as key objectives.

Other BC food security initiatives include the Ministry of Health's Produce Availability in Remote Communities Initiative and the BC Healthy Living Alliance's Healthy Eating Strategy, which developed the Farm to School Salad Bar and replicated a Food Skills for Families program. The Healthy Living Alliance also funded the Community Capacity Building Strategy which funded several food security projects across VCH, including some sub-regional work.

Local Community Food Security is also one of five broad streams supported by the Aboriginal Health Initiative Program (AHIP), a programme that funds Aboriginal communities to provide locally responsive health promotion projects, and to which links have been made with the CFAI. The SMART Fund also has Community Food Security as a targeted funding stream. In addition, there have been a large number of non-profit initiatives driven by organisations such as Food Policy Councils, Farm Folk/City Folk, Slow Food, 100 Mile Diet, Green Table and the Council of Canadians. Organisations such as VanCity and the Vancouver Foundation have also provided funding for food security work.

## **Emergence of the CFAI**

The former provincial initiative ActNow BC was the catalyst for the development of the CFAI. Launched in 2002, the initiative focused on building community capacity to create healthy communities across BC by 2010. It established measureable targets in a variety of health prevention and promotion areas, including healthy eating.

The Ministry of Health Services approached the BC Public Health Alliance on Food Security and the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) to propose a programme to address ActNow BC's healthy eating strategy. After wide consultation with government and community leaders, the CFAI was developed. Launched in 2005 as a three-year initiative, the CFAI received ongoing base funding from the Health Authorities in 2008.

The logic underpinning the CFAI is that community food security is a pre-condition of healthy eating, which in turn affects diet-related health problems such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease. The desired outcome of the CFAI – improved community food security – has been linked to healthy eating, decreased chronic disease and improved population health (BC Public Health Alliance on Food Security, 2005).

Food security is envisioned as a continuum by the CFAI, where each stage builds upon the last to both meet immediate food-related needs and develop long-term, sustainable food systems. The image below (Kalina, 2003) depicts the stages of the continuum. Short-term relief, capacity building and redesign are envisioned as components of the continuum.

Figure 3: Food security continuum (Kalina, 2003)

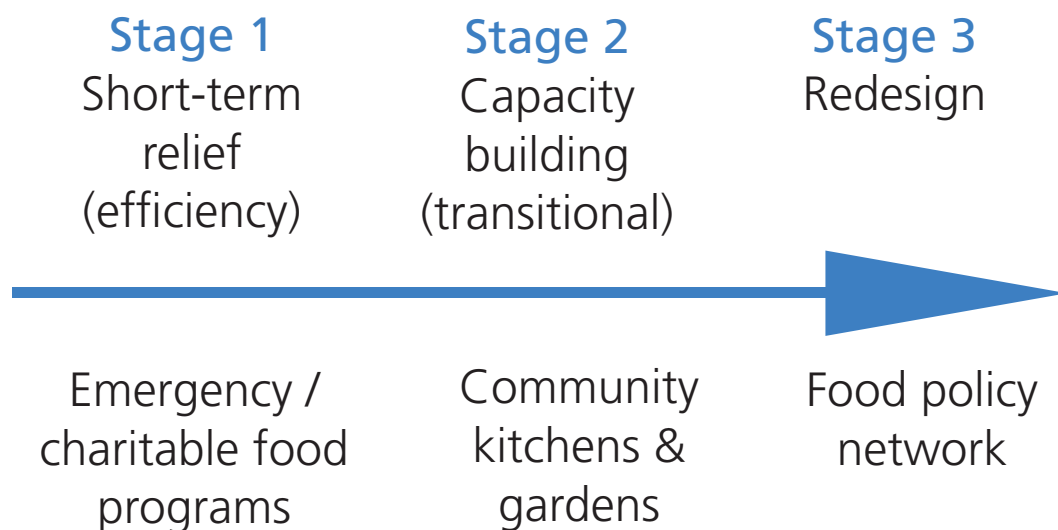


Image based on a presentation and © by L. Kalina Kamloops Food Policy Council, 2003

The CFAI is the first provincial initiative in Canada to recognise and financially support community-led solutions to food security (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2007). It emphasizes the need for “ground-up” approaches where communities can design programmes to address local needs, and where people increase control over and improve their health. The CFAI has placed a great focus on working with communities to enhance networks and build the skills within communities to identify and act on local priorities.

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### *Purpose of the CFAI*

The CFAI is a health promotion initiative with the goal to increase community food security for all British Columbians, especially those living with low incomes. Funds have been administered through the CFAI to health authorities to support the following objectives:

- Increased awareness about food security;
- Increased access to local, healthy food;
- Increased food knowledge and skills;
- Increased community capacity to address local food security; and
- Increased development and use of policy that supports community food security.

### **Vancouver Coastal Health's implementation of the CFAI**

Within VCH, the CFAI accounts for much of the government-led food security work done in communities with additional involvement from the Aboriginal Health Initiative Program (AHIP) and the SMART Fund. The VCH Authority established a Regional Food Security Committee as well as a Population Health team with a Regional Coordinator for Healthy Communities and Community Food Security. The SMART Fund works with agencies in each of VCH's eight communities to grant CFAI funding. The Regional Food Security Committee shares information on activities occurring in each of the communities.

The CFAI is designed to build on the strengths of local networks and community organisations in order to provide more opportunities and partnerships around food security at the community level, to support policy change, to promote increased access to healthy food by vulnerable populations, and to increase food knowledge and skills. The community-based approach is important to the CFAI. Regional Health Authorities deliver the initiative in varying ways to fit with local needs and priorities.

VCH community nutritionists and community developers are directly involved in supporting community coordinators. Also involved is the VCH Regional Food Security Lead who supports the VCH food security committee and links with the provincial CFAI advisory and operational committees. The Regional Lead participates on behalf of VCH in all provincial led food security initiatives and advocates for provincial level action on issues raised by the local committees.

The VCH CFAI employs a *supported community development model* to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems. Embedded in this model are structural supports and linkages provided by VCH to each of the funded communities beyond their annual funding allotment. The VCH Regional Food Security Lead acts as conduit to the communities. The Lead identifies policy opportunities and systemic barriers in communities and attempts to address these at the regional level. Video education sessions, in person educational workshops, the establishment of a food security funder's table, and policy advocacy are all tools the Regional Food Security Lead uses to connect with community. At a provincial level, the Lead mobilizes support through the PHSA for summaries on the latest key issue research, the food security gateway website, policy advocacy, and policy and evaluation support material. All of this information is made available to funded communities. VCH's SMART Fund also supports organisational capacity building with all funded programs by providing training in planning and evaluation and other related topics of interest.

*VCH Grant Process*

Prior to releasing grants for projects, ActNow BC required the development of Food Security Community Action Plans which provided guidance for assessing the relevance of grant applications. Operating independently, each Health Authority determined the best means of administering funding. The CFAI's action plans and infrastructure look different across the province. VCH utilizes the SMART Fund, a community grants programme, to manage administration of CFAI funding to qualifying organisations. Based on population size, demographics and health status, amongst other assessment criteria, VCH disbursed the \$200,000 of funding between the following eight regions:

Richmond	Vancouver
Sea to Sky	Sunshine Coast
Power River	Bella Coola
Bella Bella	North Shore

Grant amounts differed depending on urban or rural locales.

In 2005-06, community-based CFAI committees from each region worked to submit a three year action plan which included an environmental scan, a food system assessment and gap analysis and a three-year action plan. Funding was often directed to community consultants who were selected by the local community food security committee to advance implementation of action plans. Agencies or bodies interested in securing funding submit an Outcome Measurement Framework (OMF) outlining intended inputs, activities and outputs. The OMFs also outline anticipated short, medium and long-term outcomes of activities. Outcomes are reviewed to align with the objectives of the CFAI, particularly in supporting food security for vulnerable populations.

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### *Funding Mechanism*

Initially, the VCH CFAI funding was allocated on an annual basis – with the first year’s funding committed to developing community action plans. Since 2008, funding has been allocated on a 3-year basis. Grant recipients must submit progress reports and update OMFs as a requirement of their continued funding.

The CFAI provides core funding to community agencies, which distinguishes it from many other funding mechanisms. Core funding allows grant recipients to hire a part-time coordinator who can build upon existing momentum surrounding food security in their communities. While core funding for community-based food security work is relatively scarce in British Columbia, examples of similar funding mechanisms exist elsewhere. For example, the United States National Institute of Food and Agriculture operates the Community Food Projects grants programme<sup>15</sup>. Since 1997, the programme has supported community organisations fighting hunger in the U.S. through Community Food Projects (\$125,000 in one year or \$300,000 over three years) and Planning Projects (\$25,000 one time grants). Similar projects providing core funding are rare in both Canada and the U.S.

### **Food Security and Vulnerable Populations**

The evaluation team reviewed recent literature on food security and vulnerability in BC and Canada (Dietitians of Canada, 2010; Vancouver Food Policy Council, 2009; Metro Vancouver, 2010; PHSA & ActNow BC; Tarasuk & Kirkpatrick, 2009 & 2011; Hamelin, Mercier & Bedard, 2008) and was struck by how little appears to be known about programming that works in terms of supporting long-term access to healthy food for vulnerable groups. It is known that some of the services offered by food banks are not appropriate, and there have been a few innovative programmes such as the BC Farmers’ Market Nutrition and Coupon Project, as well as evaluations of food banks (Popielarski & Cotugna, 2010; Praxis, 2010; Coyne & Associates, 2007). The literature reviewed confirms the conclusions of a 2010 study of food assistance for the vulnerable in Victoria, BC (Bocskai & Ostry):

*Studies have raised concerns about the effectiveness of community responses to hunger relief for poor and homeless people ... As in other Canadian cities, nonprofit agencies in Victoria are responding to food insecurity by offering a range of food and meal programs. These programs have arisen largely as ad hoc responses by nongovernmental agencies, in an effort to fill gaps left by retractions in social policy. The programs have remained under-investigated, so that their role in the overall system is neither well appreciated nor acknowledged .... Further research is urgently needed in other Canadian cities to increase understanding of the “de facto” system of meal provision for the poor and homeless. Only by documenting the characteristics, extent, and ways of operating this ad hoc system can we begin to develop dignified and appropriate policy solutions to this difficult food security issue.*

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15 <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/communityfoodprojects.cfm>

What kinds of community level capacity are needed to ensure dignified access to healthy food for vulnerable populations? The VCH CFAI has served as an incubator for the generation of alternative approaches to enable access to healthy food for vulnerable populations. The CFAI programme as a whole under PHSA could usefully explore the question of what programmes have worked best in supporting access to healthy food for vulnerable populations.<sup>16</sup>

This would tie in well with Strategy 4.1 of the Metro Vancouver Regional Food System Strategy (2011) which is: “Improve access to nutritious food among vulnerable groups.” This report (pp. 54-5) highlights a number of examples of current work in this area, including Meals to You, farmers’ pocket markets, food banks, training, and nutritional outreach programmes. It proposes a number of future actions, including:

- Support the development of community food centres like Toronto’s “The Stop”, where community members share and learn skills, including growing and cooking fresh foods and how to advocate for improved access to good food.
- Build social capacity by funding community facilitators to help residents in under-served neighbourhoods to identify their food needs and improve their skills.
- Develop guidelines for community gardens, kitchen facilities and other resources to improve food access and diets among households living in social housing.

The implications of the food security context for this evaluation are that, except in remote situations, it is difficult to attribute directly to the VCH CFAI community level results. Though as the evaluation notes below, one of the most important elements of the CFAI has been its early and catalytic funding. This leads the evaluation team to conclude that the VCH CFAI has made a significant contribution to food security. The evidence for this is presented below.

<sup>16</sup> Some respondents raised the possibility of having healthy food available at the first point of contact for some vulnerable groups (e.g. women’s shelters or health clinics located in low income households), as individuals referred to the food bank don’t always make it there.





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## 4. Analysis of evaluation findings

The CFAI has helped catalyze hundreds of classes, workshops, celebrations, community garden projects, community kitchens, partnerships and learning events for thousands of people in rural and urban communities in the VCH region. It is difficult to aptly capture the energy and full achievements that have been seen among CFAI programmes.

Furthermore, the VCH CFAI has been operating in eight communities with drastically varied cultural, social, economic and geographic contexts. Programming has been designed to best support the unique needs of each community. The intricate relationship between context and programme impacts cannot be adequately summarized in this regional evaluation.

With these considerations in mind, we have framed our evaluation of the VCH CFAI results around common parameters: the four objectives of the CFAI. There is good practice evident in all of the four component areas. There are also areas where the evaluation team feels the CFAI can be strengthened, noted in the recommendations.

There is significant overlap between each objective area, particularly in discussing community capacity building which is connected to knowledge, skills and policy development. To provide clarity we identify the indicators utilized to evaluate each objective area.

Having said this, there are numerous intangibles in evaluating the vast array of programming across communities. Feature boxes are utilized to highlight some of these more subjective and local observations.

Finally, it is important to consider the cumulative nature of each objective area. As previously discussed, the CFAI conceives of food security as a continuum where objectives build upon each other. For example increased awareness about food and healthy eating will be a necessary step before increasing reliable access to healthy food. Increased understanding about what food security is will be necessary before being able to get involved in policy development, and so on. This consideration weaves in and out of the evaluative narratives that follow.

## 4.1 Access to local healthy food

The evaluation covered two sub-themes in this objective area: general access to local healthy food and access to local healthy food by vulnerable populations.

### **Food access outcomes and indicators**

Intended outcomes:

1. Increased access to local healthy food, particularly for vulnerable populations; and
2. Expanded availability of safe, nutritious, culturally appropriate foods produced in environmentally sensitive way to communities in VCH.

Indicators utilized to evaluate whether CFAI has improved access to local healthy food include:

- Respondents' satisfaction with food access programmes;
- Type and number of programmes designed to facilitate access to local healthy food;
- Amount of food harvested and distributed; and
- Number of people participating in food access programmes.

### **Effectiveness of efforts to increase access to healthy food**

Stakeholder interview respondents reported that the CFAI has increased access to local healthy food. The majority of the CFAI supported programming led to increased access, for example community gardens, urban farms, fruit tree pruning and gleaning projects, vegetable gleaning projects, recovery of food from retail outlets, bulk buying clubs, community kitchens, festivals and garden tours, and cultural programming around food security. The range of programming can be found in Figure 4 which includes programming that provides direct access to food only. The most common activities are community gardens, community kitchens and capacity building around cooking and food preservation.

Figure 4 Types of programmes in 2010/11 that support access to local healthy food

Community organisation	Community garden	Urban farm	Fruit tree projects or fruit gleaning	Donations to food bank	Garden tour/ garden training	Community kitchen/skill building workshop	Bulk Buying, CSA, Food Boxes**	Pocket market or farmers market**
Edible Garden Project, North Vancouver	x	x	x	x	x	x		
Bella Coola Sustainable Agriculture Society	x		x		x	x		
Grandview Woodlands Food Connection	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House*					x	x		
Bella Bella Hailika'as Heiltsuk Health Centre	x				x	x		
Sunshine Coast One Straw Society	x		x	x	x	x		x
Powell River Employment Program Society	x				x	x	x	
Richmond Food Security Society	x	x		x	x	x		x
Squamish Climate Action Network	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
<b># of Programs</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>

\*The Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House is an important exception in this figure. Access to food programming is a significant part of the Right to Food program. For example, the Banana Beat (teams circulating the neighborhood providing residents with free bananas) and roving community kitchen (an outreach program that provides smoothies at various locations) are access programs that represent direct responses to the needs of the community. These programs emphasize community outreach and are philosophically quite different from other access programs.

\*\* Also, direct access food activities like farmers' markets and good food boxes are operating in many of VCH's communities. The measure here indicates which CFIA-funded projects are integrally involved in the coordination and operation of these activities in their community.

Interview participants were quick to observe that direct increases in access to healthy food were just one form of increasing access. Indirect forms of increasing access include:

- **Providing information, skill building, support and education** – Programmes on specific topics such as nutrition, cooking, preserving (e.g., sauerkraut, kimchi), and preparation of specific vegetables (e.g. Swiss Chard, kale, leafy greens) were identified as key to increasing access. Other types of access included activities to teach youth about traditional cuisine. Some respondents also mentioned the impact of 'Food Maps' in helping people identify local/affordable buying opportunities.

- **Increasing local food production** – An increased interest in gardening, container planting, berry picking, farming of sheep, goats and chickens as well as increased connections with local farmers have made sources of local food more numerous.
- **Improved networking and partnerships** – Several respondents made a connection between the development of community relationships and access to fresh food. For example, community meal programmes have benefited from an increase in donations of fresh fruit from harvest gleaning programmes. Bear Aware, a pre-existing Sea to Sky programme that coordinates public fruit harvests to reduce the number of bears visiting human areas to forage for berries and fruit, now collaborates with the local CFAI coordinator and donates fruit to social support agencies. Participation by the CFAI coordinators in network meetings (e.g. Food Action Network, Area Services Team) have also improved food access.
- **Multiplier effect** – Numerous food access programmes were initiated through CFAI funds but have since taken on a life of their own. For example, the Grandview Woodland Food Connection's Pandora Park project has spun off a large number of new initiatives and has a vibrant management board and garden community steering such works. Spin-off projects may not be part of the CFAI, but they work to achieve the CFAI objective to increase access to healthy local food.

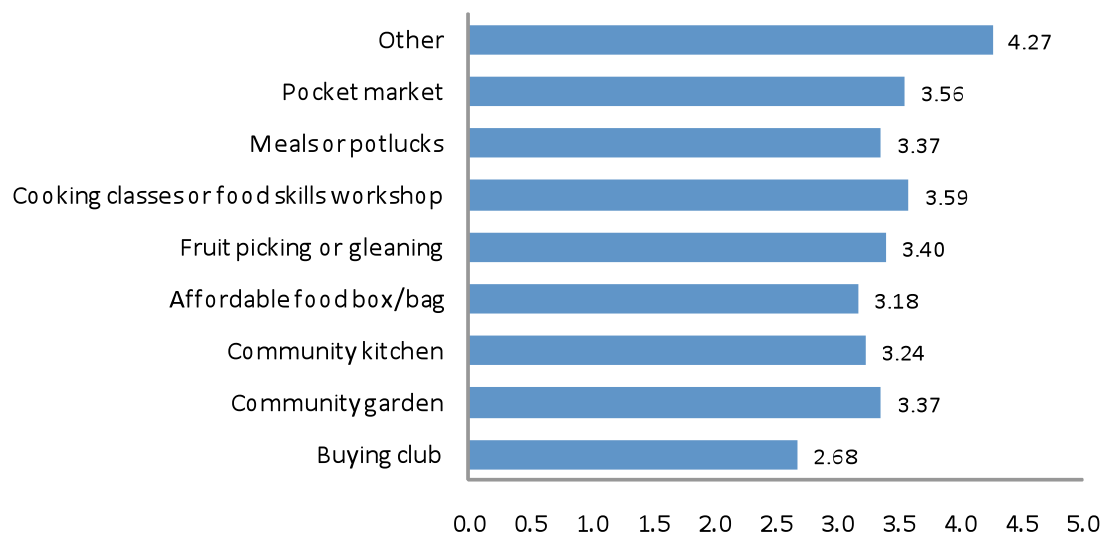
The average rating on the effectiveness of CFAI in supporting access to healthy food was 4.0 (*i.e., good*) on the 5.0 point scale used in the evaluation.<sup>17</sup> Two interview respondents rated this area as less than satisfactory. Four respondents declined response.

Survey respondents were also positive about increased access to healthy food, though with less certainty. More than half (56%) of survey respondents thought their local CFAI-funded programme had increased access to healthy food; 38 percent were not sure. The remaining 6 percent did not perceive any increase in access.

Web-survey participants who did see an increase in access were asked to identify which activities led to increased access to food on a five point scale, where 1 was "to a very small extent", 3 was "somewhat" and 5 was "to a very great extent". Respondents could also choose "not at all" which counted for 0. As shown in Figure 5, almost all the activities were rated similarly between 3.0 and 3.5. At 3.5, the highest rated type of activity was "cooking classes or food skills workshop".

<sup>17</sup> In the five point scale: 1 = poor; 2 = unsatisfactory; 3 = satisfactory; 4 = good; 5 = outstanding

Figure 5 Survey respondents' average ratings of the extent to which some CFAI activities have led to increased access to food in their community on a five-point scale



Survey respondents rated their overall satisfaction with the CFAI's efforts to increase access to food at *4.2 out of 5*, suggesting participants were very satisfied. In comparison, the 2008 Provincial CFAI evaluation found that programme deliverers did not rate access to local healthy food any higher after implementation of the CFAI programmes, but community facilitators identified increased access and availability of healthy foods as one of the most important outcomes of the CFAI.

All of the CFAI supported communities have developed community gardens. Box A provides a review of the importance of community garden plots in the North Shore.

#### **Box A: Access to local health food: community gardens in North Vancouver**

In North Vancouver the evaluation team visited three gardens and held a focus group with community gardeners. The main purpose of these gardens is to educate the local community, including some low income groups, as to how to grow food. Gardens promoted on the North Shore include the Queen Mary School Community Garden in North Vancouver City, which is located next to a school attended by many children from lower income families and has been used as a teaching resource, and a garden in North Vancouver. In both of these gardens the CFAI supported Edible Garden Project is farming a third of the plots and the produce is donated to centres that provide free food for the vulnerable, such as the Harvest Project. In 2010, 3,000 lbs of fresh local produce was donated. Other gardens supported include raised vegetable beds in a social housing unit, and a garden growing vegetables, many indigenous plants, and a Medicine Wheel on the Squamish Nation reserve, mainly through the work of volunteer youth.

Funding for these gardens has come from a number of sources, but CFAI funding has been catalytic as it has brought together stakeholders and ensured the provision of technical expertise. Community gardens are an important symbol of the ways in which communities are coming together to revive local food security.

#### **Food access for vulnerable<sup>18</sup> populations**

Substantial amounts of food are being accessed by vulnerable populations because of the CFAI. We examined this in detail in our two case studies on the North Shore and Bella Coola.

In Bella Coola approximately one tonne (2,200 pounds) of fruit is distributed annually to vulnerable populations through the fruit tree project, a recovery project where fruit tree owners allow fruit pickers to access trees they would not otherwise have picked. The fruit tree project in Bella Coola also demonstrated the ways in which food recovery has been tied into wider community issues. The Bella Coola Valley Sustainable Agriculture Society developed a strategic alliance with Bear Aware, as picking excess fruit meant less danger from bears and fewer fruit trees being cut down to deter bears.

<sup>18</sup> Vulnerable populations are those made vulnerable by financial circumstances or place of residence; health, age or functional or developmental status; ability to communicate effectively; presence of chronic or terminal illness or disability; or personal characteristics. These populations may be less able than others to safeguard their own needs and interests adequately and face barriers to accessing support and care not experienced by other population groups. These populations may incur different health outcomes traceable to unwarranted disparities in their care or stemming from special needs for or barriers to care.



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On the North Shore, the Harvest Project is a recipient of fresh fruit and vegetables from the local fruit tree project and community gardens facilitated by CFAI funding. The Harvest Project keeps detailed records of fresh food donated which show donations of some 2,500 pounds per month for about five months a year. Vulnerable groups accessing this fresh food noted the importance of access in verbal feedback and letters to the Harvest Project. The CFAI has also supported increased food recovery by the Harvest Project from retail stores. In addition, the Harmony Garden developed by the Squamish Nation provided 250 pounds of potatoes to their Elders' Centre in 2010.

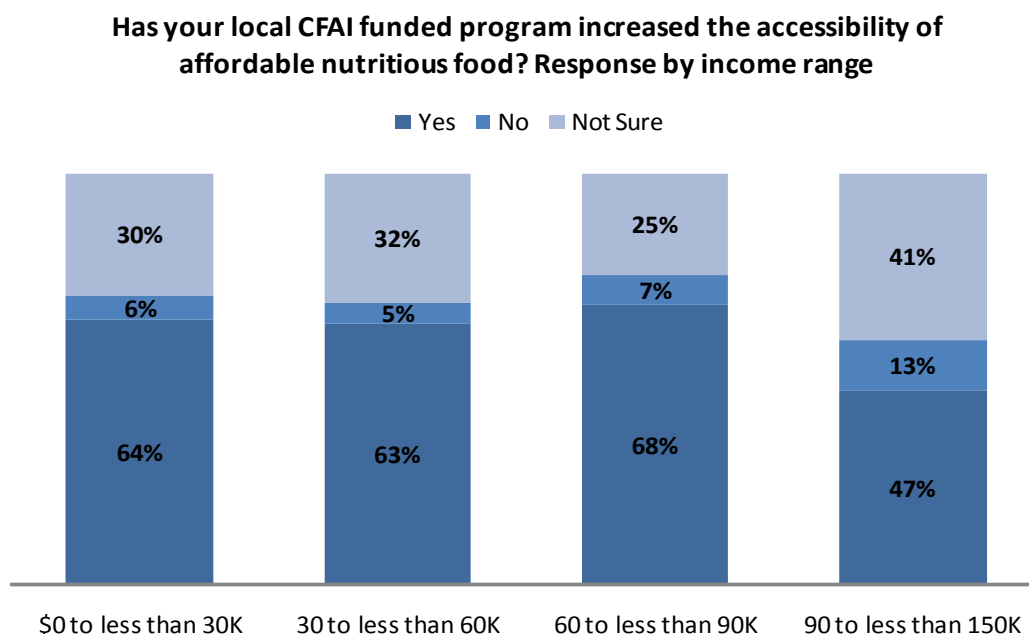
Interview respondents named several vulnerable groups who benefit from greater access to food in their communities. Groups mentioned included elders and others who cannot harvest their own food, elementary school children and their families, members of specific communities such as First Nations, Latin American and Vietnamese. Several respondents mentioned that low-income community members benefit from bulk food buying clubs.

In remote communities with few grocery stores, respondents applauded alternative approaches to delivering fresh food for adding much needed variety to community food resources. In one- or two-grocery store towns, consumers are often 'captive audiences'. This is particularly true for low-income households without the means to travel further to get better food. An interview participant from Bella Coola identified working with the commercial food sector as "an area for future programming" and that it is "worth working on a business plan with local stores". This type of work is already being done in some communities.

Almost all interview participants (93%) felt there had been adequate focus on increasing access to food for vulnerable populations, though many emphasized the need to be realistic about what can be accomplished with available funds. Some noted that while the effort is being made, it is difficult to get people who most need increased access to healthy food to participate. Participants identified barriers to participation including poverty, lack of transport, childcare, awareness and trust.

Those who reported a gross annual household income of less than \$30,000 were just as likely to have noticed an increase in the accessibility of food as those with higher incomes (Figure 6). The smallest perceived increase in the accessibility of affordable nutritious food was reported by the highest earners – those who presumably are not participating in programmes geared towards increasing access to food for low-income households.

Figure 6 Survey respondents' perceptions of increased access to food by income



Findings indicate that the CFAI has successfully increased food access for vulnerable populations. With limited resources, however, some stakeholders and coordinators identified challenges in meeting the full range of support needs as identified in the food security continuum (p.13) for vulnerable populations.

The evaluation team observed that in some cases programming has not fully transitioned from a service delivery mode (short term relief, stage 1 of the continuum) to an empowerment mode (capacity building, stage 2 of the continuum)<sup>19</sup>. The service delivery mode, for example donating community grown food to food banks and shelters, does not ensure a change in the current food system that reproduces food insecurity for certain groups (redesign, stage 3 of the continuum). Many communities operate both service delivery and empowerment modes simultaneously, which can be challenging.

Respondents provided some examples of how this balance can be challenging:

- The immediate need to feed people can be so great and important that it consumes a great deal of resources at the cost of long-term capacity building programmes;

<sup>19</sup> This evaluation differentiates between a service delivery mode and an empowerment/ rights based mode. By the former we mean a programme mode where vulnerable populations are passive recipients of external support, e.g. as is the case with some food banks. By the latter we mean a programme mode whereby vulnerable groups are active participants in the making of society, for example through education on the right to food, or training on how to grow food and move towards self-sufficiency. The evaluation also recognises that it is not always possible to make a clear-cut distinction between these two modes.

- Sometimes efforts to bridge from service delivery programmes to capacity building programmes are not successful because there is a lack of clarity about what people want (for example, new immigrant residents of one social housing unit with a community garden were growing vegetables that are unfamiliar to them and were not used) or because the vulnerable often also experience “time poverty” and lack the time to contribute to longer-term projects; and
- Interested members of the general public fill seats in empowerment / rights based programmes that were designed for vulnerable groups.

There is limited knowledge in Canada of how to develop replicable programming that supports access to local healthy food and empowers vulnerable populations. Though there were challenges, several CFAI-funded programmes are forging new approaches to bridging service delivery into empowered food access. The following examples are provided:

- At the Downtown Eastside (DTES) Neighbourhood House Society food as a human right is a central platform. They have a Food Charter on the right to food, which notes: “Our Food System mirrors the larger society in its historic reliance on the charity mode.... But the charity mode isn’t sustainable, nor is it reliable, with food only available at certain hours and the quality often questionable.” The charter focuses on dignified access to food through improved livelihoods. The Society operates a weekly in-house community kitchen that combines food preparation, grocery shopping, story-telling and education about both food and other social topics. The other community kitchen is mobile – a roving monthly cart that circulates preparing nutritional smoothies on the Tuesday before social assistance recipients get cheques. Participants get both healthy food and opportunities to learn.<sup>20</sup>
- Buen Provecho! at Grandview Woodland Food Connection (GWFC) brings newcomer Latin American youth together with Latin American elders to share traditional foods and cooking. They learn and eat together and their recipes and stories are published in a bilingual cookbook so the knowledge is passed on. This project received excellent reviews and in 2009 was featured in a photo-documentary exhibit at the Britannia Art Gallery. The GWFC has also run food preservation workshops with low income seniors, food preservation workshops with mental health service users and community gardens targeting low income apartment dwellers. Buen Provecho! was most recently funded by another source.
- A Squamish garden plot created with the first year of CFAI funding is now cared for, harvested and used by the homeless centre nearby. The garden is not just a source of food, it is a place for learning and activity for patrons of the centre.

<sup>20</sup> Many other CFAI-funded communities are also utilizing community kitchens and various interpretations of this concept (i.e. GWFC’s diabetes focused community kitchen) to reach out to specific vulnerable groups.

Interview participants recognised that the CFAI was striking a balance between service delivery and empowerment modes. One stakeholder interviewed, for example, explained: “People in food security are all immersed in different issues and perspectives. It takes time to all come to the same point. CFAI tries to balance all of the perspectives and more”.

A further issue raised in interviews was whether targeting by CFAI supported programmes within the overall vulnerable population group was adequate. A recent BC Ministry of Health review<sup>21</sup> found that certain categories of vulnerable groups were likely to be more food insecure, including women in the lowest income decile, the elderly, and recent immigrants with limited proficiency in English. This report strongly emphasizes that these groups should be at the forefront of strategies to improve food access.

Almost all interview respondents (93%) answered the question: “Has there been an adequate focus on increasing access to food for vulnerable populations?” positively, but in their comments several qualified this positive response by noting that seniors, First Nations, persons with disabilities, and new immigrants were not adequately covered. Respondents noted that well-known barriers such as lack of income, cost of transportation or cost of child care, worked against participation of vulnerable groups. The evaluation team did identify considerable good practice in this area, for example, Aboriginal youth have begun a food garden at the sharing farm in Terra Nova in Richmond, and in Powell River a new community garden in Sliammon has started with the Tla’Amin Community Health and the Ahms Tah Ow School.

It is important to note in speaking about access to food for vulnerable populations that the VCH CFAI funding in this area is not adequate to change data at the Health Service Delivery levels at which the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) is administered. Despite the small amounts of funding made available for increasing access to food through CFAI, this evaluation found funding is making a marked increase in helping people eat better.

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21 Ministry of Health (2011) Evidence Review for the BC Food Security Core Public Health Functions. Prepared for the Ministry of Health Services by Elietha Bocskei



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## 4.2 Building community capacity

Community capacity building can be defined as enhancing the skills and assets that make it possible for communities to identify and manage their own health needs. Strategies to build community capacity recognise and enhance the expertise and participation of the community and involve the development of new networks and contacts within and amongst communities. Self-help, peer support, mentoring, mutual aid, skill sharing, partnership, coalition and network building are all strategies that characterize community capacity.

The concept of community food security relies on residents of a community having the skills, resources, knowledge and drive to ensure all people have a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritious diet through a sustainable food system that improves self-reliance and social justice. Building social capital has to be a key part of food security work, particularly where a central objective of a programme is to support access to healthy food for the vulnerable.

### **Capacity building outcomes and indicators**

Intended outcomes:

1. Increased community capacity to animate food security activities, including public engagement and volunteerism;
2. Strengthened leadership and partnership for food security, including partnerships between food security groups and local school boards, civic organisations, agricultural groups, food suppliers and others to build cooperation;
3. Funding and resources leveraged to support strengthened food security; and
4. A variety of vehicles acting to address community food security issues.

Several aspects of community capacity were analyzed in this evaluation. Indicators utilized to evaluate whether the CFAI has helped build community capacity include:

- Perception of increased community capacity to address local food security;
- Types of community capacity building activities;
- Participation in capacity development activities and applying new knowledge;
- Respondents' satisfaction with community capacity building activities;
- Strength and type of networks developed;
- Additional funds leveraged in relation to the CFAI;
- Volunteerism and value of volunteer work; and
- Enhanced programmes and spin-offs or new community initiatives.



## Effectiveness of Efforts to Increase Capacity Building

Interview participants who were asked if they had observed increased capacity to address food security in their communities agreed that community capacity had grown since the implementation of the CFAI. Respondents mentioned increase in the following areas:

- **Capacity of organisations, institutions and businesses in the community to address food security:** Teachers have developed food security lesson plans and course materials, local shelters and service agencies have incorporated food security into their mandates, restaurants and grocery stores carry locally produced foodstuffs.
- **Capacity of residents to grow and process their own food:** Through skills, knowledge, exchange of information, increased involvement in food-related activities, community gardens, awareness about food preservation, seed saving and gardening and development of a gardening community for ongoing support.
- **Capacity to develop and strengthen partnerships, collaboration and relationships:** There are collaborative relationships between different groups; links between food security and other related issues are expanding beyond a narrow constituency. Networks are strengthening. One respondent noted that the CFAI shows that VCH has a commitment to food security and connecting food to public health: “VCH is a big part of the food systems equation.... If you’re not including food as part of analysis then you’re missing a big part of the basic public health picture there.”
- **Capacity within CFAI-funded organisations:** Increasing project management capacity, governance capacity, fundraising (e.g. employment related federal grant, fundraising events) in the CFAI-funded organisations.
- **Leadership development:** Developing leadership roles for community volunteers, youth, and seniors. Also development of leadership in community coordinators. About half of survey respondents (53%) reported feeling more capable of leading community food security work thanks to their involvement.
- **Spin-off and support:** The VCH CFAI has served as a support to and catalyst for other organisations and initiatives (e.g. Transition Town organisation, Bear Aware Programme, food charters) and has driven increasing visioning and monitoring.

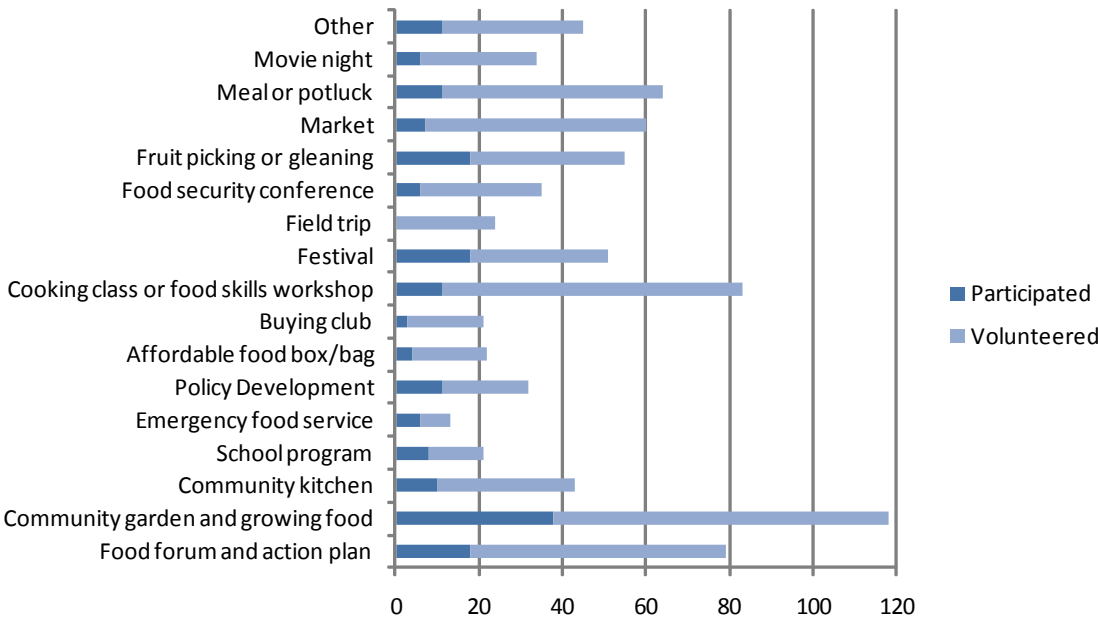
One participant emphasized that capacity building would be more effective with more financial support: “We’ve got a lot of good people who have a lot of skill and good ideas, but it’s having the actual funding to get these projects and initiatives off the ground that’s a real problem.”



Interview participants gave VCH's CFAI programmes an average rating of 4.1 (good) out of 5.0 when asked to rate effectiveness in supporting community capacity building. Though confident in the development of new and stronger community capacity, participants were divided as to whether food security work was sustainable without the CFAI. Most emphasized that the CFAI has cumulative effects – not just funding programmes but supporting greater systemic change – and that retracting the funding now would either slow or stop the pace of change. As one participant stated: “There will always be people to do it without funding, however, it would be an error to assume that five years of funding will get a community far enough to be doing something forever. So much can continue to happen.”

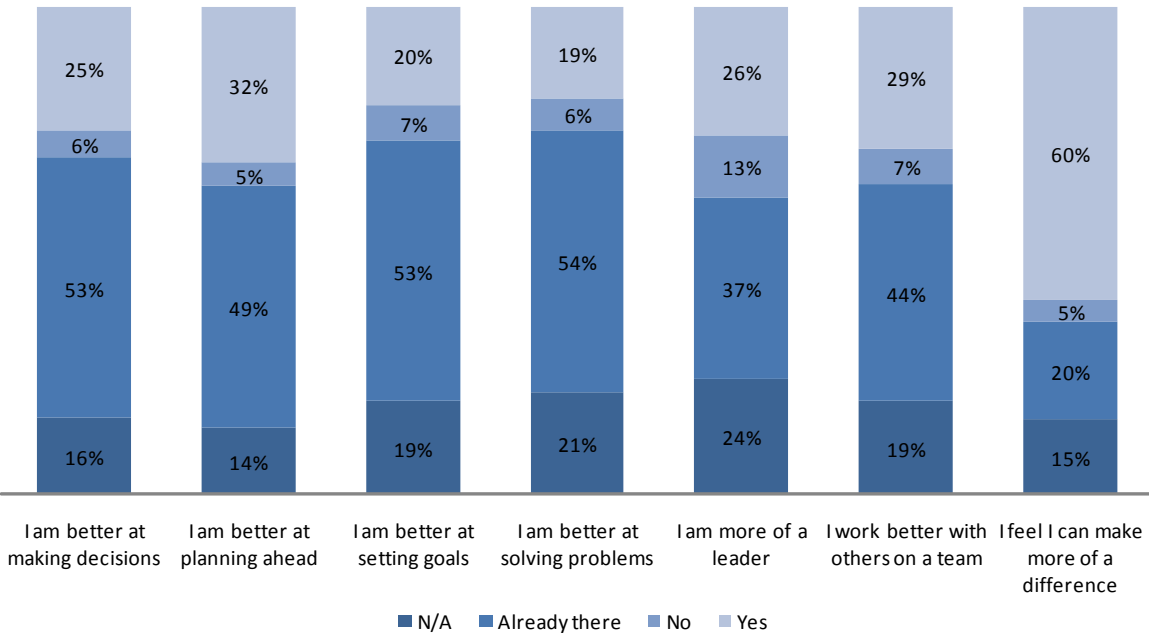
Food forums, conferences, public speaking events and movie nights have all helped people increase their understanding of food security and food systems. Garden tours, community kitchens, cooking skills workshops, gardening and seed saving workshops, farmers’ markets, harvest calendars and maps to local food producers have helped people increase their ability to make healthy and sustainable food choices. Festivals, school workshops and projects, community gardens and intergenerational/cross-cultural food sharing events have engaged residents as volunteers and active participants, building their capacity to organize and strengthen community relationships. Survey respondents were involved in numerous different activities either as volunteer or participant. Figure 7 highlights the rate of participating in different activities by respondents.

Figure 7 Types of activities in which survey respondents participated



The most common activity in which survey respondents took part was community gardening and growing food, followed by cooking classes and food skills workshops. Participants and volunteers who responded to the survey were engaged in these activities in many ways, including participating in activities (89%), helping invite others (47%), organizing activities (31%), and getting involved in decision-making (34%). As a result of participation in CFAI-funded food security activities, several respondents felt they had gained new organisational skills. Figure 8 shows new capacities that survey respondents attributed to their participation in CFAI-funded activities. About one third felt they had become better at making decisions, planning ahead, setting goals, solving problems, working with others and being a leader. Almost two thirds (60%) felt they could make more of a difference.

Figure 8 Capacities developed and attributed to CFAI activities by survey respondents



The success of community capacity building activities owes much to strong partnerships and networks between different agencies. Community coordinators had reached out to many different community partners, including:

- Schools and school boards;
- Other food security-related organisations;
- Municipal departments;
- Farmers and food producers;
- Health care providers;
- Social and environmental non-profit societies;
- Local businesses; and
- City councils.

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The majority (90%) of interview participants were certain local networks were stronger as a result of the CFAI funding. In describing the strengths of networks, participants were asked to utilize the Gadjia scale (see Appendix E) as a measuring stick in describing the integration they had observed within local networks. Most participants saw their local networks as moving from stages of cooperation in food security work towards partnering and merging. Moves towards increased integration are hopeful signs for the longevity of food security initiatives in VCH's region. Strengthened networks promote resource sharing, clear communication and long-term commitments to achieve shared goals.

Richmond's Food Security Society (RFSS) presents several strong examples of strengthened partnerships and the benefits of resource sharing. RFSS works closely with partners from the City of Richmond's Parks Department, the Richmond Fruit Tree Project and the Richmond Schoolyard Society to manage the Terra Nova Sharing Farm and adjacent school and community gardens. The site has become a vibrant place for learning about gardening, local food, healthy eating and community development. It has a fully equipped industrial kitchen, outdoor eating and learning area, First Nations garden, a large greenhouse, community garden beds, cob oven, farming equipment and gardening tools. Outside the farm, RFSS has helped connect emergency food providers who are already working to serve the most needy. The 2010 Richmond Community Meals Report catalogued where and when community meals were available. Opportunities for increased efficiency were identified and agencies met to discuss challenges and ideas on how to improve meal service.

#### *Funds Leveraged*

The evaluation team sought to assess the extent to which partnerships, fundraising, donations, volunteer work and other contributions added to the value of the CFAI programme in VCH's communities. Two sources were used to determine the amount of funding that projects leveraged: primary information gathered through communication with community coordinators and secondary information collected from progress reports. Primary information on funding leveraged was only collected from currently CFAI-funded organisations. Progress reports for previously funded organisations were also reviewed.

Furthermore, some of the funds identified during this review are held in partnership with community collaborators. For example, funds leveraged for the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House's Kitchen Tables Project are shared in partnership with other organisations in the downtown eastside. We have included shared funds in this calculation for two reasons: firstly, many food security projects are collaborative in nature and secondly, because they serve to promote increased community food security as per CFAI's objectives. With the above considerations in mind, Figure 9 provides an estimate for funds leveraged in all communities since 2006.

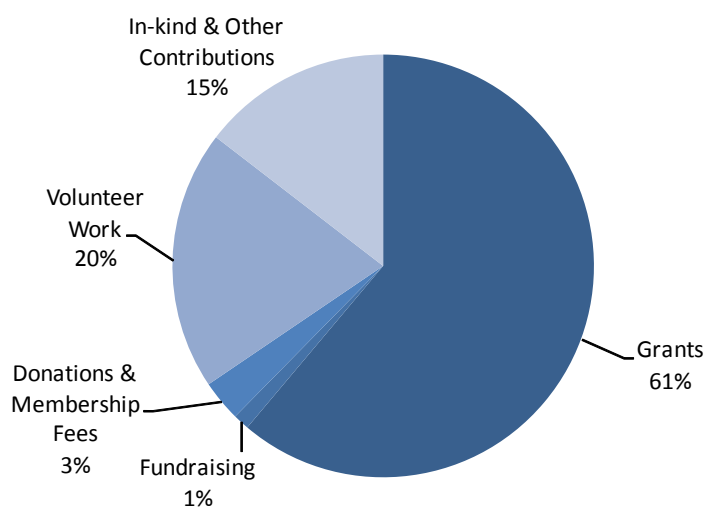
Figure 9 Estimate of funds leveraged in all communities

Fiscal Year	Funds leveraged	VCH CFAI funding	Ratio
2011/12 (to June 2011)	\$328,849.00	\$200,000.00	3.3 : 2
2010/11	\$451,793.75	\$200,000.00	4.5 : 2
2009/10	\$163,348.75	\$200,000.00	1.6 : 2
2008/09	\$121,204.13	\$200,000.00	1.2 : 2
2007/08	\$65,465.00	\$200,000.00	0.7 : 2
2006/07	\$2,416.00	\$200,000.00	0.01 : 1
<b>Total funding</b>	<b>\$1,133,076.63</b>	<b>\$1,200,000.00</b>	<b>1.1 : 1.2</b>
Average funding per year (last 6 years)	\$188,846.11		
Average funding per year (last 5 years)	\$226,132.13		
Average funding per year (last 4 years)	\$266,298.91		
<b>Average funding per year (last 3 years)</b>	<b>\$314,663.83</b>		
Average funding per year (last 2 years)	\$390,321.38		

In total, the estimated value of funds leveraged in the VCH communities since 2006 is **\$1,133,076.63**. We see a remarkable increase in the value of funds leveraged as years pass. This observation likely reflects the data collection challenges already identified. It may also suggest an increase in mobilization and organisation in VCH's CFAI programmes.

In calculating the above estimate, four types of funding were included: grants, fundraising, donations and/or membership fees, volunteer work and other in-kind services. Figure 10 shows the sources of funds leveraged and what share is attributable to each source.

Figure 10 Share of funds leveraged in all VCH-funded communities by source



- **Grants:** Many programmes were securing grants in addition to CFAI funding. Most funds (61%) were leveraged through grants, the majority of which were one-time allotments for specific programmes or projects. Coordinators sometimes, but rarely, secured additional core funding from municipalities or local health services.
- **Fundraising:** Fundraising took many forms, but accounted for the smallest percentage of funds leveraged (1%). A few communities coordinated fundraisers. Several fundraised at events. One utilized the online fundraising tool Green Zebra.
- **Donations and/or membership fees:** Three percent (3%) of funds were raised through donations or membership fees.
- **In-kind value of volunteer work:** The in-kind value of volunteer work accounted for the second-largest source of funds leveraged (20%). Volunteer contributions are also measured for volunteers who responded to the survey (see Box B).
- **In-kind value of other services:** The in-kind value of other services was a significant source of value to programmes (15%). Types of services included work space, reception and financial administration, printing and photocopying, guest lectures, meals, hosting, seeds, equipment, venues and other forms of support.

VCH's CFAI also served as a catalyst for other initiatives. The North Shore's Edible Garden Project contributes small grants through the CFAI-funding to community groups who are working on food security projects. While all grant recipients received financial support, 40 percent also noted having received in-kind support. In describing the difference this support made, a resident of a housing complex that received garden training explained it "gave residents a good base of knowledge to proceed so that the gardens were and continue to be a success." Another spoke to the broad impact of funding: "The local food movement has taken off since we have been able to bring the awareness to it thanks to this grant."

## Capacity Building for Vulnerable Populations

The majority of interview participants (81%) who were asked if they thought there was greater inclusion of vulnerable populations in community capacity building agreed. Significantly fewer (26%) interview participants thought vulnerable populations had gained greater voice and more confidence as a result, while the majority could only see partial change or did not feel comfortable answering on behalf of vulnerable peoples. Several thought the voices which were being heard were those of existing leaders. Respondents said concerted effort needs to be made to reach out to vulnerable groups: "...without that it is too easy to preach to the choir and just include people who are just like ourselves." The role of the community coordinator was thought to be critical to bridging individuals from the role of food collector, to participant and then to organizer and owner of a particular project or initiative.

**Box B: Value of Survey Respondents' Volunteer Work**

In total, 91 volunteers responded to the survey. The table below outlines the estimated hours that volunteer respondents reported donating.

# Volunteer Hours	TOTAL	%
Under 4	12	13%
4 to 40	32	35%
40 to 80	14	15%
80 or more	27	30%
Skipped question	6	7%
Total # responses	91	100%

The SMART Fund values volunteer time at a rate of \$13 per hour. Assuming respondents reported the lowest number of hours in their category, the value of volunteer hours donated by survey respondents amounts to at least \$37,180. If respondents actual hours volunteered were the highest of their category, the value of volunteered time comes to \$66,768. This is only the value of hours contributed by survey respondents.

Response Category (# hours)	Lowest # Hours in Category	Highest # Hours in Category	Total # Responses	Lowest # total hours	Highest # total hours	Lowest value at \$13/hr	Highest value at \$13/hr
under 4	1	3	12	12	36	\$156	\$468
4 to 40	4	40	32	128	1280	\$1,664	\$16,640
40 to 80	40	80	14	560	1120	\$7,280	\$14,560
80+	80	100*	27	2160	2700	\$28,080	\$35,100
*For example only.				2860	5136	\$37,180	\$66,768

This does not account for the volunteer hours contributed to the CFAI by coordinators themselves who, from our perception, are contributing well over remunerated hours. We therefore suggest this figure under-represents the value of volunteer contribution.





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## 4.3 Influencing policy development

### **Policy Development Outcomes and Indicators**

Intended outcomes:

1. Local communities implement food security policies in concert with government initiatives (federal, provincial, regional or municipal);
2. Community members will become more involved in food security policy processes and there will be increased community capacity to lobby for and implement food security policies; and
3. Food security becomes integrated with other policies and regulatory tools.

Indicators used to evaluate the CFAI's effectiveness to increase the development and use of policies to support food security in VCH communities include:

- Number and type of policy work about food security with various community leaders, including municipal governments, First Nations governments, schools and school boards, hospitals and health care centres, and non-profit organisations;
- Number and popularity of food forums and other policy events;
- Respondents' perceptions of increased capacity to lobby and develop policy; and
- Participants' and volunteers' levels of interest and understanding about food policy.

### **Effectiveness of Efforts to Increase Policy to Support Food Security**

The following list identifies the types of policy work that have been conducted in CFAI-funded communities since the inception of the initiative in 2005:

- In the District of North Vancouver there are now four references to food security and urban agriculture in the Official Community Plan;
- In the Downtown Eastside a Food Charter has been created (The Right to Food in a Low-income Neighbourhood). The target: that 75 percent of DTES residents, participants, funders, and policy makers use the Food Charter in their work;
- In the Sunshine Coast the Food Policy Council held its first meeting in 2010 and is identifying relevant approaches to food policy in coordination with Powell River;

- In Powell River, reporting to the Mayor and councilors occurs at monthly meetings. Two city councilors are receiving minutes and updates from Food Security Coalition;
- In Vancouver, food forums serve to gather community members to talk about food security, food systems and the role of policy. The community coordinator sits on numerous councils and boards and helps organize numerous policy events;
- In Squamish a Food Charter has been endorsed by the community with 300 signatures, and adopted by council;
- In Richmond partnerships have been formed between the CFAI-funded Richmond Food Security Society (RFSS), past funding recipient the Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project, Kwantlen College's Institute for Sustainable Horticulture, the City of Richmond and VanCity to establish the Richmond Farm School. Members of City Council sit on the board of the RFSS and the society has made presentations to Council. Two food security conferences have also been coordinated; and
- In Bella Coola and Powell River there has been promotion of local livestock farming through exemption from the Provincial meat regulations (see Box C).

In addition to the above, all communities were required to develop a food system assessment before receiving funding from the CFAI. Some communities have utilized these plans as the groundwork for policy-relevant communications with municipalities.

As can be seen from the list of policy work, little of the local policy work is specific to vulnerable populations. Also, most is carried out at the local level and often in relation to Official Community Plans and food charters. There was also some work enforcing provincial guidelines related to supporting consumption of healthy food in schools. Some policy issues, like hospital purchasing, is seen as too large a challenge for local coordinators but is being addressed by the VCH Regional Food Security Lead.

The VCH Regional Food Security Lead helps address policy issues raised by communities at a broader level. The Lead has participated in regional and provincial tables supporting several policy areas, including: meat inspection regulations, hospital food purchasing, food security in social housing, advocacy regarding funding networks and the need for public agencies to support food security. The Regional Food Security Lead also actively presents to municipal council members across the region. Community coordinators communicate directly with the Lead to discuss issues and opportunities that require support or a regional approach. The Lead is there to support community coordinators in policy development and to link regional policy issues with broader levels of government. This is the strength of a provincial programme with regional support.

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**Box C: Promoting food security through exemptions to the Provincial meat regulations in Bella Coola and Powell River**


Introduced in 2004, B.C.'s Meat Inspection Regulation was intended to ensure food safety, strengthen the meat processing sector, and rebuild consumer and international confidence in B.C. The Regulations meant that small scale livestock producers needed to send their livestock to licensed abattoirs for slaughter; for example, under the new regulations, the nearest licensed abattoir to Powell River was in Courtenay, an hour away by ferry. This threatened the livelihood of many small scale livestock farmers across the Province.

The community coordinator in Bella Coola connected with other communities and made presentations to the BC Food Processors Association, which was managing the meat regulation transition process. Bella Coola farmers were also brought in to the provincial level discussions. A new graduated licensing approach was announced in April 2010 including two new levels of slaughter operation for provincially licensed facilities:

- Retail Sales permits direct producer sales to local consumers and to retail establishments and restricts production to between one and 25 animals.
- Direct Sales permits direct producer sales to local consumers and restricts production to between one and 10 animals.

Nine remote communities were eligible for the new licensing, including Powell River and Bella Coola. In Bella Coola the new regulations have meant that it is potentially profitable to continue pig farming, meaning that there will be a source of local meat. As one farmer explained, to run a local farm it is necessary to farm holistically, which means making a profit on livestock which supply manure for growing crops, with livestock in turn eating excess production of crops. So the changes to the meat regulations will also support the growth of local farming as a whole.

Results from the survey of participants and volunteers revealed an increase in interest around food security policy. While 44 percent of respondents had been involved in advocating for or developing food policy, 61 percent said they have become more interested in developing food security policies. Furthermore, 43 percent of respondents reported feeling more capable of lobbying for or developing food security policies as a result of their participation in CFAI-funded programmes. Though in response to this same question, 41 percent of respondents said they were not sure. Uncertainty may be indicative of the need for more education about what food policies are and how they can be developed.



Of the respondents interviewed at community level who responded to the question: “Has CFAI funding helped support development and use of policy that supports community food security?” 67 percent responded positively. The same group of respondents rated the VCH CFAI’s efforts to increase the development and use of policy that supports food security at 3.6 on the one to five point scale, the lowest rating across the four CFAI objectives. Respondents noted that vulnerable groups have for the most part not been involved at the policy making level. They cited a number of reasons for this, including lack of time, unfamiliarity with council proceedings, and language barriers. However, some respondents working directly with vulnerable groups suggested that there is potential for their greater participation in food security policy making if necessary arrangements are made (e.g. holding discussion sessions during regular meetings of social housing units).

Policy development may be the area that is most challenging for CFAI funded communities and where community coordinators require additional support and guidance, as well as increased opportunities for networking among themselves. This relates to several factors:

- Community coordinators may require greater capacity to work at the policy level;
- Policy-level work may not be a community priority; and
- Local government may not have the resources to implement food security policy.

Community coordinators, VCH nutritionists and VCH Community Developers may wish to consider the range of policy interventions available to them and discuss as a group the optimal interventions for different contexts. For example, in some cases the focus on policies that are most likely to achieve systemic change may be appropriate, although it is recognised that these policies are often at the Provincial and Federal rather than the municipal or regional levels. Some respondents raised the question as to whether policy level work should be prioritized if there is no demand for this from the local community.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> In relation to advocacy for policy in general (and not specific to CFAI), a recent article on aligning food systems policies to advance public health in the U.S. found that policy advocates often focus on narrow objectives with disregard for the larger system, that to be most effective public health professionals need to consider the full range of interdependent policies that affect the food system, and that food policy councils have proven to be an effective tool, particularly at the local and state levels, for development of food system policies that can improve public health. The article usefully outlines the different levels of policy intervention open to food security advocates, at federal, state and local levels, in relation to the various elements of the food system. Specific policy suggestions at the local level to support access by vulnerable populations include promoting transit routes to grocery stores from all areas, establishing community kitchens and mobile processing units, and establishing city ordinances that allow mobile fruit and vegetable vendors in low income neighborhoods. Muller, M. et al (2009) “Aligning Food Systems Policies to Advance Public Health”. *Journal of Hunger and Environmental Nutrition*, (4), 225-240.

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The Provincial CFAI evaluation found that when asked about the impact of the CFAI on Regional Health Authority policies, 94.1 per cent of programme deliverers<sup>23</sup> said that the CFAI had influenced policy. Programme Deliverers also noted that the CFAI projects were usually one of many factors influencing policy. Some 46 per cent of Community Facilitators reported that the CFAI had an impact on food security policies. On a scale of 1 – 5 (1 = not good, 5 = very good), the average rating given by Programme Deliverers was 1.3 before and 3.1 after implementation of the CFAI projects. For Community Facilitators, their average rating was 2.3 before the CFAI and 3.3 after implementation. These ratings of 3.1 and 3.3 are in accordance with the rating of 3.6 for the VCH CFAI evaluation.

The first years of funding have established the groundwork for policy development in many VCH communities and there is room for further growth in this area. Vulnerable groups have for the most part not been involved at the policy making level, but some front-line respondents suggested that there is greater potential for this. Community coordinators, whom are all currently classified as less than 0.4 FTE, may require more time to dedicate to policy work which can be resource intensive.

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<sup>23</sup> Programme deliverers are staff in the Health Authorities and Ministry of Health who delivered the CFAI. Community Facilitators are the same as what this report calls “community coordinators”.





## 4.4 Increasing food knowledge and skills

The CFAI funding has supported greater awareness of food issues and a higher level of basic skills among vulnerable populations. This is perhaps the area where it is most difficult to disentangle CFAI from other programme interventions, as food security is increasingly mainstreamed across the province.

### **Food Knowledge and skills outcomes and indicators**

Intended outcomes:

1. Increased awareness of food security and a demonstrated understanding of food systems, particularly for marginalized groups; and
2. Increased food knowledge and food skills resulting in healthier diets and lifestyles in the community, particularly for marginalized groups.

Indicators utilized to measure the impact of VCH's CFAI in this area include:

- Degree to which respondents indicate increased awareness of food security, food knowledge and skills;
- Types of activities and materials made available to participants to increase knowledge and skills, particularly for marginalized groups;
- Examples of knowledge and application of food security, food and food skills; and
- Ways in which vulnerable groups are involved in CFAI supported learning activities.

### **Effectiveness of Food Security Awareness and Food Knowledge Development**


An increase in awareness and knowledge was documented in all communities. All interview participants who had lived in their communities since the CFAI's implementation and were asked if they had observed a change in awareness about food security agreed there was increased awareness.

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Participants identified numerous ways the CFAI had contributed to this:

- **“From zero to something”**: By starting the conversation about food security, particularly in smaller communities;
- **“A continuous job”**: By keeping the food security conversation rolling in large communities where diverse cultures, immigration and mobile populations mean there is always someone new to reach out to;
- **“A face for food security”**: By having coordinators be representatives of food security. They are a presence at events and meetings, write articles, deliver presentations, provide the food view on local issues and help others get involved;
- **“Getting the word to filter out into the community”**: By organizing awareness building programmes like garden tours, 50 mile diet challenge, food forums and conferences, public food festivals and events and movie nights;
- **“Connections with the community”**: By connecting with other community groups who are now thinking about how they should integrate food security into their strategic plans and operations;
- **“Show pride”**: By making food security visible through gardens and demonstration projects and attaching pride to being able to provide for your community;
- **“Social marketing”**: By hosting interactive websites and utilizing Facebook, Twitter and other social media to keep people aware of news and events;
- **“Continuity”**: Year after year, community members have grown to trust the work done by established community coordinators. The community knows who to go to for information and can get reliable knowledge from a trusted source; and
- **“From lingo to understanding”**: By providing meaning to the complexity of food systems and our role in the system. Understanding food security provides a platform from which to talk about social development and social justice issues.





With regards to an increase in food knowledge and skills, 82 percent of those asked felt an increase had been made. Participants identified numerous ways the CFAI had contributed to increased food knowledge and skills:

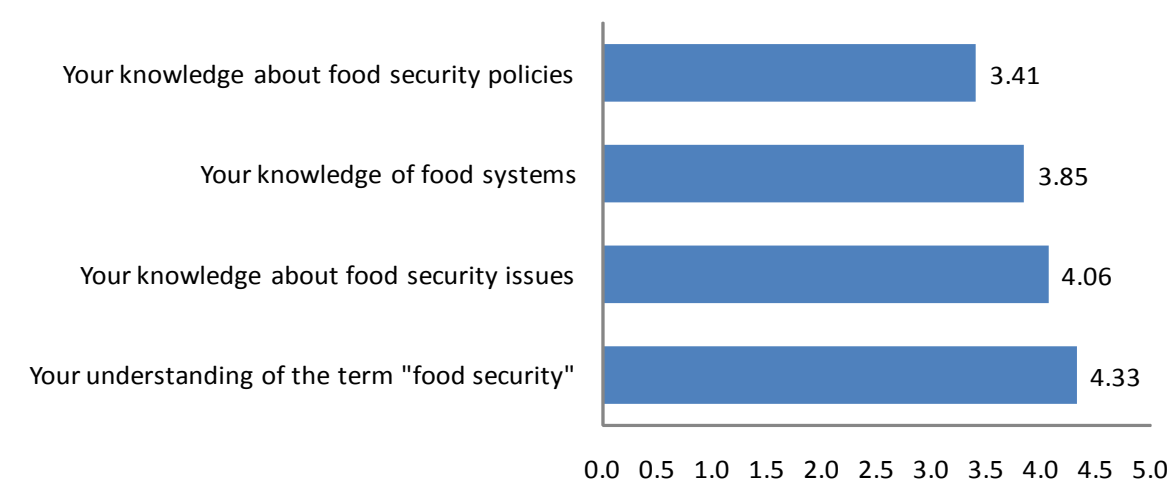
- **“More parents buying fruit as opposed to pizzas”**: By increasing awareness in schools where students are learning about food through workshops on healthy versus unhealthy eating, composting, canning, aquaponics, gardening and other food skills. For example, in Bella Coola the high school has stopped making junk food available and offers healthy options free of charge;
- **“Spending limited money to create healthy meals”**: By providing workshops in the community on how to create a healthy meal on a budget and community kitchens have helped people learn to get the most nutritional value out of food;
- **“How to grow food, how to bring it to the table”**: By offering programmes on how to grow, harvest and preserve food/seeds, prepare meals from garden crops;
- **“Activities aren’t only building knowledge and skills in workshop attendees”**: By encouraging people to share their new knowledge and skills with others; and
- **“Regaining lost knowledge”**: By organizing workshops and events centred around traditional foods for different cultural groups to help reconnect people to traditional and/or cultural knowledge about nutrition.

On average, respondents rated the CFAI’s effectiveness in increasing food security awareness and knowledge about food as *4.0 out of 5.0 (i.e., good)*. Several said they were challenged to rate this category given that the CFAI’s contributions are hard to disentangle from other factors affecting change. Other participants raised questions about whether increased food knowledge and skills was benefiting people and to whom those benefits were directed. Though knowledge is being gained does it result in changed behaviours? Are people applying the knowledge they acquired? Interview participants from some communities expressed concern that skills workshops were attracting mostly middle income people. What is the differential impact of one well-fed person learning to eat better versus one undernourished person gaining access to more nutritious food?

Responses from participants help elucidate some of the questions raised in interviews. In terms of awareness about food security, 92 percent of survey respondents reported knowing more about food security or sustainable food systems as a result of their involvement with the CFAI-funded organisation. Increased awareness was reported across income categories.

Survey respondents were also asked to share their degree of understanding and knowledge of a few key concepts, including the term food security, knowledge about food security issues, food systems and food security policies. Respondents rated their knowledge on a five point scale where one was not good and five was very good. Average ratings are shown in Figure 11.

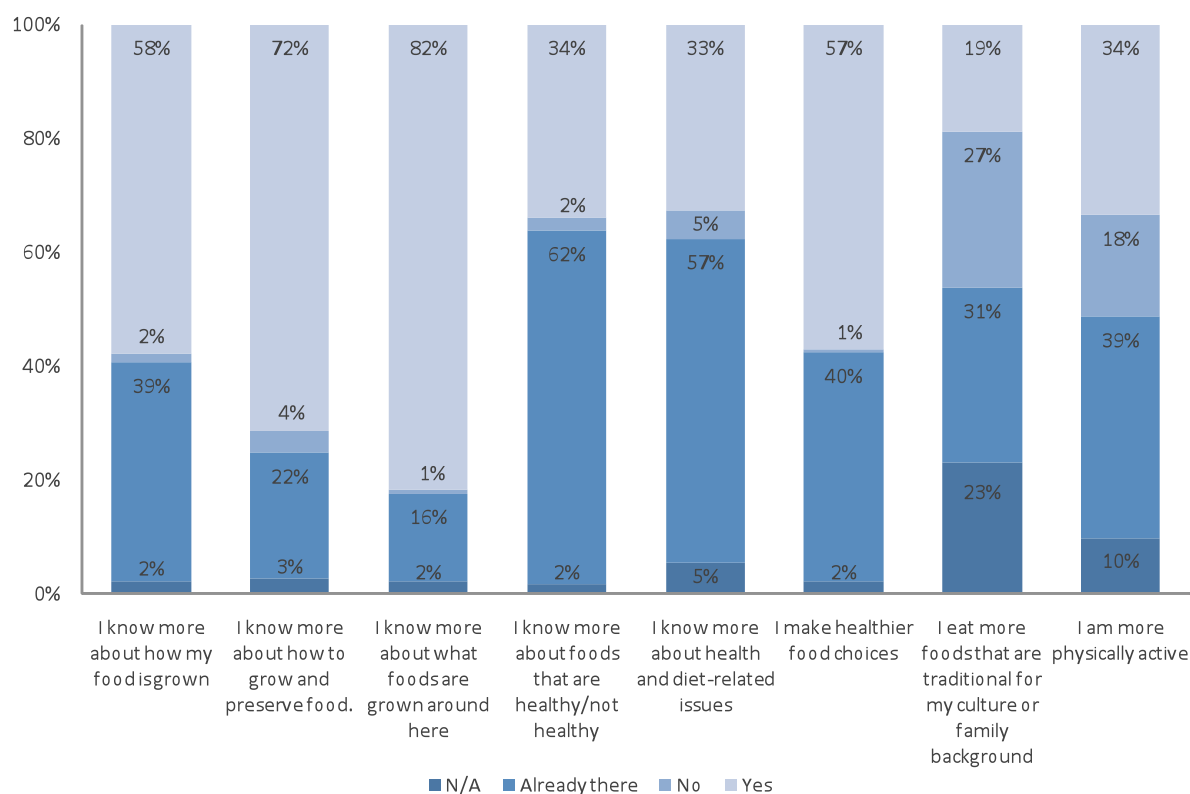
Figure 11 Survey respondents’ rating of their knowledge about food security



In general, respondents rated their knowledge of the term food security highest (4.3 out of 5), while understanding about food security policies rated the lowest (3.4 out of 5). Again, ratings were similar across income categories. Respondents with lower yearly household income categories (less than \$30,000) reported slightly higher ratings (policies: 3.9; food systems: 4.1; food security issues: 4.3; and the term “food security”: 4.5).

In terms of knowledge about food, Figure 12 outlines what types of knowledge participants and volunteers that completed the survey felt they had gained. The figure also shows what skills respondents felt they had not gained, already possessed (“already there”) or were not applicable to the programmes in which they participated.

Figure 12 Types of changes experienced by survey respondents due to participation in CFAI-funded activities



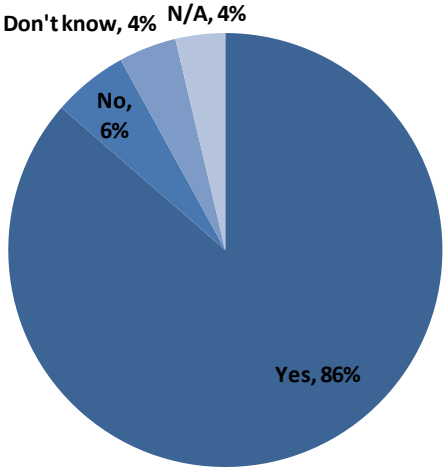
The types of changes included both changes in knowledge and changes in behaviour. Survey responses show that participants and volunteers gained the most knowledge about how to grow and preserve food and what foods are grown locally. Over half of respondents also said that they know more about how food is grown and have changed their behaviour to make healthier food choices. Findings also show that most respondents felt they already had a good amount of knowledge about foods that are healthy, health and diet-related issues.

When asked to provide examples of food skills gained, respondents identified the following:

- Options to use food grown locally
- Recipes for cooking new foods
- Affordable options for good food
- Seed saving
- Food skills to maintain work/life balance
- Methods for preserving food
- Knowledge about nutritional content
- New and improved gardening skills
- Beekeeping and wild harvest
- Planning and cooperating with others to share food

In further response to concerns regarding if new knowledge results in changed behaviour, survey findings show hopeful signs that skills are being applied; 86 percent of web survey respondents agreed that increased food skills have helped them eat better or live a healthier lifestyle (see Figure 13 below).

Figure 13 Percentage of survey respondents reporting that increased food skills help them eat better and/or live a healthier lifestyle



Many survey respondents left examples of how they have shared their food skills. Such stories include sharing knowledge within co-ops and co-housing communities, talking to friends about condition-specific plants, cooking and sharing new recipes for family, sharing the products of harvest with coworkers, providing advice to fellow gardeners, teaching children about nutrition and forming canning groups with neighbours. Some have even shared their learning by presenting in more isolated communities and writing articles for magazines or newspapers. Others found that new knowledge introduced them to new people with shared interests and expanded their social network. Respondents in the lowest household income bracket (\$30,000 and under) were the most vocal in sharing examples.



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## 5. Cross cutting themes and considerations for programme sustainability

The comments in this section highlight themes that emerged from the analysis of evaluation findings in the four objective areas of the VCH CFAI, as well as issues that should be considered in addressing the sustainability of VCH's CFAI.

**Capacity of community coordinators.** All community coordinators are classified as less than 0.4 FTE, which makes their achievements even more impressive. The capacity of community coordinators is being built in a number of areas, including leadership and policy development. This is partly on the job learning and partly at the coordinators' own initiative. An area where coordinators may require greater capacity is related to programming to support access to healthy food for vulnerable populations and policy engagement that is inclusive of vulnerable populations.

**Networking among community coordinators.** Current inter-community communication is facilitated by VCH through bi-monthly (previously monthly) conference calls between VCH community nutritionists, community coordinators and community developers. These calls involve information sharing and programme administration. Community coordinators have been brought together, for example at the BC Food Systems Network meeting, but on an ad hoc basis. Coordinators found this meeting productive and useful. Conference calls were also attempted with the coordinators, but were not found to be useful. Coordinators noted that they would prefer greater inter-community contact, if this is clearly directed – for example a discussion on policy development, or fund-raising during VCH Food Security Advisory Committee meetings.

**Balancing the needs of the general population and vulnerable populations.** The CFAI supports food security for the general population, in particular for vulnerable groups. Having these two foci presents a range of programming challenges, including:

- “Time poverty” experienced by vulnerable populations can mean targeted programmes have poor or erratic attendance. With limited resources, coordinators can only run so many programmes. Poorly attended programs are less likely to last.
- Without successful outreach programmes or existing connections, coordinators and stakeholders feel programmes may be “preaching to the converted.” Effective outreach and relationship building with vulnerable populations takes time and a persistent respect for the ways vulnerable populations want to/can be involved in the CFAI.

- Classes intended for all (e.g., “Cooking on a budget”, food preservation) often fill up with participants who are already educated and interested in food security.
- Advocacy for growing and purchasing local organic crops may mean the production of food which is beyond the means of vulnerable populations while an exclusive focus on vulnerable populations may mean sidelining other food security work.

Challenges balancing the twin foci were especially present in mixed-income areas. The challenge for the CFAI is to ensure that communities prioritize approaches that are relevant to their communities and support both general and vulnerable populations as appropriate. Community coordinators are integral in providing the local knowledge needed to develop context-specific approaches to serve all members of their communities. Part of the reason for why it is a challenge to design ideal programming for all is that the community coordinator position funded by the CFAI is only part time. While coordinators have been very effective at leveraging other funds using the CFAI staffing time as a base, new funds are not always intended to support the vulnerable. Community coordinators may appreciate additional support and guidance when dealing with this complex issue.

**Connections between the four CFAI objective areas.** The evaluation concludes that the CFAI has successfully balanced the four CFAI outcomes. Kalina’s food security continuum (p.13) envisages a transition from a service delivery mode to community capacity development geared towards structural changes. The evaluation found that the CFAI programme did not follow this continuum in a linear fashion, but tended to work in all of the objective areas at the same time. This was partly a function of funding available; for example, if funding for community kitchens and there was an Official Community Plan being developed, the coordinator worked on both of these. It was also partly a function of the different needs and interests of different segments of the community. Ideally capacity that is built will lead to the kinds of structural changes envisaged under the CFAI, but this is a long-term process.

The interview questionnaire and web/written survey included questions on how well the CFAI addresses its four stated objectives and the connection between them. Stakeholders at the community and regional level viewed the connections being made between the four areas as positive. There was praise for the way in which the community coordinators juggled the various activities and made linkages between them, and also for the flexibility which was allowed to the programme. As one interview respondent noted: “I wouldn’t want to narrow it, the programme gives [coordinators] the freedom to combine the four areas in whatever ways are feasible in each community.” If respondents had any concerns, it was related to the emphasis that coordinators were able to place on policy related work. As previously noted though, 43 percent of survey respondents reported an increase in their ability to lobby or develop food security policies, which shows a shift in capabilities in this area.

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The evaluation supports the current approach of the VCH CFAI; that is, there is flexibility within each community to respond to that community's needs. Given the four objectives of the CFAI are roughly synonymous with the stages of the continuum, there does not appear to be a need to promote further a particular theoretical framework for the CFAI at this point.

**Results based management.** The evaluation team reviewed the results based management, planning and reporting mechanisms in place for the CFAI and found these to be excellent, given the size of the CFAI programme. Strategic planning has contributed significantly to the coherence and cohesiveness of the programme at the community level and overall, and was viewed as a benefit by coordinators rather than a burden. Some coordinators remarked on the usefulness of filling in Outcome Measurement Frameworks (OMF) and Progress Reports. VCH conducts a thorough review of OMFs and progress reports once a year to compare the results with CFAI's overall objectives. Follow-up with each programme occurs in order to discuss accomplishments and gaps. This procedure is working effectively to ensure communities are on track.

**Impacts on local First Nations / Aboriginal Community.** The evaluation team was asked to determine benefits to Aboriginal peoples from participation in food security initiatives, how involvement of Aboriginal communities influenced the way that food security is envisioned, and what impacts this had on local food security strategies. All of the communities had involved Aboriginal peoples to varying degrees and with some level of success. As noted, in North Vancouver the VCH CFAI has in the past supported the community garden on the Squamish Nation reserve, although there are no current linkages with Aboriginal groups. In Richmond, a First Nations healing garden is part of the sharing farm and has seen varied levels of interest. In Bella Coola, First Nations are involved in the community kitchens and the Healthy Beginnings programme for infant development, which includes a community garden. In Bella Bella, where waste is being ferried out because existing garbage dumps are at capacity, the CFAI project has demonstrated how composting could reduce waste volumes and served as a catalyst for discussions about an effective long-term approach to recycling food and garden waste. The local band council is involved in this work. The DTES Neighbourhood House was planning a storytelling banquet to honour the cultures of the DTES by sharing dishes, stories and entertainment from Chinese, Japanese, European and First Nations traditions was in the planning stages. In Grandview Woodland, a Food Skills for Families workshop series has been developed for Aboriginal families.

Three percent of survey respondents identified as Aboriginal. One Aboriginal respondent shared thanks for the opportunity to both learn more and pass on new knowledge: "I love learning about food security and passing knowledge on... I am very grateful for the programme and our community would benefit from even more, as more and more people take interest every year." Another commented on how growing and preparing indigenous foods is beneficial to First Nations communities as it helps people "rely less on foods with salt, fat and sugar."





**Impacts on other sectors.** The evaluation team was asked to assess how the CFAI influenced local school boards, municipalities, the commercial food sector, family farms etc., and what realistic expected outcomes could be achieved from further work with these sectors. This report has already detailed significant achievements made in developing community gardens in schools, influencing municipalities through advocacy to promote policy change, and support for family farming. It has also detailed the numerous partnerships developed through the CFAI. Little work thus far has been done with the commercial food sector apart from food recovery from supermarkets and some pocket markets. This may be a gap the CFAI can aim to fill in future. Any further connections to other sectors should be made in the context of supporting capacity building to establish a viable long-term approach to help communities (especially vulnerable populations) access healthy food.

The evaluation team sees VCH's CFAI moving into the future with great strength. With the launch of the provinces' recent health promotion program – the \$68.7 million Healthy Families BC initiative - there is a renewed provincial focus on preventative health and “investing in programs that give at-risk British Columbians access to supports and incentives to help them improve their health and the health of their families.”<sup>24</sup> Food and food security play an important role in individual and community health. The CFAI has proven to be a program that spurs innovation at the community and family level, providing the support necessary for British Columbians to gain the skills they need to promote long-term health.

As the CFAI moves ahead, the evaluation team suggests considering the following areas which have proven thus far to be very important to the success of the initiative. Recommendations specific to these areas are also included in the next section of this report.

**Community coordinators.** CFAI community coordinators have been food security “hubs” in that they link those interested in food security, have or can bring in necessary knowledge, and are the “go to” person for food related matters in their community. They also play a critical role as liaison in reaching out to vulnerable populations. Their consistent presence inspires trust in the community. The work of the coordinators, VCH nutritionists and VCH Community Developers is one reason CFAI funding is so effective. The community coordinators also bear the cost of receiving only part time funding for what can be a full time job. While the community coordinators have been able to leverage additional funding, this is almost always project based. In this situation there is a danger of coordinator burn out, unless means are found to support coordinators adequately.

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24 BC Government. May 26, 2011. News Release. Office of the Premier. Ministry of Health.

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**Housing the CFAI work.** The organisational location of community coordinators differed between communities. In some cases a new organisation was set up, in others such as the Grandview Woodland Food Connection in Vancouver and the Edible Garden Project in North Vancouver, the community coordinator was housed in an existing community organisation. Benefits to being housed in an existing organisation were: the availability of office and meeting space and communication infrastructure; administrative support; potential synergies with other parts of the organisation; and the potential for grant applications. The evaluation also found that housing CFAI's work strengthened the capacity of the host organisation.

**Networks and partnerships.** Thus far, community coordinators have forged many strong partnerships with a wide variety of organisations including local governments, schools and educational institutes, other food security organisations, cultural associations, neighbourhood groups, seniors centres, multicultural associations, food banks and other community agencies. Strong partnerships are necessary to leverage funds, reach different population groups and to provide a consistent standard and breadth of programming. Building networks that focus on food security in general, and supporting greater access of vulnerable groups to local healthy food, is a long-term process. Research has shown that it takes up to 10 years before a network can be considered sustainable – if things go well. Networks tend to go through similar stages, starting with a small dedicated group and then expanding once the mission is clear and communication challenges are sorted. Leadership, secure funding, and an enabling environment are all key to networks becoming sustainable. It would be unrealistic to expect that the networks supported by CFAI funding will continue to flourish without the support of community coordinators, VCH nutritionists and VCH Community Developers. Without continued funding a significant part of the investment since 2005 will be lost.

**Regional distribution of funding.** Respondents pointed out to the evaluation team that remote areas face higher food prices for staples on which vulnerable populations depend, longer transportation routes, fewer fund raising opportunities, and lower community capacity, plus a higher proportion of low income and vulnerable groups in many cases. In this context, respondents recommended a review of the regional allocation of funding. The evaluation team recognises that regional distribution is a complex issue and the CFAI has already adjusted regional funding to take these factors into account.

## 6. Recommendations

Finding	Recommendation	Time & resources required for follow-up	Responsibility for follow-up
The VCH's CFAI needs to remain on the cutting edge of food security work, in particular related to programming for vulnerable groups, and policy and regional level work.	<p>Review VCH's CFAI objectives in a one day planning session with community coordinators, VCH nutritionists and VCH Community Developers (see the next three rows for further details).</p> <p>Review the outcomes of this evaluation and reiterate (if required) the VCH-specific OMF to realign activities, outcomes and indicators with VCH priorities.</p>	Winter 2011, resources required for a strategic planning facilitator and conference call	VCH
<p>Vulnerable populations are accessing substantial amounts of local, healthy food, but the transition from a service delivery mode (see definition on page 26) to an empowerment mode has not yet been made in some programmes.</p> <p>Some meaningful connections have been made with grocery stores and hospitals to increase mainstream access to healthy local food.</p> <p>Sub-groups within the overall vulnerable population group may be missed by VCH's CFAI supported programming.</p>	<p>Synthesize good practice in CFAI programming that already supports access to local healthy food for vulnerable populations and share this information across the programme.</p> <p>Provide additional investment in order to ensure that community coordinators, nutritionists and community developers have adequate capacity to programme for vulnerable populations.</p> <p>Explore the potential for greater interchange with commercial food outlets to ensure that healthy food is readily available for purchase by all.</p> <p>Review reporting format for progress reports to consider adding questions about ways in which programmes specifically support vulnerable populations in each CFAI objective area (access to healthy food, capacity building, policy development, awareness and food knowledge.)</p>	Ongoing, as part of strategic planning and regular PHSA support to the Provincial CFAI programme	PHSA

Finding	Recommendation	Time & resources required for follow-up	Responsibility for follow-up
VCH's CFAI policy related work could concentrate more on policies that support vulnerable groups' dignified access to local, healthy food.	<p>Hone VCH capacity to support the CFAI's policy focus to ensure that new policies will lead to the systemic changes envisaged by the programme; consider the potential for influencing Provincial policy in a more coordinated fashion; consider policy forums with vulnerable groups, recognising the challenges to this.</p> <p>Increase collaboration and partnership with First Nations to promote indigenous understandings of food security and food systems change.</p>	<p>Ongoing, as part of strategic planning and regular VCH support to the programme.</p> <p>Meeting in Spring 2012, resources required for meeting organisation and catering.</p>	VCH
There is a lack of shared understanding about what policy development means and how it can be achieved.	Train coordinators on the meanings and methods of policy development.	A yearly half-day training course and/or guidebook.	VCH with support from PHSA
VCH's CFAI programming could include a greater regional focus.	Explore the potential for using funding to create regional food hubs, particularly in remote and rural communities.	<p>Ongoing, as part of strategic planning and regular VCH support to the programme.</p> <p>Additional funding could also be sought for a feasibility study in one or two regions.</p>	VCH
Some respondents recommended a review of the regional distribution of VCH's CFAI funding.	Review regional distribution of funding and make clear the rationale for funding decisions.	Winter 2011, no additional funding required.	VCH
Community coordinators are central to the effectiveness of the VCH's CFAI, but may be in danger of burn-out	Consider non-material incentives for community coordinators, for example supporting attendance at the BC Food Systems Network annual meeting, and establishing a system of self-funded interns to support their work.	Attendance at BC Food Systems Network: \$4,000 per year	VCH

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# Appendices

## Appendix A: Vancouver Coastal Health CFAI Logic Model

Objective #1: Increase awareness about food security as well as food knowledge and skills			
Activities	Outputs (as measured in Progress Reports)*	Short Term Outcomes (1-5 years)	Intermediate Outcomes (5-10 years)
Offer opportunities to raise awareness about food security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• # of events to build awareness of food security</li><li>• # of participants at awareness raising events on food security</li><li>• # of food skills classes</li><li>• # food of skills workshops</li><li>• # other food knowledge development events</li><li>• # of food security materials developed and distributed</li></ul>	Increased awareness of food security, particularly for vulnerable groups	Stronger food knowledge and skills results in healthier diets and lifestyles in the community, particularly for marginalized groups
Coordinate food skills and knowledge development events and workshops		Increased food knowledge and food skills, particularly for vulnerable groups	
Produce food security informational material (print & web-based)		Demonstration of awareness about food security, particularly for vulnerable groups  Demonstration of knowledge about food and food skills, particularly for vulnerable groups	
Objective #2: Increase community capacity to address local food security			
Activities	Outputs (as measured in Progress Reports)	Short Term Outcomes (1-5 years)	Intermediate Outcomes (5-10 years)
Leverage financial and in-kind support through CFAI base funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Total \$ and in-kind support leveraged in relation to CFAI</li><li>• # of coordinator positions over time</li><li>• # of volunteer positions</li><li>• # of networks local coordinators are part of</li><li>• # of food networks formed</li><li>• # partnerships with schools</li><li>• # partnerships with non-profit organisations</li><li>• # partnerships with other community operations</li></ul>	Increased community capacity to animate food security activities	A variety of vehicles (community members, neighbourhood groups, committees, organisations, etc.) are acting to address community food security issues
Support food security coordinators		Increased public engagement and volunteerism	
Train volunteers		Strengthened leadership for food security	Strong partnerships are ongoing between food security groups and local school boards, civic organisations, agricultural groups, food suppliers to build cooperation
Develop and strengthen food security networks		Strengthened networks and partnerships for food security	
Support partnership development between agencies in the community on food-related projects		Funding and resources leveraged to support food security projects/programmes  Increased programming and strengthened practices for food security	

\*Progress reports are completed by community coordinators and submitted to VCH bi-annually. Both universal and community-specific outputs are reported on in progress reports. The outputs identified here are a summary of different types of outputs measured in different communities.



Objective #3: Increase access to local healthy food			
Activities	Outputs (as measured in Progress Reports)	Short Term Outcomes (1-5 years)	Intermediate Outcomes (5-10 years)
Facilitate access to local healthy food through emergency food services, community gardens, community kitchens, food forums, and other food access programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of emergency food services</li> <li>• # community gardens</li> <li>• # fruit tree projects</li> <li>• # community kitchens</li> <li>• # food forums</li> <li>• # other programmes that provide people with food</li> <li>• # of meals shared</li> <li>• Amount of food harvested</li> </ul>	Access to local healthy food has increased, particularly for vulnerable groups	Expanded availability of safe, nutritious, culturally appropriate foods, produced in an environmentally sensitive way to communities in VCH
Distribute food to marginalized groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amount food distributed (e.g., food boxes, fruit gleaned)</li> </ul>		
Objective #4: Increase development and use of policy that supports community food security			
Activities	Outputs (as measured in Progress Reports)	Short Term Outcomes (1-5 years)	Intermediate Outcomes (5-10 years)
Present food security issues to key decision makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # presentations to key decision makers (e.g., council, neighbourhood committees)</li> </ul>	Community members become more involved in food security policy process	Local community implements food security policies in concert with government initiatives (CFAI 2005-2008) (e.g. Food Charter, 2010 Gardens in 2010)
Develop food charters, food security policies, forums, policy events, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of food forums/policy events</li> <li>• # food charters developed</li> <li>• # of food security policies developed in community</li> </ul>	<p>Food security policies are developed</p> <p>Increased community capacity to lobby for food security and implement food security policies</p>	<p>Food security policies are implemented as planned</p> <p>Food security becomes integrated with other policies and regulatory tools</p>

## **Appendix B: Vancouver Coastal Health Community Food Action Initiative Survey for Program Participants**

### **Purpose of this Survey**

The Community Food Action Initiative (CFAI) is a health promotion initiative aimed at increasing access to healthy food for all British Columbians. Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH), your health service provider, has been providing CFAI funds to eight (8) communities in the region since 2005. SPARC BC is a non-profit society based in Vancouver which is evaluating the impacts of the CFAI on behalf of VCH.

As part of the evaluation we are collecting feedback from community members who have been involved in CFAI-funded activities. You have been selected to complete this questionnaire because you have participated in CFAI-funded programming.

The survey will take about 10 minutes to answer. Results of the survey will be used as part of the evaluation report. Your responses will be reported in a way that protects your identity and privacy.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this questionnaire, please contact [NAME] at SPARC BC ([contact info]) or your local community coordinator, [NAME] ([contact info]). Or, you can leave comments or questions in the box below.

Thank you for taking the time to comment on your local VCH CFAI funded food security programs!

**General Comments or Questions:**

**Your contact info (if you would like a reply):**

**1. Please CIRCLE your community AND the food security program you have been involved in.**

<p><b>Bella Bella</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Hailika’as Heiltsuk Health Centre</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Not sure</li> </ul>	<p><b>Bella Coola</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bella Coola Sustainable Agriculture Society</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Not sure</li> </ul>
<p><b>North Shore</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> North Shore Neighbourhood House - Edible Garden Project (current)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The Harvest Project - Enhanced Food Recovery Program</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Not sure</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lower Sunshine Coast</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> One Straw Society (current)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sunshine Coast Community Services</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure</li> </ul>
<p><b>Powell River</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Powell River Food Security Project (Powell River Employment Program Society)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Not sure</li> </ul>	<p><b>Vancouver</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Grandview Woodlands Food Connection (current)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House - Right to Food Network (current)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cedar Cottage/Trout Lake Food Security Network (current)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Farm Folk/City Folk - Trout Lake/Cedar Cottage Food Security Initiative</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Youth Alliance - Vancouver Community Agriculture Network</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Family Services of Greater Vancouver - Colts Connect in the Kitchen</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> KidSafe Project Society - Participation Garden Project and Cooking Fun for Families</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Strathcona Community Centre Association - Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Education Program</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Wilson Heights United Church - Food for Now</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Not sure</li> </ul>
<p><b>Richmond</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Richmond Food Security Society</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Richmond Food Security Task Force</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> East Richmond Community Association - The Good Grub Project</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Family Services of Greater Vancouver</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Not sure</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Sea to Sky</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Squamish Climate Action Network (current)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sea to Sky Community Services</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure</li> </ul>	

**2. What type of project(s) did you participate in? (circle all that apply)**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food forum and action plan   | <input type="checkbox"/> Festival                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community garden and growing food                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Field trip                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community kitchen  | <input type="checkbox"/> Food security conference      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School program   | <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit picking or gleaning     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency food service   | <input type="checkbox"/> Market (e.g. pocket market)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Policy Development   | <input type="checkbox"/> Meal or potluck               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Affordable food box/bag  | <input type="checkbox"/> Movie nights                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buying club (e.g. bulk buying)                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking class or food skills workshop<br>(e.g., food preservation) | _____  |
|   | _____  |

**3. There are many ways to be involved in projects. Did you ... (circle all that apply)**

- ☐ Participate in activity
- ☐ Help with inviting other people to come?
- ☐ Help organize the project activities?
- ☐ Get involved with decision-making?
- ☐ Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Based on your experience, please rate**

	Not good		Satisfactory		Very good	N/A
The organization of project activities	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
The project activities themselves	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
The decision making process from your project	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
The project's results	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

Comments:

## Questions about awareness about food security, food knowledge and skills

Food security is when all people have a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritious diet through a sustainable food system that improves self-reliance and social justice. Four core components help make up food security:

- Easy access to healthy food
- Knowledge about food and awareness about food security
- Community capacity to address local food security issues
- Policies that support community food security

### 5. As a result of your involvement with the CFAI-funded organization, do you feel you know more about food security or sustainable food systems?

- ☐ Yes      **If yes**, how has your knowledge increased? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

### 6. As a result of your participation, please rate

	Not good		Satisfactory		Very good	N/A	Not Sure
Your understanding of the term "food security"	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	?
Your knowledge about food security issues	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	?
Your knowledge of food systems	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	?
Your knowledge about food security policies	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	?

### 7. As a result of your involvement, have you gained more food skills (e.g., food growing and preservation, cooking skills, shopping on a budget, food nutrition, etc.)?

- ☐ Yes      **If yes**, what food skills have you gained? \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure

### 8. This list identifies some changes you may or may not have experienced because of your participation. Please circle "yes", "no", "already there"\* or not applicable "N/A" for the following statements:

I know more about how my food is grown	Yes	No	Already there	N/A
I know more about how to grow and preserve food	Yes	No	Already there	N/A
I know more about what foods are grown around here	Yes	No	Already there	N/A
I know more about foods that are healthy/not healthy	Yes	No	Already there	N/A
I know more about health and diet-related issues	Yes	No	Already there	N/A
I make healthier food choices	Yes	No	Already there	N/A
I eat more traditional foods	Yes	No	Already there	N/A

I am more physically active

Yes No Already there N/A

*\*"Already there" means you already knew this or had this skill.***Questions about Access to Local Healthy Food**

Accessibility of food is a core component of food security. Accessibility is the ease with which people may obtain available food.

**9. Please rate the accessibility of the following foods in your community:**

<b>Affordable food</b>	Very Poor	Poor	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Don't Know
<b>Locally produced food</b>	Very Poor	Poor	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Don't Know
<b>Organic food</b>	Very Poor	Poor	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Don't Know

**10. About how far do you have to travel to get fresh produce? \_\_\_\_\_ km****11. Has your local CFAI funded program increased the accessibility of affordable nutritious food in your community?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Not sure

**If yes**, which of the following have led to increased access to food in your community:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buying club               | <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking classes or food skills workshops |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community garden          | <input type="checkbox"/> Meals or potlucks                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community kitchen         | <input type="checkbox"/> Pocket markets                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Affordable food box/bag   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit picking or gleaning | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                              |

**12. Overall, please rate your satisfaction with CFAI-funded efforts to increase access to food in your community**

Poor      Unsatisfactory      Satisfactory      Good      Outstanding      N/A

Why did you choose that rating? \_\_\_\_\_

## Questions about Community Capacity to Address Local Food Security

Community capacity building means building the skills and assets that make it possible for communities, including individuals, families and organizations, to identify and manage their own health needs.

**13. The following list contains some changes you may or may not have experienced because of participating in your project. Please indicate "yes", "no", "already there"\* or "N/A" for the following statement:**

I am better at making decisions	Yes	No	Already there*	N/A
I am better at planning ahead	Yes	No	Already there*	N/A
I am better at setting goals	Yes	No	Already there*	N/A
I am better at solving problems	Yes	No	Already there*	N/A
I am more of a leader	Yes	No	Already there*	N/A
I work better with others on a team	Yes	No	Already there*	N/A
I feel I can make more of a difference	Yes	No	Already there*	N/A

*\*"Already there" means you already knew this or had this skill.*

**14. Do you feel more capable of leading community food security work as a result of your involvement with the CFAI-funded organization?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure

**If yes**, what made you feel that way?

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**15. Are you more interested in developing food security policy as a result of your involvement with the CFAI-funded organization?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**16. Have you been involved in working for or developing food policy?**

- ☐ Yes



I am more physically active

Yes No Already there N/A

*\*"Already there" means you already knew this or had this skill.***Questions about Access to Local Healthy Food**

Accessibility of food is a core component of food security. Accessibility is the ease with which people may obtain available food.

**9. Please rate the accessibility of the following foods in your community:**

<b>Affordable food</b>	Very Poor	Poor	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Don't Know
<b>Locally produced food</b>	Very Poor	Poor	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Don't Know
<b>Organic food</b>	Very Poor	Poor	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Don't Know

**10. About how far do you have to travel to get fresh produce? \_\_\_\_\_ km****11. Has your local CFAI funded program increased the accessibility of affordable nutritious food in your community?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Not sure

**If yes**, which of the following have led to increased access to food in your community:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buying club               | <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking classes or food skills workshops |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community garden          | <input type="checkbox"/> Meals or potlucks                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community kitchen         | <input type="checkbox"/> Pocket markets                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Affordable food box/bag   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit picking or gleaning | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                              |

**12. Overall, please rate your satisfaction with CFAI-funded efforts to increase access to food in your community**

Poor      Unsatisfactory      Satisfactory      Good      Outstanding      N/A

Why did you choose that rating? \_\_\_\_\_

**If yes**, what benefits have Aboriginal peoples gained from food security initiatives, if any?

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**23. Do you have a physical or mental disability?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

**24. Please circle your household's total yearly income before taxes?**

- ☐ Less than \$5,000
- ☐ \$5,000 or more, but less than \$10,000
- ☐ \$10,000 or more, but less than \$15,000
- ☐ \$15,000 or more, but less than \$20,000
- ☐ \$20,000 or more, but less than \$30,000
- ☐ \$30,000 or more, but less than \$40,000
- ☐ \$40,000 or more, but less than \$50,000
- ☐ \$50,000 or more, but less than \$60,000
- ☐ \$60,000 or more, but less than \$70,000
- ☐ \$70,000 or more, but less than \$80,000
- ☐ \$80,000 or more, but less than \$90,000
- ☐ \$90,000 or more, but less than \$100,000
- ☐ \$100,000 or more, but less than \$150,000
- ☐ \$150,000 and over
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

**Those are all the questions we have.**

**Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts!**

**Please return this survey to SPARC BC using the enclosed postage paid envelope.**

**Please post as soon as possible – or before June 30.**

## Appendix C: Community Stakeholder Interview Guide

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### Introduction

SPARC BC has been awarded a contract from Vancouver Coastal Health to conduct an assessment of the impact of the Community Food Action Initiative (hereafter referred to as CFAI). Part of the assessment process includes interviews with key stakeholders.

You have been selected to participate in this interview because of your involvement in and/or knowledge of the program(s) funded through CFAI in your community. We are interviewing people who represent organizations that interact with CFAI funded community coordinators and programs.

Not all questions will apply to all respondents. Please let me know if you think you are unable to answer any questions asked. The interview should last approximately 45 minutes but can be longer or shorter depending on the questions asked.

Responses will be reported in a way that protects your identity and privacy. Participation is entirely voluntary and you may end the interview at any time. You may also skip any questions you don't wish to answer.

The results of this interview will be used to inform the evaluation of CFAI.

### Interview Guide

1. Are you familiar with the Community Food Action Initiative (CFAI)? Yes / No

*If no, describe how CFAI was introduced by Vancouver Coastal Health in 2005 with the aim to increase the food security of vulnerable populations in B.C. Explain how CFAI funds coordinators in 8 communities to organize activities and increase local food security. Identify the local coordinator.*

2. Please describe your current position and your connection to CFAI.

*CFAI has 4 main focus areas. We would like to ask you questions about each area in turn:*

### Access to healthy food

3. Do you think the CFAI has increased access to healthy food? <sup>1</sup> Yes / No
  - a. If yes, how has this been achieved? If not, why not?
  - b. If yes, who are the main beneficiaries of this greater access?

---

<sup>1</sup> The PHSA defines access as “the ease with which a population may obtain available food”.

4. Has there been an adequate focus on increasing access to food for vulnerable populations?

Yes / No

5. On a scale of 1-5, please rate the effectiveness of CFAI in supporting access to food:

1 = poor; 2 = unsatisfactory; 3 = satisfactory; 4 = good; 5 = outstanding

a. Why did you choose that rating?

### **Community capacity to address local food security**

6. Has community capacity to address local food security been developed as a result of CFAI funding?

Yes / No

a. If yes, what kinds of capacity (e.g. developing leadership, fund-raising or implementing programs)? If no, why not?

b. If yes, do you think the capacity built will make advancements of food security sustainable in your community (that is, would it continue if funding from CFAI stopped)?

c. If yes, whose capacity in the community is being built and for what purpose?

7. Is there greater inclusion of vulnerable populations<sup>2</sup> in community capacity building as a result of the CFAI funding? Yes / No

a. If yes, do you think vulnerable populations have a greater voice and more confidence as a result?

8. Have local networks been strengthened? Yes / No

a. If so, to what degree (use Gadjia scale to promote discussion in this area)?

9. Have partnerships with the CFAI funded program created efficiencies through local resource sharing or other in-kind and financial support? Yes / No

a. If yes, how?

10. On a scale of 1-5, please rate the effectiveness of CFAI in supporting community capacity building:

1 = poor; 2 = unsatisfactory; 3 = satisfactory; 4 = good; 5 = outstanding

a. Why did you choose that rating?

---

<sup>2</sup> Vulnerable populations are population groups that are disproportionately represented in categories of low income and self-reported poor health, and/or population groups that have frequently reported experiences of systemic discrimination based on race, gender, sexual preferences, age and religion.

### **Increase development and use of policy that supports community food security**

11. Has CFAI funding helped support development and use of policy that supports community food security? Yes / No
- a. If yes, how (e.g. creating an enabling environment, municipal councils becoming more proactive in food security issues)? If no, why not?
12. Are community groups involved in the development of policy to support food security? Yes / No
- a. If yes, has there been greater involvement of community groups (e.g. greater involvement in council meetings) as a result of CFAI funding initiatives (over the last five years or so)?
13. Have vulnerable populations been involved in the development of policy to support food security? Yes / No
- a. If yes, has there been greater involvement of vulnerable populations as a result of CFAI funding initiatives (over the last five years or so)?
14. On a scale of 1-5, please rate the effectiveness of CFAI in increasing the development and use of policy that supports food security:
- 1 = poor;      2 = unsatisfactory;      3 = satisfactory;      4 = good;      5 = outstanding
- a. Why did you choose that rating?

### **Awareness about food security, food knowledge and skills**

15. Is there greater awareness in the community about food security than there was five years ago (in 2006)? Yes / No
- a. If yes, how has the CFAI contributed to this greater awareness?
16. Has knowledge about food increased (for example what makes a nutritious meal, cooking skills of vulnerable populations, shopping for nutritious food on a low income budget)? Yes / No
- a. If yes, how has CFAI contributed to this increased knowledge?
17. On a scale of 1-5, please rate the effectiveness of CFAI in increasing food security awareness and knowledge about food:
- 1 = poor;      2 = unsatisfactory;      3 = satisfactory;      4 = good;      5 = outstanding
- a. Why did you choose this rating?

## **General Questions**

18. Please share something that has gone really well with the CFAI? What makes CFAI special?
19. What types of unexpected consequences have resulted from CFAI funding?
20. How well does the CFAI tie its four main focus areas into a coherent whole? Should there be greater focus on some of the areas than others?
21. Given the range of funding sources for food security work right now, what is the CFAI's niche or comparative advantage (that is, what does the CFAI do well that other programmes don't do)?
22. What are your views on the overall CFAI planning process and participation in this by various stakeholders?
23. What is one main lesson from the CFAI?

## **Optional: Questions for First Nations Stakeholders**

24. How has the involvement of FN communities and Aboriginal people influenced the way that food security is envisioned? What impacts has this had on local food security strategies?
25. What benefits have First Nations communities and Aboriginal people gained from participating in food security initiatives?
26. Has food security for First Nations communities and Aboriginal people improved, and if so, to what extent?

## **Optional: Questions for Health Stakeholders:**

27. How has CFAI combined with the Food Security Model Core Program recommendations and to what degree have these elements of food security been integrated into the health care system?
28. What opportunities are there for further development in these areas?

## **Optional: Questions for Stakeholders from Other Sectors**

29. How have the results of CFAI influenced local school boards, municipalities, the commercial food sector, the Agricultural Land Reserve, family farms etc.?
30. What realistic expected outcomes can be achieved from further work with these sectors?

## Appendix D: Regional stakeholder interview guide

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### Introduction

SPARC BC has been awarded a contract from Vancouver Coastal Health to conduct an assessment of the impact of the Community Food Action Initiative (hereafter referred to as CFAI) in the VCH region. The CFAI supports food security in BC through the implementation of community plans and activities to provide increased access to safe, culturally acceptable and nutritionally adequate diets through a sustainable food system. Its aim is to improve access to healthy foods for all members of the community while specifically striving to improve access for people with low income.

Part of the assessment process includes interviews with key stakeholders. You have been selected to participate in this interview because of your ability to provide an overview of the CFAI in a regional context.

The questions below refer to both the direct results of CFAI funding, as well as CFAI funding which has been used as a catalyst to promote other food security programming.

Not all questions will apply to all respondents. The interview should last approximately 45 minutes but can be longer or shorter depending on the questions asked.

Responses will be reported in a way that protects your identity and privacy. Participation is entirely voluntary and you may end the interview at any time. You may also skip any questions you don't wish to answer.

The results of this interview will be pooled with other interviews to reach overall conclusions about the CFAI.

### Interview Guide

1. Please describe your current position and any connection to the CFAI, as well as your level of knowledge about the CFAI.

*CFAI has 4 main focus areas. We would like to ask you questions about each area in turn:*

#### Access to healthy food

2. Do you think the CFAI has increased access to healthy food?<sup>1</sup> Yes / No
  - a. If yes, how has this been achieved? If not, why not?
  - b. If yes, who are the main beneficiaries of this greater access?
3. Has there been an adequate focus on increasing access to food for vulnerable populations, and sub-groups within vulnerable populations<sup>2</sup>, such as single mothers, the elderly, and persons with disability? Please provide any information you might have on this, including individual examples.

---

<sup>1</sup> The PHSA defines access as “the ease with which a population may obtain available food”.

<sup>2</sup> Vulnerable populations are those made vulnerable by their financial circumstances or place of residence; health, age or functional or developmental status; ability to communicate effectively; presence of chronic or terminal illness or disability;

4. On a scale of 1-5, please rate the effectiveness of CFAI in supporting access to healthy food:  
1 = poor; 2 = unsatisfactory; 3 = satisfactory; 4 = good; 5 = outstanding  
a. Why did you choose that rating?

### **Community capacity<sup>3</sup> to address local food security**

5. Has community capacity to address local food security been developed as a result of CFAI funding?  
Yes / No  
a. If yes, what kinds of capacity (e.g. developing leadership, skill sharing or partnership)? If no, why not?  
b. If yes, do you think the capacity built will make advancements of food security sustainable (that is, would it continue if funding from CFAI stopped)?  
c. If yes, whose capacity in the community is being built and for what purpose?
6. Is there greater inclusion of vulnerable populations in community capacity building as a result of the CFAI funding? Yes / No  
a. If yes, do you think vulnerable populations have a greater voice and more confidence as a result?

Have local networks been strengthened? If yes, how and to what degree?

7. Have partnerships with the CFAI funded program created efficiencies through local resource sharing or other in-kind and financial support? Yes / No  
a. If yes, how?
8. On a scale of 1-5, please rate the effectiveness of CFAI in supporting community capacity building:  
1 = poor; 2 = unsatisfactory; 3 = satisfactory; 4 = good; 5 = outstanding  
a. Why did you choose that rating?

### **Increase development and use of policy that supports community food security**

9. Has CFAI funding helped support development and use of policy that supports community food security? Yes / No  
a. If yes, how (e.g. creating an enabling environment, municipal councils becoming more proactive in food security issues)? If no, why not?

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or personal characteristics. These populations may be less able than others to safeguard their own needs and interests adequately and face barriers to accessing support and care not experienced by other population groups. These populations may incur different health outcomes traceable to unwarranted disparities in their care or stemming from special needs for care or barriers to care.

<sup>3</sup> Community capacity building can be defined as enhancing the skills and assets that make it possible for communities, including individuals, families and organizations, to identify and manage their own health needs. Strategies to build community capacity recognize and enhance the expertise and participation of the community and its members and involve the development of new networks and contacts within and amongst communities. Self-help, peer support, mentoring, mutual aid, skill sharing, partnership, coalition and network building are all strategies which support community capacity.



- b. Has the policy related work been at the right level (e.g. municipal zoning, schools, hospitals), and do you think there are any gaps in work at the policy level?

10. On a scale of 1-5, please rate the effectiveness of CFAI in increasing the development and use of policy that supports food security:

1 = poor;      2 = unsatisfactory;      3 = satisfactory;      4 = good;      5 = outstanding

- a. Why did you choose that rating?

## **Awareness about food security, food knowledge and skills**

11. Is there greater awareness in the community about food security than there was five years ago (in 2006)?      Yes / No

- a. If yes, how has the CFAI contributed to this greater awareness?

12. Has knowledge about food increased (for example what makes a nutritious meal, cooking skills of vulnerable populations, shopping for nutritious food on a low income budget)?      Yes / No

- a. If yes, how has CFAI contributed to this increased knowledge?

13. On a scale of 1-5, please rate the effectiveness of CFAI in increasing food security awareness and knowledge about food:

1 = poor;      2 = unsatisfactory;      3 = satisfactory;      4 = good;      5 = outstanding

- a. Why did you choose this rating?

## **General Questions**

14. Are there any unexpected consequences that have resulted from CFAI funding?

15. How well does the CFAI tie its four main focus areas into a coherent whole? Should there be greater focus on some of the areas than others?

16. Should the CFAI be working more at a regional level, e.g. linking food security across communities?

17. Can the CFAI meet the dual objectives of both supporting food security for the general population, and increased access to healthy food for vulnerable populations? If there is a tension between these two objectives, how do you think it can be resolved?

18. What kinds of food security interventions are most effective at supporting vulnerable groups?

19. Given the range of funding sources for food security work right now, what is the CFAI's niche or comparative advantage (that is, what does the CFAI do well that other programmes don't do)? How well does the CFAI combine with other Provincial initiatives?

20. Are there areas where you think the CFAI should be working in the future?

## Appendix E: Gadja's Scale of Network Integration

Level of Integration	Purpose	Strategies and Tasks	Leadership and Decision – Making	Interpersonal and Communication
Networking 1	Create a web of communication  Identify and create a base of support  Explore interests	Loose or no structure  Flexible, roles not defined  Few if any defined tasks	Non-hierarchical  Flexible  Minimal or no group decision making	Very little interpersonal conflict  Communication among all members infrequent or absent
Cooperating 2	Work together to ensure tasks did  Leverage or raise money  Identify mutual needs, but maintain separate identities	Member links are advisory  Minimal structure  Some strategies and tasks identified	Non-hierarchical, decisions tend to be low stakes  Facilitative leaders usually voluntary  Several people form “go-to” hub	Some degree of personal commitment and investment  Minimal interpersonal conflict  Communication among members clear, but may be informal
Partnering 3	Share resources to address common issues  Organisations remain autonomous but support something new  To reach mutual goals together	Strategies and tasks developed and maintained  Central body of people  Central body of people have specific tasks	Strategies and tasks developed and maintained  Central body of people  Central body of people have specific tasks	Some interpersonal conflict  Communication System and formal information channels developed  Evidence of problem solving and productivity
Merging 4	Merge resources to create or support something new  Extract money from existing systems/ members  Commitment for a long period of time to achieve short and long-term outcomes	Formal structure to support strategies and tasks is apparent  Specific and complex strategies and tasks identified Committees and subcommittees formed  High	Strong visible leadership  Sharing and delegation of roles and responsibilities  Leadership capitalizes upon diversity and organisational strengths	High degree of commitment and investment  Possibility of interpersonal conflict high  Communication is clear, frequent and prioritized degree of problem solving and productivity
Unifying 5	Unification or acquisition to form a single structure  Relinquishment of autonomy to support surviving organisation	Highly formal, legally complex  Permanent reorganisation of strategies and tasks	Central, typically hierarchical leadership  Leadership capitalizes upon diversity and organisational strengths	Possibility of interpersonal conflict very high  Communication is clear, frequent, prioritized, formal and informal





THE COMMUNITY FOOD ACTION INITIATIVE (CFAI) IS A HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAM THAT SUPPORTS COMMUNITY-LED SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE FOOD SECURITY IN BC. SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 2005, THE CFAI HAS CATALYZED HUNDREDS OF CLASSES, WORKSHOPS, CELEBRATIONS, COMMUNITY GARDENS, COMMUNITY KITCHENS, PARTNERSHIPS AND LEARNING EVENTS TO SUPPORT LOCAL FOOD SECURITY IN BELLA BELLA, BELLA COOLA, NORTH SHORE, POWELL RIVER, RICHMOND, SEA TO SKY, SUNSHINE COAST AND VANCOUVER.

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE FINDINGS OF AN EVALUATION OF THE CFAI IN VANCOUVER COASTAL HEALTH (VCH) COMMUNITIES. RECOMMENDATIONS ARE BASED ON FINDINGS DRAWN FROM A REVIEW OF RELEVANT DOCUMENTS, 48 INTERVIEWS, 2 FOCUS GROUPS AND A SURVEY OF OVER 290 PARTICIPANTS AND VOLUNTEERS. THE REPORT WAS COMPLETED BY SPARC BC AND TONY BECK ON BEHALF OF VCH.

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