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Perspective of an Intermediary Change Agent**

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Examining the Process of Community Mobilization within a Community-Institution

Initiative: Perspective of an Intermediary Change Agent

Christine Faubert

Thesis submitted to the

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CCI	Comprehensive Community Initiatives
CII	Community-Institution Initiatives
CPE	Centre de la petite enfance
CLSC	Centre local de services communautaires
CSSS	Centre de santé et de services sociaux
HRDC	Human Resources Development Canada
JEF	Jeunes en Forme
KIS	Kids in Shape
LAC	Local Action Committee
QEF	Québec en Forme
RCSSC	Research Centre for Sport in Canadian Society
RDT	Resource Dependence Theory
RQVVS	Réseau québécois de Villes et Villages en santé
WHO	World Health Organization

GLOSSARY OF KEY CONCEPTS USED IN THE THESIS

Capacity building: The knowledge, skills, resources, and power a community (i.e., individuals, organizations, and institutions) possesses to affect larger systems issues (Chinman et al., 2005).

Catalyst institutions: The organizations, institutions, agencies, and/or individuals who take a leadership role in “identifying the need for change, creating a vision, specifying a desired outcome, and then making it happen” (Ford, Ford, & D’Amelio, 2008, p. 362). Catalyst institutions will typically invite community organizations to partner around this vision of change and objectives, and provide financial and human resource support for community-institution initiative (CII) implementation.

Collective action: Refers to the process whereby individuals, organizations, and constituencies work together to achieve a common vision and goal, and involves the following stages: mobilizing or recruiting local partners (i.e., forming a community coalition), developing a common vision and understanding of the problem, identifying needs, resources, and priorities, developing an action plan, implementing actions and strategies, and evaluating actions for continued improvement (Green & Kreuter, 1991; Simard, 2005; Lamoureux, Lavoie, Mayer, & Panet-Raymond, 2002). It is an iterative process of collaboratively planning, implementing, and evaluating an annual action plan.

Collective capacity: Refers to the knowledge, skills, resources, and power a community (i.e., individuals, organizations, and institutions) possesses to affect larger systems issues (Chinman et al., 2005).

Community autonomy: Refers to the extent to which a community is self-sufficient in operating an initiative or a change effort. In this thesis, operational vs. financial autonomy are distinguished.

Community-institution initiatives (CII): CII are initiatives that join organizations at the community level with institutions often external to the community in a process of joint planning, implementation, and evaluation of a change effort.

Community mobilization: Refers to a dynamic and ongoing process which seeks to develop the capacity of communities to assemble resources, assets, and efforts in an attempt to take action together in a complementary, integrated, and sustained way and produce desired change (Grandchamp, 2003; Ninacs, 2007).

Community ownership: Refers to the extent to which a community controls, identifies with, and feels a sense of responsibility over an initiative or a change process.

Interdependence: In their 2003 reprint of their 1978 book, Pfeffer and Salancik defined interdependence as: “whenever one actor does not entirely control all of the conditions necessary for the achievement of an action or for obtaining the outcome desired from the action” (p.40).

Intermediary change agent: Staff hired by the CII’s catalyst institution to work with organizations at the local level and coordinate, facilitate, and oversee CII implementation.

Intersectoral action: Refers to the collaboration and joint action, between *various organizations intervening at the local level, in sectors such as education, social services, municipal, recreation, and health.*

Resource dependence theory (RDT): RDT is a theory of organizations which seeks to explain the relationship between organizations and their external environment (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; 2003). The central argument of RDT is that in order to survive and function, organizations are dependent on their external environment for acquiring the resources which are critical to their operation, but over which they have limited control. From this view, organizational behaviour can be best explained as a function of the critical resources that an

organization needs to acquire in order to survive and function. This state of dependence deriving from the unequal distribution of valued resources allows for organizations to be externally controlled and creates asymmetrical exchange and power relations between organizations.

ABSTRACT

This doctoral thesis presents an exploratory case study of Kids in Shape (KIS), a community-institution initiative (CII) in which the author operated as an intermediary change agent responsible for facilitating community mobilization around the initiative. This study sought to examine the processes and dynamics underlying the mobilization of intersectoral local organizations involved in the project, as well as the role the first author played from her posture. A single case analysis was constructed based on qualitative methods and analysis of the community mobilization process and intermediary change agent's practice over a 29-month period (December 2005-April 2008). The data derived from five sources: (1) intermediary change agent participant observation and descriptive notes, (2) intermediary change agent reflective notes, (3) local partners' monthly meeting recording transcripts and notes, (4) debriefing notes from KIS research team meetings, and (5) written and electronic material. The analysis involved a two-stage process: (1) inductive, thematic coding and analysis of the raw data (Patton, 1990); and (2); theoretical, conceptual coding and interpretation of emerging themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Paquette, 2007) based on four concepts derived from resource dependence theory (i.e., resource interdependence, autonomy, ownership, and control over the use and contribution of resources). The results showed that the intermediary change agent's work was characterized by a set of tensions occurring along three continuums: process-product, insider-outsider, and bottom-up/top-down. Inherent to these tensions were organizational autonomy and ownership (i.e., control) over various types of processes/capacities and resources, notably between KIS's research team and local partners. This case analysis also revealed key managerial strategies (i.e., activating, synthesizing, framing, mobilizing) which strengthened relationships of interdependence between local organizations, and barriers which hindered the development

of collective capacities. Finally, local organizations were found to move through different stages as they learned to work together and achieve collective goals. Results from this case study enabled the conceptualization of a theoretical construct of interdependence dynamics operating among organizations involved in KIS, and strategies used by the intermediary change agent to manage these dynamics throughout the community mobilization process. The results suggest that the notions of organizational resources (i.e., financial, in-kind, political), capacities, autonomy, and ownership need to be considered in an integrated model in order to understand the complex dynamics and relationships operating among organizations involved in CII.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This doctoral thesis examines the processes, mechanisms, and dynamics underlying the mobilization of intersectoral local organizations involved in the *Jeunes en Forme/Kids in Shape* (hereafter KIS) initiative, and the role I (the author) played as KIS's intermediary change agent from this perspective and specific position in the project. Using an in-depth and exploratory case study approach (Stake, 1995), a theoretical construct is built which reflects interdependence dynamics that were operating among organizations involved in KIS, and strategies used by the intermediary change to manage these dynamics throughout the process of community mobilization.

General Context

Over the past two decades, numerous collaborative initiatives have emerged between institutions (e.g., foundations, institutes, private philanthropies, universities, governmental agencies) and communities (e.g., community groups and non-profit organizations, schools, municipal authorities) to address a variety of health and social issues in a more comprehensive and integrated way (e.g., Youth Net/*Réseau Ado*, Vibrant Communities/*Communautés dynamiques*, 1, 2, 3, *GO!*, *Initiative montréalaise de soutien au développement social local*, *Écoles et milieux en santé*, National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention, *Québec en Forme*, *Québec Enfants*, Women Organizing Activities for Women, Québec Region Integrated Prevention Program for Cardiovascular Disease and Lung Cancer, *Villes et Villages en santé*, and numerous comprehensive community initiatives¹ supported by American organizations such as the Aspen Institute, the

¹ Comprehensive community initiatives (commonly called CCI) are characterized by their systemic, multisectoral, integrated, and participatory nature. They emerged, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, from the

Ford Foundation, the Pew Charitable Trust, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation). In the fields of public health and social development², community-institution initiatives (hereafter CII) have espoused broad (e.g., poverty reduction, neighbourhood revitalization) or more specific visions of change (e.g., enhancing children sport and physical activity and/or enabling environments for healthy lifestyles), as well as various approaches (e.g., intersectoral collaboration, community mobilization, community development, social development) to realize the changes envisioned.

Collaborative community-based approaches to address health and social issues (e.g., community development, community-building, community organizing, social development, voluntary action by the civil society) came about long before the establishment of CII (cf. Boutilier, Cleverly, & Labonte, 2000), particularly in the social domain (cf. Bourque, 2008; Cox, Erlich, Rothman, & Tropman, 1987; Doucet & Favreau, 1991; Lamoureux, Lavoie, Mayer, & Panet-Raymond, 2002; Netting, Kettner, & McMurtry, 1998). Since the 1970s, collaborative practices, concerted action, and, more recently, partnerships have been pervading social and health policy discourse, translating into a multiplicity of interventions, initiatives, and approaches, including CII.

There is no general consensus in the literature on the meaning of, and impetus behind, CII. While some view partnerships between institutions and communities as an emerging, more democratic model which involves local organizations in the planning and implementation of public services (e.g., Caillouette, 1994; Vaillancourt, 1994), others see

need to rethink inefficient, fragmented, and top-down practices and approaches focused at single categorical issues and targeted at individuals (Bilodeau, Allard, Francoeur, & Chabot, 2004; Kubisch, Auspos, Brown, Chaskin, Fulbright-Anderson & Hamilton, 2002; Schorr, 1997; Torjman & Leviten-Reid, 2003). In this thesis, the term “community-institution initiative” (CII) is used more generally to refer to either comprehensive or more focused initiatives (e.g., addressing narrower health issues) which join local communities and institutions to work on a common mission and objectives.

² It should be noted that this thesis is predominantly situated in the population health, public health, health promotion, and organizational literature.

such practices as a response from the state in the early 1980s to rethink its inefficient, centralized, and technocratic approach to public services management and provision (Lamoureux, 1994). Still others consider CII as a neo-liberal form of social control from the state (e.g., Doré, 1991) or a new mechanism to hand over to social actors (including community organizations) the responsibility for managing an important share of social services (e.g., Larivière, 2005), often alongside inadequate resources and support (Bourque, 2008).

Certainly, the emergence of CII reflects recent systemic conceptualizations of health and social problems (Green, Richard, & Potvin, 1996; Higginbotham, Albrecht, & Connor, 2001). In fact, they appear alongside the release of key policy statements in Canada (e.g., Ottawa Charter of Health Promotion, Epp Report) and internationally (e.g., Jakarta Declaration on Health Promotion into the 21st Century, Bangkok Charter for Health Promotion in a Globalized World), and along the worldwide Healthy Cities/Healthy Communities movement initiated by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1986, all embracing a broad and complex framework for thinking about health and social issues, as well as multifaceted and integrated approaches and strategies including community participation and capacity building. In this context, partnerships between institutions and communities seem to reflect both health and social reforms that have taken place since the mid-1980s (O'Neill, Pederson, & Rootman, 2000), and a redefined role for, and relationship between, institutions and communities in the management of health and social services (Bourque, 2008) and in the promotion of population health and social change goals (Torjman & Leviten-Reid, 2003). What seems to distinguish this new generation of community-based approaches from earlier efforts, at least in the public health, health promotion, and population health domains, is that they tend to be initiated, catalyzed, and funded by

institutions external to local communities; implemented at the local level; formulated around intersectoral means to action and change; and designed on community mobilization strategies.

Community-Institution Initiatives (CII)

Although CII may originate from, and be driven by, community members or groups, external institutions tend to be the impetus for CII (Green & Mercer, 2001; Kubisch, Brown, Chaskin, Hirota, Joseph, Richman, & Roberts, 1997; Williams, Labonte, Randall & Muhajarine, 2005), particularly in the public sector (Provan & Kenis, 2007). Consequently, a theme that is gaining attention in the literature is the role that external institutions play in supporting CII. The institutions, agencies, and/or individuals who take a leadership role in “identifying the need for change, creating a vision, specifying a desired outcome, and then making it happen” have been referred to as *change agents*, and contrast with *change recipients* (i.e., communities) who are responsible for “implementing, adopting, or adapting to the change” (Ford, Ford, & D’Amelio, 2008, p. 362). Change agents also contrast with what Wolverson (1998) calls “collaborators in change,” who advocate for the change and provide leadership in its planning, implementing, and monitoring. Change agents thus tend to be organizations which call for, sponsor, and formulate a change effort (Ford et al., 2008); they will typically invite communities to join the effort as legitimate partners (Chaskin, Brown, Venkatesh, & Vidal, 2001). In this thesis document, the term *catalyst institutions* is used to refer to Ford et al.’s notion of change agents.

In addition to inviting community organizations to partner around a shared vision and objectives, catalyst institutions will usually commit core resources and an infrastructure that support CII implementation and results, including technical expertise and/or assistance (Kubisch et al., 1997; Reid, Cabaj, & Kearney, 2003; Savan, 2004). However, the literature

suggests that how technical expertise and assistance are “practiced” may differ considerably across CII. For instance, catalyst institutions have sometimes adopted a facilitation, support, accompaniment, and monitoring approach with communities (e.g., Grandchamp, 2003). Other CII have used technical expertise and assistance in more directive and professionally-controlled ways (e.g., Public Health Agency of Canada, 1999). In general, catalyst institutions will play a role in the establishment of participation and decision-making mechanisms (i.e., local governance structures), the coordination of organizations’, institutions’ and agencies’ work, resources, and strategies, and the training and supervision of CII staff (Québec en Forme, 2008; Howard-Grabman, 2007; Hastings & Jamieson, 2002). Some or all of these tasks tend to be handed over to staff, referred to here as *intermediary change agents*, typically hired to work with community partners and facilitate and oversee CII implementation.

A second characteristic of CII is that they tend to privilege local communities as implementation sites for the initiative. Increasingly, action and strategies implemented at the local level are seen as holding the greatest potential to create sustainable changes in the social, physical, and political environments that shape a community’s health (e.g., Boutilier et al., 2000; Government of Québec, 2006; Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition, 2003; RQVVS, 1999; US Department of Health and Human Services, 2000; White, Jobin, McCann, & Morin, 2002; WHO, 2007). This stems in part from a so-called “shift” from top-down government models towards more participatory governance approaches aimed at increased stakeholder and community participation in, control over, and responsibility for, the implementation of public health and health promotion initiatives (Ferreyra, 2006; O’Connor & Gates, 2000). Experience in Canada and internationally suggests that successful action at the local level rests on four cornerstones: community participation, intersectoral

partnerships, community capacity building, and local government support and commitment that would bring about wider changes in organizational priorities, structures, and policies (Health Canada, 1999; Hancock, 1993; Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition, 2003; WHO, 1997). However, several authors have warned against or criticized such decentralization practices they describe as being disguised under the rubric of community development (e.g., Labonte, 2005; Lachapelle, 2003; Lamoureux, 2007; Poole, 1997; Thibault, Kikulis, & Frisby, 2002).

Another characteristic of CII is that they tend to be increasingly formulated around intersectoral collaboration and partnerships (Maskill & Hodgess, 2001). Intersectoral action has become a prominent feature of population and community health intervention strategies (Canadian Public Health Association Task Force, 1997; Health Canada, 1999; Higginbotham et al., 2001; WHO, 1997; 2007), and a key element of most social problem-solving efforts (Chavis, 2001; White et al., 2002). Whether in the form of partnerships, coalitions, networks, consortia, or alliances, it has been argued that intersectoral collaboration holds the potential to tackle complex health and social issues more effectively than any individual, organization, or department alone (Lasker, Weiss, & Miller, 2001; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000). In CII, different levels of partnerships are formed: (1) between funders and catalyst institutions; (2) between catalyst institutions and community organizations, and (3) between various organizations intervening at the local level in sectors such as education, social services, recreation, and health (Brunet, 2007). Researchers suggest that intersectoral collaboration enables partners to gain a broader perspective on the nature of the problem and strategies to solve it; contribute diverse and complementary knowledge, skills, resources, and expertises; develop comprehensive strategies well-matched to local circumstances and needs; and strengthen links and relationships in the community (Foster-Fishman, Berkowitz, et al.,

2001; Lasker et al., 2001; Wolff, 2001). Yet, according to Evans (1996), the advantage of working in partnership depends on the dynamic interactions and exchanges that take place between local actors and organizations, as well as the norms of reciprocity and trust that develop around them. Such processes are believed to increase a community's ability to acquire the support and resources it needs to address complex community issues. Moreover, the literature suggests that partners must invest significant time and energy in the collective effort, and establish a climate that encourages interorganizational exchanges, collaboration, and mutual learning in order to maximize complementarities and turn the partnership into a resource that is tangible and valuable for each other (Lévesque, 2005).

One last feature of CII is that they appear to be increasingly designed on community mobilization approaches (Leroux & Ninacs, 2002). The literature suggests that CII adopting (usually intersectoral) community mobilization approaches differ from traditional “top-down” prevention or health promotion community-based programs in that they go beyond the mere implementation of community interventions and involve action strategies and principles (e.g., community engagement, intersectoral action, collective learning) which seek the enhancement of community capacity, ownership, and change (Kubisch et al., 2002; Simard, 2005). However, there is little agreement on what community mobilization means or involves. Community mobilization has been used to describe a wide range of community-based activities, from encouraging community members' participation in local efforts for improving health issues (e.g., Williams II & Olano, 1999), to initiating an ongoing dialogue between citizens and local authorities for increasing public safety and police support (e.g., Garmaise & de Bruyn, 2004), to strengthening local organizations' capacity to work together in a more complementary way to address community needs (e.g., Howard-Grabman, 2007). In this thesis, community mobilization refers to a dynamic and ongoing process which seeks

to develop the capacity of communities to assemble resources, assets, and efforts in an attempt to take action together in a complementary, integrated, and sustained way and produce desired change (Grandchamp, 2003; Ninacs, 2007). While the implementation of CII using community mobilization strategies is a growing trend to address various social and health issues, there are many gaps in current community mobilization knowledge and practice. A summary review of the community mobilization literature appears next, followed by an overview of the challenges and tensions inherent to CII designed on community mobilization strategies.

Community Mobilization

Although multiple definitions of community mobilization exist (see Appendix A for a list of definitions that have been used in various CII), the nature and objectives of an initiative appear to determine how community mobilization will be defined. The literature suggests that community mobilization is an elusive concept often used interchangeably with closely related concepts such as community capacity (Austen, 2003; Chaskin et al., 2001; Norton, McLeroy, Burdine, Felix, & Dorsey, 2002), community organizing (Bourque, Comeau, Favreau, & Fréchette, 2006a; Doucet & Favreau, 1991; Rothman & Tropman, 1987; Wharf & Clague, 1997), community development (Bourque, Comeau, Favreau, & Fréchette, 2006b; Frisby & Millar, 2002), community empowerment (Bourque & Favreau, 2003; Laverack, 2006; Ninacs, 2007; Schultz, Israel, Zimmerman, & Checkoway, 1995), and interorganizational collaboration (Foster-Fishman, Salem, Allen, & Fahrback, 2001).

A number of authors have attempted to differentiate community mobilization approaches from community development and community-based programming. According to Labonte (1993, 1994, 2005) and Robertson and Minkler (1994), community-based strategies include community mobilization initiatives and typically connect programs and

services with community groups. The issue, most oftentimes linked to the prevention of unhealthy personal health practices (e.g., physical inactivity, smoking), is usually identified by practitioners or grant holders, and intervention timelines and decision-making stay with institutional actors. In contrast, in community development efforts, community planning and organizing activities are ongoing, driven by needs and issues identified by community groups, and characterized by the transfer of control from agencies and professionals to communities and individuals (i.e., empowerment). Here, community practitioners will play a mediation role and support community capacity development. Minkler and Wallerstein (2005) noted that:

[W]hile a health education professional may borrow some principles and methods from community organization to help mount an organizing effort for obesity prevention in the community, he or she can't be said to be doing community organization in the pure sense unless the community itself has identified obesity as the problem area it wishes to address. (p. 26)

Similarly, Shiell and Hawe (1996) have argued that “community development programmes in their purest form start with no fixed agenda or health issue” (p. 243).

However, community mobilization has been conceptualized in different ways, sometimes as falling under the umbrella of community development (e.g., Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux, 2008), sometimes as a broad concept encompassing community development (e.g., Ninacs, 2007). Community mobilization shares many of the characteristics of community development, however, what seems to distinguish it from community development and community-based programming is that while the process is community-driven and seeks to build community capacity, the issue is generally introduced to the community, often by an external actor. If a community agrees to become involved, the

community mobilization process (i.e., ongoing cycle of collective planning, action, and self-evaluation) begins from that point onward. Hence, according to these various authors, answers to the questions “Who determines the issue(s) to be addressed?” and “Who drives the process?” may help determine whether one is engaged in community development, community mobilization, or community-based programming. While the community usually does not identify the issue of interest in a community mobilization initiative, it nevertheless should play an active role in driving the process.

The literature suggests that community mobilization is not so much about *what* is done to improve community health issues, but about *how* is it done (Kretzman & McKnight 1993; Simard, 2005). In fact, most researchers and practitioners have conceptualized community mobilization as a means, a strategy, a process, an approach, a framework, or a set of principles and values used to strengthen community capacity and carry out community change work (e.g., Austen, 2003; Grandchamp, 2003; Hastings & Jamieson, 2002; Howard-Grabman & Snetro, 2003; Kretzman & McKnight, 1993; Ninacs, 2007; Public Health Agency of Canada, 1999; Simard, 2005; Williams II & Olano, 1999). There seems to be an inherent assumption, yet little evidence due to deficient evaluation tools, that communities mobilized to address and solve their own health issues are more likely to achieve and sustain concrete results than through other, more external and/or top-down means (Hastings, 2001; Simard, 2005). However, exactly how community mobilization develops in the context of CII, and how this process is managed and catalyzed, has received little research attention in the literature.

Experience from community mobilization CII in Canada and the United States (e.g., Austen, 2003; Cornerstone Consulting Group, 2002; Grandchamp, 2003; Hastings & Jamieson, 2002; Kretzman & McKnight, 1993; Kubisch et al., 2002; Leviten-Reid, 2006;

Québec en Forme, 2008) suggests that there is no one blueprint for community mobilization around any community issue or for any given community. However, they point to a number of key conditions that appear to facilitate the implementation of such initiatives. These conditions include: (1) a common vision of what needs to be done or changed and action strategies for achieving change; (2) community participatory and governance mechanisms; (3) strong leadership, both within the catalyst institution and within community organizations; (4) an infrastructure that supports, facilitates, and sustains the initiative process and results; (5) a shared understanding of community strengths, assets, and needs; (6) the development of intersectoral collaborative partnerships; (7) capacity building activities, including the enhancement of local leadership, interorganizational relationships, and mutual trust; (8) time to maximize community participation and allow activities to unfold; (9) flexibility regarding expectations, deliverables, and support mechanisms; and (10) linkages with and support from external organizations.

The literature on community mobilization CII also abounds with references to the importance of fostering community participation, capacity, governance, and ownership to ensure the local fit and sustainability of CII (e.g., Austen, 2003, Bourdages, Sauvageau, & Lepage, 2003; Garmaise & de Bruyn, 2004; Grandchamp, 2003; Hastings & Jamieson, 2002; Howard-Grabman, 2007; Québec en Forme, 2008). Cheadle et al. (1998) argued that community mobilization resulted from enhanced participation and identification with the community, interorganizational collaboration, capacity development, and collective action and problem solving. Bourdages et al. (2003) reported five factors which were found to facilitate intersectoral community mobilization: the involvement of influential community members; the recognition and coordination of community strengths, competencies, and resources; the establishment of efficient decision-making processes; the clear delineation of

roles, goals, and tasks; and official support from organizations involved in the effort. While there is substantial documentation of community mobilization initiatives including CII, little research has examined how such complex processes develop in CII, how they are managed, and what dynamics are at play when catalyst institutions and community organizations join efforts in such initiatives.

Challenges Inherent to CII Designed on Community Mobilization

The literature suggests that CII based on community mobilization approaches are complex ventures and often remain insubstantial (Alexander et al., 2003; Israel et al., 2006; Kreuter, Lezin, & Young, 2000). Sometimes accused of having an idealistic, forced, or phoney notion of collaboration (Minkler, 2000; Parent & Harvey, 2009; Rowe, 2006), CII may face many challenges, including the recruitment of, and sustained involvement from, critical stakeholders; the intersection of divergent viewpoints, interests, objectives, and organizational cultures; the development of genuine collaborative efforts; the investment of human, material, and financial resources from stakeholders; and the achievement of tangible outcomes (Grandchamp, 2003; Kubisch et al., 1997; Bourdages et al., 2003; Frisby & Millar, 2002). Challenges may be particularly eminent when community partners come from different sectors, and when they are expected to contribute significantly to, take ownership of, and collectively manage the initiative in their community (Harvey et al., 2004; 2005; 2006; 2007; Lévesque, Harvey, Boyer, & Pitre, 2006). According to Checkoway (1995) and Labonte (2005), few community mobilization and community development initiatives actually transfer control and decision-making power from agencies and professionals to communities and citizens (thereby truly allowing communities to drive the process). Misunderstanding the nature of the work to be done and the processes underlying community

mobilization as an approach has also been found to impede CII progress (Grandchamp, 2003; Cabaj, Kearney, & Reid, 2002).

Research has indicated that CII may give rise to a number of tensions, particularly when they adopt community mobilization approaches (Kubisch et al., 1997; Frisby & Millar, 2002). Tensions inherent to CII have included divergences in goals, self-interests, and power relations (e.g., Chaskin et al., 2001; Kubisch et al., 1997; Brown & Stetzer, 1998; Chavis, 2001; Frisby & Millar, 2002; Williams et al., 2005; Burgess, 2006; Humphrey, 2006; Park Tanjasiri, 1999). Alexander et al. (2003) have reported on the challenges of balancing paid staff with community partners' engagement for the management of CII activities; balancing partners' commitment to the initiative's goals with the achievement of their own organization's goals; and balancing the dependency of partnership structures at the local level on a catalyst institution with achieving their own autonomy. Simpson, Wood, and Daws (2003) argued that the significant time, energy, and financial demands that accompany local communities' appropriation and governance of CII – most of which are funded only for a pilot or demonstration phase – may place additional pressure on already over-extended and finite community resources and prevent or limit the capacity of communities to sustain such a level of local contribution. One issue catalyst institutions face is to identify enabling mechanisms for local governance and ownership without exhausting community resources and capacities (Simpson et al., 2003; Smith, Baugh Littlejohns, & Thompson, 2001).

Since their emergence, CII have been criticized for predominantly adopting a *utilitarian* approach to community participation and resources, using local communities as settings to implement pre-packed public programs and/or offset the costs of providing services (Doré, 1991; Labonte, 2005; Larivière, 2005). The literature suggests different dynamics and tensions associated with a desire to decentralize and democratize the

management of public programs on the one hand, and a risk of using local communities as instruments for the implementation of public program on the other hand (Bourque, 2008; Labonte, 2005). Duperré (1992) described institution-community partnerships as involving opposing dynamics known as *top-down* (i.e., institutional or state measures which mandate or invite lower tier bodies to coordinate or operationalize their activities) and *bottom-up* (claims from social actors for increased autonomy in, and power over, organizational resources and practices) logics. Bourque (2008) added that each of Duperré's logic is itself crossed by a paradoxal dynamic. That is, interventions from the state can call to democratic, participatory practices or more rigid, standardized approaches (Lamoureux, 1994). Similarly, the bottom-up logic can distinguish practices that emphasize enhanced autonomy in, and determination of, practices by social actors, from practices that favour a complementaristic approach that lead community organizations to integrate or try to fit existing measures and programs, often for financial survival (Proulx, Bourque, & Savard, 2007).

In sum, the literature suggests that CII adopting community mobilization strategies are inevitably marked by tension because of three co-existing yet conflicting realities: (1) CII constitute a source of valuable resources for local organizations; (2) CII seek to increase the capacity of local communities to work together on common issues and develop community ownership over the solutions developed; and (3) CII rely on sustained community participation to realize their mission and achieve their objectives (Bourque, 2008). These realities imply a degree of interdependence and complex exchange relationships between local organizations and the external institution, and among local organizations at the community level involved in CII. Moreover, the potential divergence of capabilities, contributions made, and inducements received by the various organizations involved in CII

suggests differences in power, control, influence, and autonomy between organizational participants.

Although many CII are designed as levers or opportunities for community capacity, development, and change (e.g., *Vibrant Communities, 1, 2, 3, Go!, Initiative montréalaise de soutien au développement social local*, etc.), notably by providing financial and sometimes human resources in the form of development agents or facilitators, CII, particularly those with ownership and sustainability goals, face the risk that local organizations strategically join such efforts to diversify their resource streams or gain access to valuable resources, but fail to genuinely engage in and mobilize over the long-term over the change envisioned. On the one hand, it is generally recognized that organizations are dependent on resources for their survival and functioning, and must develop ways to acquire and exploit finite resources also sought by other organizations (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; 2003). Contemporary organizational literature highlights the need for organizations to find innovative ways of operating and become more strategic in realizing their mission (Child & Faulkner, 1998; Paquet, 2004). One key challenge for social actors is to make strategic decisions regarding their involvement and investment of time and resources in partnerships and initiatives that are available to them, notably by assessing the added value of their participation in each collaboration opportunity (Bourque, 2008). On the other hand, CII aspire to community ownership, autonomy, change, and sustainability, and rely upon significant and sustained community engagement, resources and time investment. Hence, one key challenge for CII adopting a community mobilization approach is to mobilize local communities around their vision of change within the context of an increasingly complex environment and changing resource contingencies. In this context, resource interdependence, autonomy, ownership (i.e., local appropriation by the community), and control over the use and contribution of

resources, four notions that lie at the foundation of resource dependence theory (hereafter RDT; Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003), appear as a useful framework for examining the community mobilization process in CII.

Resource Dependence Theory (RDT)

RDT is a theory of organizations which seeks to explain the relationship between organizations and their external environment (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; 2003). The central argument of RDT is that in order to survive and function, organizations are dependent on their external environment for acquiring the resources which are critical to their operation, but over which they have limited control. A lack of control over valuable resources creates uncertainty for organizations operating in that environment. Hence, to minimize uncertainty, organizations must interact with other organizations, actors, or entities in their environment which control the sources of finite and valued resources. In this perspective, organizational and interorganizational behaviour can be best explained as a function of the critical resources that an organization needs to acquire in order to survive and function. This state of dependence deriving from the unequal distribution of valued resources allows for organizations to be externally controlled and creates asymmetrical exchange and power relations between organizations (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). Hence, a governmental agency granting funding to a nonprofit organization to provide specialized services to a particular population will keep a certain degree of control over that organization, for instance, by preserving discretionary authority over the substance of the program or service provided and the clientele targeted, by failing to recognize local expertises, by providing funding on a short-term basis, or by imposing rigid evaluation modalities and accountability measures.

Pfeffer and Salancik (2003) described the environment in terms of three structural characteristics which define the relationships among social actors (i.e., organizations). These

characteristics are the extent to which power and authority are widely dispersed in the environment (*concentration*); the availability or scarcity of critical resources (*munificence*); and the number and pattern of linkages among organizations (*interconnectedness*). The level of uncertainty an organization confronts will be determined by the degree of conflict and interdependence present in the social system. According to these authors, the level of dependence on particular resources is influenced by how important the resource is to the organization, how scarce it is in the environment, and how sought or demanded it is by other organizations.

The view that the environment imposes constraints on organizations implies that organizations are likely to try to avoid or resist external forces; adapt or adjust their basic activities/operations, processes, structures, and practices; or exert control or influence over the resource environment or exchange relationships in an attempt to increase organizational stability. Unlike other theories of organizations (e.g., institutional theory, population ecology), RDT suggests an active agency role for organizations, who will engage in strategic actions to obtain support and reduce uncertainty deriving from the environment. Hence, according to RDT, organizations and their managers are not passively adapting, complying, or conforming to environmental demands and constraints; they actively try to mould the institutional environment to their own advantage (Boyd, 1990; Oliver, 1991; Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). Interests, power relations, and strategic choice are thus prominent themes in RDT.

In RDT's view, organizations will reduce environmental uncertainty and achieve a predictable inflow of vital resources by exercising power, control, or negotiation over interdependencies which tie them to their external environment. The need for organizations to acquire resources leads to the establishment and maintenance of relationships with other

organizations that control or affect the flow of critical resources, and to various efforts at influencing these organizations in order to determine one's own environment. RDT assumes that organizations will attempt to minimize their own dependence relationships by decreasing their dependence on others (i.e., independent strategies) and/or by increasing others' dependency on them by changing or adapting to their environment (thus enhancing their power relations). This external control perspective explains how "efficiency, autonomy, and [resource] exchange may drive and determine organizational behaviour in the context of external pressure" (Oliver, 1991, p. 151).

RDT argues that organizations will use different strategies to manage constraints and bring certainty and stability to their environments. While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to provide a detailed description of each, strategies typically fall into one of two broader categories: buffering and bridging. Buffering and bridging strategies essentially function to protect, define, and modify organizational boundaries in an attempt to reduce interdependence and uncertainty and increase autonomy (Johnson, 1995). Buffering strategies involve protecting the organization against outside influences, including instability and fluctuation brought by environmental dependence. Stockpiling needed resources, forecasting uncertainties and potential fluctuations, and scanning the environment for opportunities and threats are typical buffering strategies (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). Bridging strategies involve building bridges, linking or cooperating with other organizations. Organizations can attempt to share resources and power, and coordinate/negotiate interdependencies by establishing collective structures of interorganizational action with exchange partners, competitors, and regulators, that is, via joint ventures, coordinated efforts, coalitions, trade associations, etc. Other bridging strategies include organizational growth, diversification, and interlocking directorates.

Coalition building, which is of particular interest in the context of this research, is one form of bridging strategy used by organizational leaders to manage external demands and pressures. In joint ventures such as coalitions or partnerships, organizations join others to work towards common objectives. As only a portion of an organization's assets are pooled in coalitions, each organization preserves a certain level of independence. Maximizing resource exchanges, synergies (i.e., performance), and the pursuit of one's mission, rather than simply reducing uncertainty for the organization's operations, are what motivate bridge building (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). One line of research in the coalition literature has examined how resource interdependence, goal congruence, and mutual trust affect interorganizational cooperation (Lundin, 2007; O'Toole, 2003). Lundin (2007) found that trust and congruence of goals must both be present to maximize collective action among agencies in the implementation of local policy. That is, in a situation of mutual dependence, organizations were more likely to collaborate and exchange resources necessary to achieve organizational goals if their interests and goals converged and if they trusted each other. In other words, goal congruence between organizations is not likely to promote joint action if organizational authorities do not trust each other.

A second line of research has focused on power relations between organizations involved in vertical alliances marked by significant asymmetrical dependence (e.g., Donada & Nogatchewsky, 2005; Vaillancourt, 1994; Tsisis, 2008). To appreciate the relational nature of power and how it may pervade collaborative initiatives such as CII, Dahl's (1958) definition of power is useful. According to Dahl, organization "A" has power over organization "B" to the extent that "A" can get "B" to do something "B" would not otherwise be able to do without or through other alternatives. Thus, one's power resides in another's dependency (Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1962), and can be used to influence or

manipulate the behaviour of the more dependent other. Various strategies used by more dependent organizations to minimize coercive conditions imposed by the more powerful partner and maximize autonomy have been discussed in the literature. In one study of non-government AIDS organizations engaged in shared governance with Health Canada, coalition building among NGOs created a form of countervailing, political power (i.e., equal concentration of opposition) that forced the more powerful partner (i.e., Health Canada) to acknowledge its dependence on the less powerful, thereby shifting power to a more equal distribution of resources and governance processes (Tsasis, 2008). Another strategy used by community, non-profit organizations is conflictual concertation (Vaillancourt, 1994). In conflictual concertation, less powerful organizations (e.g., community-based, non-profit organizations) agree to collaborate with more powerful organizations (e.g., governmental agencies), but the conditions and rules of the collaboration are negotiated and based on compromises on each part. Although both parties gain from the asymmetry of dependence, conflict is considered inherent to the exchange relationship. Thus, the establishment of rules also appears to determine the extent to which dependence relations, developing from resource exchanges, can be used to accomplish the external control of organizations.

Negotiated Environments

Although originally developed at the organizational level, the logic and rationale behind RDT also appears to be applicable to organizational behaviour at the interorganizational or coalition/network level unit of analysis. In fact, the predominant view of organizations is that they are essentially goal-oriented (Zedeck & Blood, 1974). According to Pfeffer and Salancik (2003), “this goal-oriented or instrumental view (...) implies that organizations are collections of individual efforts that come together to achieve something which might not otherwise be accomplished through individual action” (p. 23).

Thus, just as organizations have grown more complex and provided more effective means to achieve various social goals, so have community coalitions united individual and organizational efforts to address complex health and social issues more effectively than any individual or organization alone (Lasker et al., 2001; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000; O'Toole, 1997). Moreover, the argument that coalitions can be conceptualized as single organizations is well illustrated in Pfeffer and Salancik's (2003) view of organizations:

The organization is a coalition of groups and interests, each attempting to obtain something from the collectivity by interacting with others, and each with its own preferences and objectives. The result of these interactions and exchanges is the collectivity we call the organization. (p. 36)

Provan and Kenis (2007) similarly described networks as “forms of social organizations, which are more than the sum of the actors and their links and which deserve to be studied in their own right” (p. 23), and provided arguments for considering networks as the unit of analysis when their governance and management constitute the focus of research.

In this thesis, two levels of analysis were examined: individual organizations involved in the community coalition, and the community coalition (i.e., formed by the mobilization of local organizations) as the organizational unit. Like other organizations, this entity interacts with the catalyst institution which created it (a condition of its larger environment, among others). However, this entity is also in itself a negotiated environment; it faces an additional level of complexity by being inescapably confronted to constraints imposed by each constituent organization's interests, values, objectives, and accountability mechanisms. The interdependencies examined in CII are thus particularly complex.

Moreover, unlike most networks and coalitions, which usually emerge out of organizations' initiatives to build or engage in them and bring organizations that are typically alike (e.g.,

private sector, profit-oriented), this research seeks to examine how RDT helps to understand the process through which a community coalition formed by a catalyst institutions in the context of a CII, and composed of organizations from various sectors (e.g., public/institutional, non-profit, etc.), evolve.

In this regard, CII appear as a prominent platform to examine RDT because they are inherently about interorganizational exchange relationships, influence, control, and negotiation over decisions and access to resources, both horizontally, among local organizations, and vertically, between the community coalition and the catalyst institution. This unique characteristic which distinguishes CII from other types of organizations has important implications for practice and theories which seek to describe the management of multiorganizational arrangements, relationships, and dynamics found in this increasingly common type of organizations. In the public and nonprofit sectors, CII have become important formal mechanisms for achieving multi-organizational and collective outcomes (Agranoff & McGuire, 2003a; 2003b; Imperial, 2005; Lemieux-Charles et al., 2005; Provan, Isett, & Milward, 2004; Provan & Milward, 1995; Provan & Kenis, 2007).

From a RDT perspective, joining a CII may constitute an organizational strategy to diversify one's stream of resources. These resources can be tangible, such as financial or material (e.g., premises and equipment) resources, and intangible, such as information, staff, social capital, legitimacy, and status (Lévesque & White, 1999; Lundin, 2007; Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). Harvey et al. (2005) further distinguished tangible resources (e.g., money, personnel, material, and services) and intangibles resources (e.g., information, expertise) from political resources (e.g., claims activities, access to higher-level status individuals and organizations). In the context of CII, many questions arise with regards to the processes of mobilization and the exercise of control over access to and contribution of resources. For

instance, what tensions emerge within such complex multi-organizational configurations, exchange relationships, and efforts to achieve collective goals? Are specific types of resources (and efforts to control them) more important at particular times during CII implementation, as the community mobilization process evolves, considering that CII seek to foster local ownership and autonomy over the initiative? Moreover, it is not clear whether strategically joining a CII to diversify one's resource streams interferes with local organizations' interest and ability to mobilize and work together towards a shared mission and goals. The community mobilization approach which characterizes current public health practices and institutional environments is not without tension, possibly impacting how local organizations might respond to and position themselves towards such initiatives. For instance, the extent to which joining a CII is a strategic choice or an obvious, inevitable decision for certain organizations is unclear. To date, RDT has overlooked the strategic behaviours (i.e., decisions, mechanisms, structures, actions, practices) that organizations adopt in direct response to the institutional processes that affect them (Oliver, 1991), notably in the context of CII. The examination of RDT to assist in better understanding the complex processes and dynamics operating in a multi-organizational entity such as a CII is both the originality of this thesis and a significant contribution to the literature.

Much of RDT seeks to explain how organizations attempt to influence and control their social context. Within this theoretical perspective, the role of the organization's manager is to guide and control this process of manipulating the environment to maximize organizational autonomy and ensure continued support and survival of the organization. This task can be problematic because organizations are confronted with competing and conflicting demands and pressures from the environment, albeit necessary for enhancing their power over resources which are not within their control. Interestingly, scholars have been reluctant

to examine formal mechanisms of control within networks on the basis that control and hierarchy countervail the view of networks as collaborative arrangements and relationships (Kenis & Provan, 2006; Provan & Kenis, 2007). In CII, intermediary change agents (i.e., managers) hold positions which grant them discretionary power over most of the processes governing local organizations' access to and contribution of resources. This role is examined next.

The Role and Practice of Intermediary Change Agents in CII

The mobilization of catalyst institutions and organizations at the local (i.e., community) level around common objectives established as part of CII has given rise to complex partnership arrangements, governance mechanisms, and liaising/coordinating needs that require management (Bolda, Saucier, Maddox, Wetle, & Lowe, 2006; Brunet, 2006; Cabaj et al., 2002; Cornerstone Consulting Group, 2002; Israel et al., 2001). This management work in CII is typically assumed by one or a team of individuals (Bourque, 2008; Cabaj et al., 2002; Québec en Forme, 2008) wearing different titles (e.g., coordinators, managers, community developers) based on the position that they hold and the role that they play in the initiative's organizational structure. For the purpose of this thesis, individuals hired by CII as coordinating mechanisms between catalyst institutions and local organizations are referred to as intermediary change agents. In CII, intermediary change agents typically assume a liaison role between catalyst institutions and community partners, as well as between community partners. While their role may vary according to the nature and organizational structure of CII, they are usually responsible for supporting and monitoring the implementation of CII. In such initiatives, intermediary change agents have been found to manage complex interdependencies and processes of participation, resource exchange, capacity-building, and change (Brunet, 2006; Cabaj et al., 2002; Lévesque et al.,

2006). In addition, considering their intermediary and liaison position, they may be exposed to considerable tensions and conflicts between catalyst institutions and community partners (Boutilier & Mason, 2006; Humphrey, 2006; Lévesque et al., 2006; Pettigrew, 2003), and between organizations at the local level (Chavis, 2001).

The literature on intermediary change agents in CII is particularly scarce (Bourque, 2008). For the most part, our understanding of the roles, activities/functions, and practice of CII intermediary change agents appears to be limited to an idealized set of skills and competencies (e.g., interpersonal, facilitation, and convening skills, organizing and management skills, strong leadership, commitment to the issue at hand or the effort's goals, observation, listening, and negotiating skills, ability to work independently and in collaboration) highlighted in CII progress and "lessons learned" reports. However, there is a large, informative literature in other contexts relevant to community mobilization CII from which valuable insights can be drawn, including organizational management and change (e.g., Buchanan & Boddy, 1992; Ford et al., 2008; Hartley, Bennington, & Binns, 1997; Kahn, 2004; Wolverton, 1998), multi-organizational partnerships (e.g., Pettigrew, 2003), and participatory action research (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005; Stoecker, 1999). Moreover, much has been written about the role and practice of community developers, organizers, "animators," or practitioners in the community development and community organizing literature, which may inform intermediary change agent theory and practice in the context of CII.

Table 1 presents an overview of selected models of community practice³ with associated characteristics and intermediary change agent roles. At the left end of the table, in

³ The term "community practice models" is broadly used here to refer to various approaches to community action and change.

Table 1

Various Models of Community Practice with Associated Characteristics and Intermediary Change Agent Roles

Dimension	Organizational Change (Wolverton, 1998)	Participatory Action Research (Stoecker, 1999)	Community Development (Labonte, 2005)	Community-Based Programming (Labonte, 2005)	Community Organizing (Rothman & Tropman, 1987; Lamoureux et al., 2002)	Capacity-Building (Kretzman & McKnight, 1993)
<i>Identification of health problem/issue/need</i>	Organization	Researcher and community	Community	Health professional or agency	Professional	Community (although work is focused on assets not problems)
<i>Goal of collaboration (utilitarian vs. empowerment goal)</i>	Introduce and manage organizational change	Conduct research oriented toward social change	Establish a more equitable power relationship between institutions and community groups	Bring institutional program into community setting	Develop and coordinate services	Help disadvantaged or oppressed social groups self-organize and gain power and resources
<i>Leadership and decision-making</i>	Primarily stays with change agent	Controlled by both researchers and community members	Community controlled, with support from professional	Decision-making rests principally with professional; implementation responsibility transferred to community	Professionally controlled, top-down planning approach	Community controlled
<i>Intermediary change agent's role</i>	Change agent collaborates with change recipients but may use control when needed	Varies according to role espoused (consultant, initiator, and collaborator)	Power relations are constantly negotiated	Vertical relationship whereby intervention and development are delivered or directed from above	Professional expert with technical skills engages community in problem-solving process	Supports residents and local organizations in developing their own assets and capacities

Inspired from Labonte (2005) and Lamoureux, Lavoie, Mayer, & Panet-Raymond (2002)

the organizational change domain, Wolverton's (1998) typology of leadership for achieving systemic change describes intermediary change agents as holding authority to bring about the change process because they are mandated and supported by catalyst institutions to stimulate and guide this process. Although much of their work involves collaboration, intermediary change agents may use control when necessary. They tend to possess technical skills, interpersonal abilities, and a commitment to change that allow them to build trusting relationships, foster a climate for change, generate support for and maintain focus on a change vision and strategy, manage uncertainties, and make strategic decisions to move change forward. Intermediary change agents enjoy some latitude from champions of change (i.e., catalyst institutions), who will "accept the inevitability of temporary disorganization and ineffectiveness as natural change phenomena" (Wolverton, 1998, p. 26). Moreover, they are supported by collaborators of change who provide leadership in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of the change, as well as support and stability to make change part of the organization's core operations, values, and culture.

The organizational change literature suggests that intermediary change agents can assume different roles depending on the level of control they exert over the process of change. Dimock (1992) proposed, in decreasing order of control, the following roles for the change agent: director, expert, consultant, resource, facilitator, and collaborator. Similarly, Collette, Delisle, and Perron (1997) distinguished between the following seven strategies, in decreasing order of power role: imposition, pressure, consultation, co-management, incitation, suggestion, and habilitation. In participatory action research, Stoecker (1999) noted three main approaches for the participatory researcher – the consultant, initiator, and collaborator roles – depending on the nature of the project, the researcher's skills, and the level of participation the community needs and wants. Stringer (1996) has portrayed the

participatory action researcher as “a catalyst who stimulates people rather than imposes on them, emphasizes process over product, enables people to do it themselves, starts where people are, helps people plan and act and evaluate rather than advocate for them, and focuses on human development as well as solutions to problem” (in Stoecker, 1999, p. 846). In the context of multiorganizational partnerships (Pettigrew, 2003), the intermediary change agent was found to assume a complex and demanding political entrepreneur role.

Community practice models of social interventions in community organization and community development efforts have also proposed different approaches and power roles for the intermediary change agent (see Table 1). In most community-based programming initiatives, funders and professionals typically take the lead in identifying the problem to be addressed (e.g., enhancing children’s access and participation to sport and physical activity), elaborating intervention programs to be implemented, and employing various action strategies and processes (i.e., community capacity building and leadership development) to encourage community participation and ownership of the professionally-selected problems and solutions (Labonte, 2005). In macro level social work practice, planned change in organizations and communities is an intervention similarly guided by professionals (Netting et al., 1998).

In the community organizing domain, Rothman and Tropman’s (1987) framework describes three dominant approaches, which Lamoureux et al. (2002) conceptualize as three distinct action strategies of community mobilization: social planning, locality development, and social action. The social planning practice model emphasizes the use of professional experts with technical skills to engage communities in a problem solving process. While the degree of community participation may vary, building community capacity or promoting social change is not usually sought in this model. In contrast, locality development is

described as a community change process initiated and defined by community residents. Locality development hinges on the broad and active participation of local people. The role of the community worker is to mobilize community residents and support them in the identification of common issues and solutions. The third practice model, social action, focuses on helping disadvantaged social groups or traditionally oppressed segments of the population to self-organize and gain the voice, power, and resources they are entitled to. In this model, change is driven by community needs and values, and change agents' power needs and imposition of values are deliberately minimized. All three approaches are not mutually exclusive; Rothman (2001) suggested that most community organization efforts use a mix of two or more of these models.

Of interest, scholars have discussed the potentially detrimental impact of intermediary change agents' attitudes, behaviours, and practices on community capacity building and change processes (e.g., Ford et al., 2008; Labonte, 2005; Bourque, Barette, & Vézina, 2002). For instance, Ford et al. (2008) noted how intermediary change agents in organizational settings may actually be contributing to resistance to change by disconnecting themselves from the learning and change process, breaching agreements and trust, and failing to legitimize change and elicit concrete action. Similarly, the literature suggests that excessive direction or leadership from intermediary change agents may hinder mobilization efforts as community groups see their needs and participation disregarded. Bourque et al. (2002) discussed potential challenges of *Centres de santé et de services sociaux's* (CSSS; at the time called *Centres locaux de services communautaires*; CLSC) changing role definition and position in Québec following the Clair Commission, the public health Law on Governance, and the Governmental Policy on Community Action at the beginning of the 2000s, which require CSSS to "manage" service agreements and "coordinate" community mobilization

efforts rather than “support” them. Kretzman and McKnight’s (1993) approach to capacity building reinforces the notion that assets, capacities, and relationships emerging from community development efforts should be built from the inside-in, among community residents and organizations, rather than relying on experts, social workers, health providers or funders. Intermediary change agents in this context thus work from the backstage to support residents and local organizations actively developing their own assets and capacities.

Research Gaps

In CII based on a community mobilization strategy, interdependence seems to be reflected by a complex coordinated system of actors and actions. On the one hand, given CII’s goal of building community capacity and maximizing local ownership of the initiative, CII intermediary change agents must encourage local and horizontal decision-making processes and foster local organizations’ autonomy and appropriation of the solutions developed by them. On the other hand, given that CII are not viable without the sustained participation of and resource investment from community organizations, CII intermediary change agents must use a variety of strategies to manage and strategically adjust CII’s operations and activities to the local context and multiple organizational interests and missions.

While CII designed on a community mobilization approach is a growing trend, there are many gaps in current CII knowledge and practice. For instance, how local organizations respond to the opportunities provided and constraints imposed by CII is not clear. More specifically, the *process* through which community mobilization, access to, and contribution of, resources is governed in CII has been largely overlooked. Furthermore, negotiation and compromise being at the core of collective endeavours, the efforts and strategies deployed by CII intermediary change agents to manage interdependencies and power relations, balance

multiple organizational interests and objectives, negotiate local governance and sustained institutional support with autonomy and ownership goals, and ensure continued support for and survival of the CII represent a line of research that is worth examining. Intermediary change agents operate at the heart of CII. By their very position and role, they typically have a good knowledge of community needs, realities, and organizational roles and cultures, and at the same time, they are mandated to bring the CII into fruition. Given their privileged position, they are well positioned to identify the strategies that are most likely to succeed in maintaining a coalition of partner organizations which contributes the resources and support necessary for CII to pursue its activities and goals.

In light of the diversity of community practice approaches and roles intermediary change agents have adopted in various contexts, the roles, practices, and strategies CII intermediary change agents need to assume in order to manage the process of community mobilization remain undefined. When community mobilization and capacity building processes have been the focus of research, researchers and evaluators have primarily studied them from a distance and/or at discrete points of time (i.e., doing research *on* or *about* community mobilization from an external change agent perspective) and, as a result, possibly gained only fragmented or insufficient insight into community mobilization mechanisms and dynamics (Simard, 2005). The recent interest in – and funding allocation for – community mobilization CII, particularly in the public and population health area, suggests that a growing number of researchers and practitioners are embarking in projects espousing community mobilization approaches with possibly inconsistent theoretical foundations, varied practice guidelines, and limited community mobilization experience. CII intermediary change agents must cope with community mobilization's ambiguous conceptualization and operationalization (Bourque et al., 2002). As the individuals most directly responsible for

stimulating and managing CII, much remains to be learned about the roles and practice of intermediary change agents in such initiatives, substantiating the need to examine their role and practice in this context from their specific position.

As previously emphasized, community mobilization CII are approaches, not programs. The need to examine processes underlying intersectoral community mobilization and action by local actors and organizations is significant in a context where action is defined and constructed locally and where processes such as community participation, interorganizational collaboration, and community ownership are important means to achieve CII results and impacts. At the same time, many researchers (e.g., Connell & Kubisch, 1998; Crilly, Kloseck & Lubell, 2003; McQueen & Anderson, 2000; Minkler & Wallerstein, 2005; Simard, 2005; Smith, Baugh Littlejohns, & Roy, 2003) contend that we are ill-equipped to capture and assess the dynamic, complex, and context-specific processes (e.g., enhanced leadership from a local organization, strengthened ability of a committee to work together across sectors) that underlie intersectoral community mobilization initiatives. The analysis of complex dynamics and processes inherent to CII requires that the mechanisms, strategies, and practices which facilitate community mobilization and resource exchange be carefully examined and followed throughout the initiative. Process analysis in this context is deeply rooted in action and allows for key processes and practices to be developed as they generate change and transformation (Simard, 2005). As community mobilization CII are gaining popularity as a privileged strategy in public and population health, in-depth case studies of the process from the perspective of CII intermediary change agents are needed to build community mobilization theory and inform professional practice in the context of CII.

Despite the emergent literature on CII, we are still in the early stages of understanding dynamics related to interdependencies, goal divergences, and negotiation

processes inherent to CII. In sum, the literature suggests that there is an important research gap regarding local organizations' behaviours and strategic responses to CII, as well as the role played and strategies used by CII intermediary change agents in enacting an environment favourable to community mobilization and continued support for and survival of CII. In essence, research gaps include: (1) what are the tensions, challenges, and dilemmas operating in CII; (2) how community mobilization, capacity-building, and appropriation develop among local organizations in CII, when access to valuable resources constitutes a strong incentive for joining the initiative; (3) what are the transaction costs for local organizations to being/staying involved in CII; and (4) what are the roles, strategies, and key mechanisms used by intermediary change agents to facilitate the process of community mobilization and manage resource use and contribution in CII. There is a need to enhance our understanding of the complex dynamics of interdependencies involved in CII, how such interdependencies are managed to achieve CII goals, and how they must be considered in theories which seek to describe their management. This doctoral thesis is meant to reduce these research gaps. To do so, I immersed myself into KIS, a CII (a community-university initiative), and assumed the role of the intermediary change agent. The KIS project, as well as my role and posture in KIS, are described next.

The Kids in Shape Project

KIS is a community-university project initiated by the Research Centre for Sport in Canadian Society (RCSCS) from the University of Ottawa. Its goal is to adapt the model developed by *Québec en Forme* (QEF), and implement it in an underprivileged neighbourhood in Ottawa as a pilot project for future implementation in communities across Ottawa, Ontario, and Canada (except for Québec which is already covered by QEF). Unlike a large number of community-university collaborations, which primarily focus on

collaborative research with the community, KIS's main objective was the establishment of a community structure connecting community actors and agencies with the goal of improving interorganizational linkages, resource coordination, and collective action to enhance underprivileged children's sport and physical activity participation. The following is a brief description of QEF in order to better understand the foundation of KIS.

QEF

QEF is a partnership between the Government of Québec and the *Fondation Lucie et André Chagnon*. Since its inception in 2002, QEF has supported more than 35 communities uniting over 700 partner organizations in 8 regions of the province, and reached over 56,000 children. QEF works with community partners to facilitate a healthy and active lifestyle for children ages 4 to 12, with priority on the underprivileged, through physical and sport activities. In June 2007, QEF saw its mandate significantly broadened with the creation of the *Fonds pour la promotion des saines habitudes de vie*. With this new mandate, QEF is expanding to all regions of the province, reaching out to children aged 0 to 17, and introducing initiatives aimed at promoting healthy eating habits. QEF's new mission is to contribute, through the support of community mobilization projects, to the adoption and maintenance of an active lifestyle and healthy eating habits by Québec's youth from birth to age 17.

Instigators of QEF (and of KIS) recognize that community governance and action rooted in local dynamics are cornerstones of community mobilization. While QEF and KIS have their open set of principles which guide community mobilization and action, their respective management teams are cognizant that the exact nature of operation modes, actions, and intervention strategies must be defined by community organizations in respect with local circumstances and needs. However, to act as a lever for community action and

change, QEF's and KIS's core infrastructure includes three components: (1) local entities known as Local Action Committees (LACs; called *comités d'action locaux* in French); (2) an initial (three-year in the case of KIS) funding commitment to support core operations and programming; and (3) human resource support (i.e., the intermediary change agent in the case of KIS).

The QEF structure is composed of a provincial management team, 4 territorial teams, 17 regional teams, as well as over 90 LACs. Adopting what it defines as a “bottom-up” logic, which builds on local strengths and resources and decentralizes decision-making power to community organizations, QEF mainly operates through LACs (although it also plays a role of influence and positioning at the regional and provincial levels to ensure that actions and mechanisms at those levels support and reinforce community action). The decision for QEF (and KIS) to operate through LACs is founded on the following values and principles: (1) new initiatives should support, build on, and strengthen existing community resources and expertises rather than replace existing ones; (2) local actors are better positioned than higher-level agencies to identify and address community needs and issues; and (3) horizontal, fluid participative initiatives and shared decision-making mechanisms and processes enhance opportunities for collective action and community change. Operation and decision-making rules are to be negotiated among LAC partners; however, all partners are expected to contribute some kind of resource (time, expertise, knowledge, equipment, access to infrastructure, money) to the partnership, and are granted equal decision-making power.

LACs are created around elementary schools (and now high schools) in disadvantaged communities, and comprise various organizations including community groups, centres, and organizations, sport clubs and organizations, *centres de la petite enfance* (CPE), CSSS, and municipalities, based on available resources. With the support of a

coordinator, community partners united within LACs work together to identify community needs and resources, develop a common vision and objectives, combine and coordinate local resources and programs, develop and implement concerted physical activity (and more recently, healthy eating) initiatives which complement existing programs and opportunities at no cost to the children, and evaluate their strategies and actions to continuously improve and demonstrate the added value of their intervention. LACs are not advisory committees, nor taskforces or boards. They provide shared platforms for action towards change at the community level. LACs' collaborative efforts culminate in the production of local strategic plans, which are developed, implemented, and evaluated on an annual and triennial basis. QEF finances LACs' action plans, including intervention and programming expenses and human resources which will differ from one LAC to another based on identified issues, priorities, and identified levers of change. Development agents and key resources in physical activity (and more recently healthy eating) work with LAC partners and coordinators to support the implementation of QEF.⁴

KIS

KIS began in 2005 as a three-year pilot project (Sept. 2005-Aug. 2008) based on the first version of QEF. As such, KIS aims to strengthen the capacity of communities to provide more opportunities for children aged 4 to 12 from underprivileged families to be physically active. Like QEF, KIS supports communities in forming collaborative partnerships, developing a comprehensive understanding of sport and physical activity opportunities and programs offered in their community, identifying needs, setting priorities, and carrying out projects to increase children's participation in sports and physical activities through

⁴ QEF recently modified its organizational structure and the role of its regional teams in accordance to its new mandate and intervention approach privileged. However, this thesis refers to QEF's former structure and management style as KIS' pilot phase was modeled after QEF's first mandate.

collaborative action at the local level. To ensure a comprehensive pool of resources and capacities, LACs are implemented in communities with pre-existing or potential capacity for collaboration. With the initial financial help of Sears Canada's Young Futures program, the RCSCS has taken on the leadership to establish a pilot LAC in the Vanier community in Ottawa, and to evaluate it. Two major components thus include: (1) establishing local partnerships responsible for implementing sport and physical activity programs, and (2) researching and evaluating the project and its partnerships (Parent, Harvey, Faubert, & Fallu, 2007).

The specific objectives of KIS are to: (1) assess the feasibility of adapting and implementing the QEF formula in other communities in Canada; (2) build local intersectoral partnerships through the establishment of a pilot LAC in Vanier, Ottawa, whose role is to strengthen and improve existing community resources and increase physical activity participation among children aged 4 to 12; and (3) act as a catalyst for community mobilization, capacity, and ownership, as well as ensure the sustainability of the project beyond the initial Sears funding. KIS's long-term goals are to help communities build self-sustaining, community-based partnerships that will continue to improve children's access to and participation in physical activities, and influence the adoption and implementation of practices, norms, and policies facilitating environments favourable to the health and global autonomy of children and their families.

To assist KIS's pilot LAC through this process, KIS provided financial and human resources to support the partnership's activities. Funds invested by KIS in the community are managed by the LAC and cover expenses linked to programming, primarily financing human resources (i.e., sport instructors and youth monitors). Unlike most community-university initiatives, local organizations embarking in LACs are expected to take full ownership of and

manage the sport and physical activity initiatives, and accordingly, invest considerable resources (mostly in-kind) into program planning, implementation, and evaluation.

It should be noted that KIS differs significantly from QEF in terms of organizational structure, resources, and capacity. KIS's structure is composed of a university-led management team, composed of two lead researchers and one research coordinator, and a local governance structure (LAC). KIS's management team and the LAC are linked by an intermediary liaison officer called the LAC coordinator (i.e., the intermediary change agent), the position I assumed for this doctoral research. Most notably, no full-time staff works on KIS. The organizational structure of KIS appears in Figure 1.

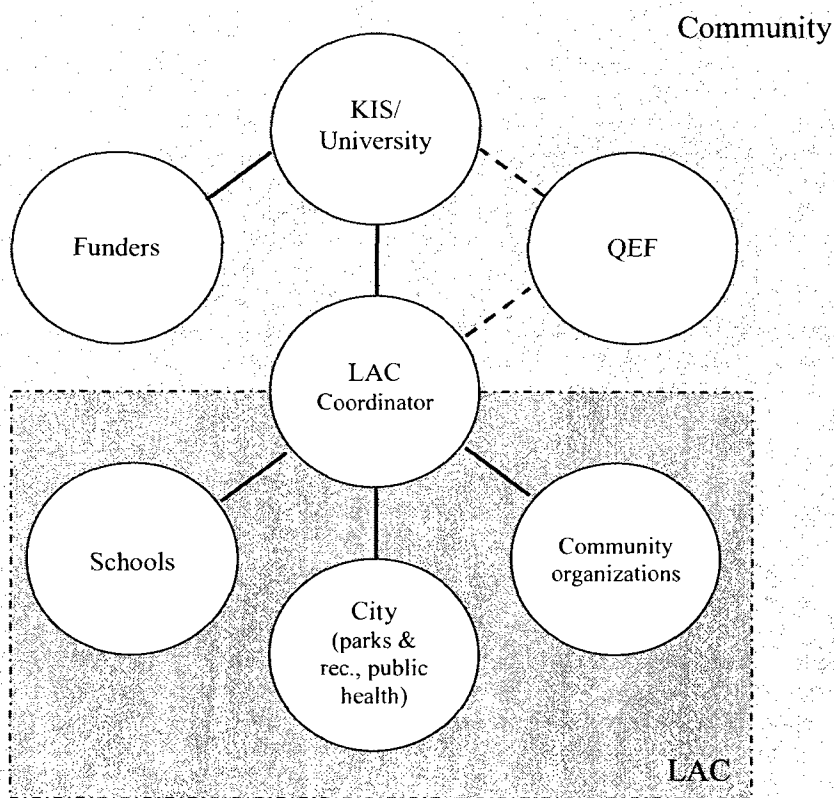


Figure 1. KIS's organizational structure.

With the financial support from the Government of Ontario's Ministry of Health Promotion in 2007-2008, KIS has been extended by an additional year (until August 2009), which led to an expansion of the Vanier LAC to the Lowertown and Overbrook-Forbes neighbourhoods, currently forming the Rideau-Vanier LAC. Vanier, Lowertown, and Overbrook-Forbes are socio-economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the Ottawa region with important francophone, multicultural, and immigrant populations.

The initial pilot phase of the KIS project (2005-2008) forms the general context within which this doctoral research was conducted. KIS's yearly goals consisted in:

Year 1: Creation of the LAC, and development of its first action plan;

Year 2: Implementation of action plan and elaboration of the next action plan; and,

Year 3: Implementation of the second action plan and evaluation.

Partner organizations forming the Rideau-Vanier LAC, as well as the number of representatives involved, are presented in Appendix B. LAC partners have been working together since December 2005, through LAC monthly meetings, sub-committee meetings and activities, and regular formal and informal activities. The structure of LAC meetings and the LAC's internal operational processes were designed to: (1) identify community needs, priorities, community resources, and potential intervention strategies; (2) share, complement, and coordinate resources, programs, and initiatives; (3) produce an annual action plan of concerted sport and physical activity programs and initiatives; and (4) follow-up and evaluate the annual action plan. The annual calendar of the LAC's activities appears in Appendix C.

Using Provan and Kenis' (2007) typology of network governance, the LAC would most likely fall into the shared governance type of network, where coordination and control is highly decentralized and equally shared among LAC partner organizations. However,

when examined as a whole, KIS appears as an externally governed, shared governance entity in which the University, through KIS's research team and the intermediary change agent, take on the role of the lead organization that is (in theory) not a network member.

Role and Posture of the Researcher

In KIS, the LAC coordinator (i.e., intermediary change agent) is an intermediary liaison and mobilization officer hired by KIS's research team to work closely with Rideau-Vanier LAC partner organizations and engage them in autonomous dialogue, on-going planning, shared decision-making, and collective action. One key role of the LAC coordinator consists in helping LAC partners build strong linkages and lasting capacities to collaborate on the planning, implementation, and evaluation of an annual action plan. While KIS's research team acted as more detached program evaluators, I was at the heart of the community mobilization process, operating as a horizontal link between LAC partners. Specifically mandated to coordinate the various activities of the LAC, the intermediary change agent's roles involved: (1) facilitating the process of community mobilization, capacity-building, and appropriation of the KIS project by LAC partners; (2) encouraging interorganizational dialogue, linkages, collaboration, and action; and (3) supporting partners through the development, implementation, and evaluation of concerted sports and physical activity programs and initiatives.

In KIS, the LAC coordinator also acted as a vertical bridge between LAC partners and KIS's research team to ensure that program implementation conformed to KIS's guidelines, principles, and objectives; to negotiate context-specific needs and issues; and to communicate important project developments. While the University provided the broad parameters and resources needed to reach the project's objectives, as the LAC coordinator, I played a guidance, coordination, and oversight role to support intersectoral action at the

community level. In other words, I was actively and intimately involved in the action and change process, playing different roles, sometimes concurrently. It should be noted that as a participant in QEF's provincial and regional meetings (in the Western region), my perspective and learning has inevitably been shaped by QEF's experience and learning. Given this framework, KIS can be viewed as one approach to action research, with strong collaboration, capacity-building, and community change goals and values (Reason & Bradbury, 2001).

Purpose of the Study

Using an exploratory case study approach (Stake, 1995), the processes, mechanisms, and dynamics underlying the mobilization of intersectoral local organizations involved in the KIS project, as well as the role I played and strategies I used as KIS's intermediary change agent to manage the community mobilization process, are examined. Four research questions were specifically addressed, namely:

From my perspective and specific posture as KIS's intermediary change agent,

1. What tensions and dynamics were at play in the interdependent relationship between LAC partners and KIS's research team?
2. What roles and strategies were used to manage the community mobilization process in KIS, particularly the interdependencies and the level of autonomy and ownership of the different organizations involved in the initiative?
3. How did the process of community mobilization and exchange of resources among the organizations involved in KIS evolve over the initiative?
4. What theoretical construct (e.g., theory, framework, model) helps to understand interdependence dynamics operating among organizations involved in KIS?

It should be noted that this research project focused on the processes and dynamics underlying the development of the KIS project in the Vanier, Lowertown, and Overbrook-Forbes neighbourhoods, as opposed to project results and impacts (although community mobilization, as defined herein, is always done to propel collective action for change and, as a result, cannot be separated from action and change). Hence, the analysis was carried out in such a way as to acquire information that would both inform action and be useful in guiding my own practice as KIS's intermediary change agent. In keeping with the qualitative, participative, and emergent design of the present study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Labonte & Robertson, 1996; Patton, 1990; Reason & Bradbury, 2001), the objectives and action strategies pursued as KIS's intermediary change agent were inevitably transformed as a result of my extensive involvement in the project and to better reflect the needs and context of the community and the learnings of the project. This approach has allowed for rich processes, mechanisms, dynamics, and transformations underlying the community mobilization process to transpire and be adequately captured as they occurred. In this view, the terminology and research questions originally proposed before the conduct of this research project have been modified (from "partnership synergy" to "community mobilization") to more adequately reflect the approach I used in the context of KIS. Certainly, the process through which the project was framed, and subsequently reframed, reflects significant learning for both myself and KIS. The original set of research questions, along with indications of how the above questions address each of them, appears in Appendix D. Moreover, the theoretical orientations that initially guided this doctoral research appear in Appendix E.

It should be reminded again that the focus of this thesis is on the intermediary change agent's perspective, at the interface between community partners, and between community

partners and the catalyst institution. This unique perspective is likely to be different from that of KIS university researchers (catalyst institution's perspective) and LAC partners (local organizations' perspective). As introduced earlier, Ford et al.'s (2008) definitions can be used to distinguish the roles and perspectives of the individuals and organizations involved in KIS:

KIS/University/Funders: organizations who call for, sponsor, and formulate the change (i.e., catalyst institution);

LAC coordinator/KIS intermediary change agent (myself): person responsible for supporting and monitoring the implementation of the change;

LAC partners: individuals and organizations responsible for implementing, adopting, or adapting to the change (i.e., local organizations).

Two reasons motivated the decision to examine the processes of community mobilization and control over resource use and contributions in KIS from the intermediary change agent's viewpoint as opposed to from the community partners' perspective. First, the perspective of individuals responsible for supporting and facilitating CII has not received much research attention. Research appears to be limited to the perspective of the community (e.g., Frisby & Millar, 2002; Hutchison & Campbell, 1996; 1997) or, at the other end, the perspective of the catalyst institution (e.g., Williams et al., 2005; Williams II & Olano, 1999). Second, the coordination of the LAC was complex, exhaustive, and time-consuming work, which I was undertaking as part of my doctoral research. Given that I had neither experience with intersectoral community mobilization work nor with community supporting roles prior to embarking in the KIS project, I felt I was neither equipped nor resourced to undertake a fully participative analysis and construction of the community mobilization process *with LAC partners* in addition to what was already demanded from them in the

context of KIS (i.e., LAC planning, implementation, and evaluation activities). It should be noted that my situation may not be all that unusual, as many people appear new to this approach in the public health domain (Brunet, 2006) as a result of changing contexts and conditions for community mobilization since the early 2000s (Bourque et al., 2006b). This thesis thus provides additional potential impact for practitioners engaged in community mobilization CII in the public and population health spheres. The use of RDT as a theoretical perspective for examining CII and the community mobilization process among local organizations will provide new insights for understanding organizational behaviour and intermediary change agent practice in the context of CII and be a significant contribution to the examination and perhaps to the further delimitation or expansion of the theory.

The following section presents an overview of the ontological, epistemological and methodological premises that guided this doctoral research, as well as the methods that were used to collect and analyze the data.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

Authors active in qualitative research suggest that research should be an undertaking grounded on personal beliefs and values (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Mills, Bonner, & Francis, 2006). Mills et al. have argued that:

To ensure a strong research design, researchers must choose a research paradigm that is congruent with their beliefs about the nature of reality. Consciously subjecting such beliefs to an ontological interrogation in the first instance will illuminate the epistemological and methodological possibilities that are available. (p. 2)

Researchers' underlying assumptions about the world (i.e., reality is unique and objective vs. multiple and socially constructed) are often unstated or taken for granted. Making such beliefs and values explicit in this doctoral thesis seems important for helping readers understand and always bear in mind the perspective of the author while reading this thesis, and assess internal coherence between (1) the *ontological* stance of the researcher, or her personal view of social reality; (2) the nature, origin, and scope of knowledge that this thesis addresses and generates, and the nature of the relationship between the researcher and reality (*epistemology*); (3) the research approach, principles, and procedures used for generating knowledge (*methodology*); and (4) the *methods* or tools used to collect and analyze the data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

The following section presents a brief overview of the ontological, epistemological, and methodological premises of this doctoral thesis, followed by a description of the methods used throughout the process of data collection and analysis.

Ontological Stance of the Researcher

In my personal view, social reality is infinitely complex, dynamic, and evolving. I see the world as being comprised of multiple realities, perspectives, truths, and meanings, all shaped by individuals' historical, cultural, and social contexts. For instance, how I experience and make meaning out of this doctoral research is much influenced by my scholastic profile, professional background, life experiences, age and (intellectual) maturity level, posture in the KIS project, and relationship with participating individuals and organizations, to name just a few. Had this study been completed five years later, or by someone else, KIS would probably not have elicited the same experience and meaning among its participating individuals and organizations, including KIS's intermediary change agent (be it myself or another person). As such, in my own view, it is not possible to apprehend an "objective, non-biased" reality, as the very act of attempting to apprehend reality implies a relationship, and thus an interaction, between the apprehender (whether an individual or a man-made tool or device), in all of its affordable yet limited creation, his/her/its historical, cultural, and social context, and the reality being apprehended.

The process of community mobilization in CII and the management of such initiatives as defined, described, and reviewed earlier reflect such a highly complex, multifaceted, dynamic, and ever evolving reality. In fact, CII are composed of: (1) individuals with varied profiles, backgrounds, and expertise; (2) organizations with different missions, values, interests, goals, priorities, resources, and power; and (3) relationships, partnerships, and dynamics operating at different levels within a coordinated system of actors and actions. Moreover, CII evolve in political, economic, and structural contexts that shift at a relatively rapid rate. This complexity suggests that more than one conceptual scheme and

meaning can be attributed to human and organizational experience in CII, depending on one's identity, context, posture, and/or interface within the CII.

Consistent with this view of the nature of reality, this thesis is grounded on a constructivist research paradigm. Constructivism asserts that “realities are social constructions of the mind, and that there exist as many such constructions as there are individuals (although clearly many constructions will be shared)” (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 43). Constructivism rejects the idea that a reality exists independent of the mind (i.e., objectivism/realism). Instead, it supports a *relativist* ontology, that is, the view that reality is ontologically relative to one's specific conceptual scheme or view of the world (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). According to constructivism, meaning and knowledge are always a human construction, although it recognizes that individuals may hold similar views about the nature of social reality within and across cultural groups (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Epistemological Underpinnings

Epistemologically, the relationship between the researcher and the object of research in constructivism is subjective and transactional, leading to a co-construction of meaning (Appleton, 1997; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Constructivism positions researchers as authors of reconstructions of experiences and meanings, “albeit in the context of their own inevitable interpretations” (Strauss & Corbin, 1994, p. 281). Researchers' subjectivity and interaction with the research participants and data are seen as inevitable yet essential parts of the research process and outcomes as they allow access to the multiple views of reality that may exist (Appleton, 1997; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In light of how I interacted with and was intimately linked to the object of this research, constructivist beliefs and values were thus favoured over other paradigms' philosophical underpinnings.

The epistemological assumptions underlying a study guide researchers in determining what they can say about their data, and how to theorize meaning (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Consistent with constructivism, the goal of the present research is not to seek broad generalizations of this single case analysis to other CII but to *increase our understanding* of community-institution partnership *dynamics* and community capacity and autonomy *processes* operating in CII by apprehending and analyzing a substantially fine, rich, and contextualized case (i.e., KIS). However, because meaning is seen as volatile due to the dynamic and changing nature of social structures and contexts (Guba & Lincoln, 1989), the focus of this research is centered on apprehending and understanding contextualized local manifestations through the analysis of one specific case and generate knowledge (i.e., dynamic patterns) that will help: (1) intermediary change agents to better capture, understand, and adapt their practice to other CII based on their idiosyncratic contexts, and (2) CII participants, stakeholders, and researchers to better understand and analyze CII dynamics and processes.

Methodological Approach

Methodologically, the constructivist paradigm adopts a hermeneutic and dialectic approach (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Hermeneutics involves interpreting and reaching an understanding of the essential meaning of the constructions, while dialectic involves seeking out convergent and divergent thinking about the phenomena under study, possibly uncovering conflicting ideas and perspectives. Constructivist researchers emphasize an emic perspective, or the notion that there cannot be one single explanation for a complex social phenomenon. This implies that divergent perspectives are likely to emerge, yet be as valid as the researcher's own (Appleton, 1997). This exploratory case study thus takes a qualitative approach to understand a phenomenon in all its complexity.

Creswell (2007) proposed five methodological approaches to constructivism: grounded theory, phenomenology, ethnography, case study, and narrative research. In seeking a research methodology that would reflect my ontological and epistemological position, the exploratory case study approach⁵ (Stake, 1995) seemed the most appropriate. However, it should be noted that this doctoral research does not fall neatly into any of the five methodological approaches proposed in the literature. Rather, it appears to be situated at the intersection of the case study (Creswell, 2007; Stake, 1995), autoethnography (Ellis & Bochner, 2000) and insider action research (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005; Coghlan & Shani, 2008) methodologies. In fact, this doctoral inquiry involved an in-depth, longitudinal, and systematic examination of a single case (i.e., the KIS initiative). Moreover, this research involved prolonged time in the field (Creswell, 2007), and included a reflective component, which could take on an autoethnographic form (Boyle & Parry, 2007; Ellis & Bochner, 2000). Finally, because I observed, documented, reflected on, and analyzed my own practice as an actor actively involved and intimately immersed in the action and change process, this study also borrowed principles from insider action research (Coghlan & Shani, 2008). In fact, KIS can be viewed as one approach to action research, with strong collaboration, capacity-building, and community change goals and values (Reason & Bradbury, 2001).

Altogether, this “hybrid” research approach allowed for a fine, context-specific, and culturally rich reading of the process of community mobilization and control over resources, as well as substantial “internal” insights into collaborative dynamics, processes, and mechanisms which might otherwise not have been captured by more traditional (i.e.,

⁵ Stake (1995) is privileged over Yin (2003) here because Stake is located in a constructivist paradigm and uses the case study approach to better understand complex phenomena and cases (i.e., whether similar or different), while Yin is grounded in a post-positivist paradigm and uses the case study approach to make generalizations.

external, non-participant evaluation) research approaches. For instance, this approach allowed me to connect CII's everyday aspects with that of broader political and strategic organizational agendas and practices. Furthermore, it permitted to reveal the tacit aspects of CII implementation, including inherent tensions, paradoxal dynamics, and power relations.

Research Methods

As introduced earlier, qualitative researchers endorsing a constructivist paradigm “stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 8). Qualitative research, whether in public health, sociology, management, or political science, allows for an increased understanding of how social experience is created and given meaning. As such, it seeks to answer questions that stress the *what, how, why, and in what circumstances* different individuals, groups, organizations, or communities make certain decisions or take certain actions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). In light of the research questions this thesis addresses, this study was developed based on qualitative research methods.

Participants. This case analysis focused on the pilot phase of the KIS project (September 2005-August 2008). Not including its two main funders (i.e., Sears Canada and Ontario's Ministry of Health Promotion), the KIS initiative comprised a total of 14 organizations represented by over 25 organizational representatives; namely, one University, as well as five francophone elementary schools, two school boards, five community organizations and recreation centers, and one city forming the Rideau-Vanier LAC (see Appendix B for an overview of the number of representatives per organization). Formal agreement to participate in this study and to record monthly LAC meetings was obtained from all LAC partner representatives through a consent form approved by the ethics review

committee at the University of Ottawa (see Appendix G). It is worth mentioning that the focal participant of the study was myself, as KIS's intermediary change agent and doctoral student researcher. In fact, as indicated earlier, the research was conducted from this very specific lens and posture.

Data sources. This case analysis draws on qualitative data collected (or *created*) between September 2006 and April 2008, with archival and electronic material produced as of December 2005 (totalling a 29-month period; see Appendix H for an overview of the study timelines and key milestones). In order to understand the tensions, dynamics, processes, and strategies used to manage the process of mobilization and control over resources *from the perspective of KIS's intermediary change agent*, it was important that the analysis allows for the capturing of my personal experience, insights, and feelings deriving from my day-to-day involvement in KIS. As such, the data derived from five sources, in order of importance: (1) the LAC coordinator's participant observation and descriptive notes, (2) the LAC coordinator's reflective notes, (3) LAC monthly meeting transcripts and notes, (4), written and electronic material (i.e., e-mail conversations, official documents produced by the LAC or by KIS'S research team, etc.), and (5) debriefing notes from KIS research team meetings. However, it should be noted that the major data source for this study was the set of field (i.e., observation and descriptive) and reflective notes I compiled in a journal over the course of the project (data sources 1 and 2). These notes and reflections were recorded every day or every few days in a research journal (initially in a paper format and later in an electronic format).

Participant observation and descriptive notes comprised notes recorded with regards to various behaviours, situations, circumstances, activities, and events which I observed but also enacted throughout the KIS initiative. These included observation and descriptive notes

deriving from conversations and encounters with various KIS participants (i.e., LAC partners, KIS's research team, youth leaders, children and their parents, QEF colleagues), LAC meetings or sub-committee meetings, and various other KIS operational activities. Reflective notes represented thoughts, feelings, and impressions of what I experienced, I observed, or I did and what happened in the context of my everyday activities and interactions with the various project participants. Table 2 presents examples of participant observation and descriptive notes and reflective notes that were recorded during the research process. It should be noted that allowing myself reflection time and space (e.g., while driving back home at the end of the day, during a hike at the beginning of the day) were incredibly helpful in generating my reflective notes.

Out of the 15 LAC meetings that occurred during the period of this study, 7 were tape-recorded in accordance with LAC partners' signed consent (January 2007-October 2007), and one meeting (December 2007) was not entirely recorded as planned (i.e., the tape recorder was kept on the pause function inadvertently for the second half of the meeting). Out of the 7 LAC meetings that were tape-recorded, only three (January, February, and April 07) were transcribed verbatim (the rationale behind this decision is presented later). However, after each of the 15 LAC meetings, extensive observation/descriptive and reflective notes were taken to capture tensions, challenges, dilemmas, and dynamics at play in the LAC and in KIS more globally, as well as processes, mechanisms, and strategies used to manage the process of community mobilization and the use and contribution of resources. LAC meeting recordings were listened to so as to complement notes taken after the meetings.

The very nature of qualitative research, particularly the methodological approach that was used in the present study (i.e., self-reflective, insider action research, flexible, evolving), required that I keep an highly reflective stance with regards to the research context, the

Table 2

Excerpts of Participant Observation/Descriptive and Reflective Notes Recorded during the Research Process

Participant Observation and Descriptive Notes

Because physical activity programming was concentrated in the schools during year one in order to address the issue of accessibility/transportation, there are many resources in the community and municipal infrastructures that have not been used nor collaborated for developing various initiatives. –February 27, 2007 (Observation note taken after a LAC meeting)

[The City parks and recreations manager] sees the LAC as a strategic planning and development committee in which questions such as how can we increase girls' participation in sports, how can we engage parents more, and how can we better reach multicultural communities teacher whose concerns are rather located within her school. –March 23, 2007 (Observation note taken after a LAC meeting)

During the LAC meeting, we established specific criteria for determining the types of projects that we would like to see supported through the LAC next year. This will help partners through program development, reinforce partnerships between them, and better evaluate the relevance of projects brought to the table (will facilitate decision-making). –October 30, 2007 (Observation note taken after a LAC meeting)

Reflective Notes

Because LAC partners invest so much time and resources in KIS, I often feel that I also owe them time and resources. For example, all the voluntary work that I do for [this community organization] ... but it contributes so much to the project in material (photocopies, office space and furniture, etc.) and human resources... At [this other community organization], I help them address their human resource issue by linking them with the University's Human Kinetics Department for HK students and volunteers. It's like an exchange of resources, a form of collaboration, but I often feel frustrated because I feel I have less time and in-kind resources to give them compared with what they contribute to KIS. The project is largely based on local partners' contribution and so I always feel the need to thank them for all they do. –November 17, 2006

Table 2 (Cont'd)

Excerpts of Participant Observation/Descriptive and Reflective Notes Recorded during the Research Process.

Ideally, in our upcoming LAC evaluation exercise, we will have to assess the level of ownership for each program supported by the LAC/KIS to determine which ones will be renewed next year and which ones may not (make ownership an evaluation criteria). I am not sure how partners will receive this. It doesn't mean they will have to do everything and that I will completely withdraw. My approach will rather be to present the approach privileged by KIS/QEF (participation during and outside meetings, partnerships, community ownership, resource investment, etc.), to collectively assess where we are up to (how do they perceive themselves?), and establish specific objectives and priorities to gradually progress towards this work culture. No need to tell you that I feel in an awkward position. The discourse is that the LAC has decision-making power and that my role is to influence the LAC to make certain decisions or take certain directions. At the same time, I do have the last word. This requires that I be very careful in my approach. I think the exchange must be bidirectional (be ready to listen, stay open to their reality). –December 3, 2006

KIS's long-term orientations and sustainability not being clear and guaranteed, it is difficult for me to be the intermediary between LAC partners and KIS. It is frustrating because I spend my time motivating partners to invest energy and resources in the project, reminding them that the University works to ensure KIS's financial sustainability beyond the pilot phase and that we don't want KIS to be a three-year initiative... I feel it is important that they these orientations and goals be clarified and defined to reassure partners and I and give meaning to our work. –April 17, 2007

perspective I held, and the perspective the other participants held in the data collection and interpretation process. As qualitative researchers extract meaning from the data through their own interpretive filter, the use of memoing (Birks, Chapman, & Francis, 2008; Charmaz, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994) throughout the research process proved helpful in this study. Sometimes compared with journaling (Birks et al., 2008), memoing is a research technique used in qualitative inquiry that enables researchers to keep track of decision-making and thought processes that underlie any changes in research direction, as well as conceptual construction. Memoing allows researchers to acknowledge their own subjective influence on data collection and interpretation yet maintain quality and rigor throughout the research process (Birks et al., 2008).

In the present study, memoing was used as a procedural (i.e., mapping research procedures and decisions) and analytical (i.e., extracting/constructing meaning from the data) strategy (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Procedural memos allowed me to record and acknowledge the logical processes and rationale that guided me in making certain decisions and taking specific actions or directions throughout the various phases of the study (e.g., data collection activities, analytical procedures, etc.). Analytical memos enabled the extraction of meaning from the data and their expression in conceptual terms. Analytical memos served to complement the data analysis process, particularly in moving the analysis of raw data from a *descriptive* (i.e., thematic, semantic or explicit) level to an *interpretative* (i.e., conceptual, theoretical, or latent) level (Boyatzis, 1998; Patton, 1990). The following extracts provide two examples of procedural and analytical memos, respectively, produced during the course of the study:

The theoretical orientations that initially guided this thesis research, which were developed before the conduct of this study, were based on the concept of partnership

synergy. Partnership synergy has been defined as the extent to which a group successfully combines the “perspectives, resources, and skills of its participating individuals and organizations [in a way that it] contributes to and strengthens the work of the group” (Lasker et al., 2001, p. 187). Considering that constructivist insider action research is, by definition, emerging out of and constructed into action, they are likely to change as a result of the participatory experience. Consequently, following my extensive participation in the KIS project/Rideau-Vanier LAC and the inductive nature of the research analysis, this initial model and my own understanding of the KIS project were revised, reframed, and refined throughout the research process to account for my experience and learning in KIS. As a result, the foundation of KIS’s approach to community-based activities was found to lie upon the development of community mobilization, ownership, and capacity for collective action. This led me to examine the KIS initiative and manage the LAC with that particular lens from that point onward. (Procedural memo – produced January 27, 2007)

After a discussion with my supervisors, we agreed that it was not necessary to transcribe all LAC meetings considering the time it represents to transcribe three-hour discussions with multiple participants, and the extensive observation and reflective material that I collect immediately following LAC meetings. However, I need to make sure that these notes are appropriately cross-referenced to specific moments and themes addressed during the meetings so as to be able to return and easily locate recorded extracts if needed. (Procedural memo – produced May 3, 2007)

The analysis of tensions that emerged during the course of KIS seems to suggest that the notion of interdependence in KIS is particularly complex; it appears to be articulated vertically, in terms of power relations, collaboration, and resource exchange between KIS and the LAC, and horizontally, in terms of power relations, collaboration, and resources exchanges among LAC partners. However, this two-dimensional interdependent relationship also appears to be modulated transversally by another dynamic, that is, the need for the LAC to become autonomous in managing the initiative yet, at the same time, reach KIS's objectives. (Analytical memo – produced February 15, 2009)

It seems like the relative importance and the meaning of tangible and intangible resources in the exchange relationships changed as KIS and the community mobilization evolved. While material and human resource exchanges among LAC partners were encouraged and emphasized at the beginning of the initiative (e.g., “it was agreed that the school would take charge of registrations and provide access to the gym and sport material” – December 1, 2006, Observation note), LAC partners' financial contribution and political resources, such as their collective legitimacy, external linkages, and capacity to influence decision-makers, became particularly important after two years into the initiative (e.g., “LAC partners meeting with Rideau-Vanier and Overbrook-Forbes councillors to share concerns with regards to the accessibility of city infrastructures, financial assistance for underprivileged families, and the need for subsidized summer day camp registrations for low-income families in two parks” – March 23, 2008). Financial resources seem to have been of central concern throughout the initiative; however, the meaning of KIS's financial contribution changed, from being seen as “additional money” to develop physical

activity programs, to a “lever” for building Rideau-Vanier’s capacity to increase opportunities for children to be physically active. Both changes appear to reflect a response from KIS and the LAC each recognizing their reduced interdependency as the financial sustainability and survival of KIS became increasingly uncertain.

(Analytical memo – produced March 7, 2009)

Data analysis. An important characteristic of the data collection and analysis process was its on-going and iterative nature (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Reason & Bradbury, 2001; Patton, 2002). As a significant amount of material was collected over the 29-month period, participant observations/descriptive notes, reflections notes, and LAC meetings recordings were summarized (i.e., data reduction) and, along with debriefing notes and electronic material, analyzed on a monthly basis approximately (although this varied based on the amount of material collected and on the depth of reflection notes). Indeed, as the study (data collection and analysis) progressed and as I became deeply immersed and engaged with the data, memos gradually became more reflective and analytical, leading to a reduction of journal writing and an increase in the production of analytical memos.

This qualitative study was analyzed as a two-stage process: (1) inductive, thematic coding and analysis of the raw data (Patton, 1990); and (2); theoretical, conceptual coding and interpretation of emerging themes based on key concepts from RDT. Inductive/thematic analysis aimed to identify patterns of meaning (themes) that captured important aspects and dynamics of the KIS initiative, and which were particularly prevalent across the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The data were coded without trying to fit them into a pre-existing coding frame. Analysis involved moving back and forth between the data set, the coded extracts of data, and the potential themes that appeared as the analysis progressed. Inductive thematic analysis led to the identification of : (1) tensions and paradoxal dynamics operating

in KIS; (2) a number of strategies used by KIS's intermediary change agent which promoted community mobilization and the development of collective capacities among LAC partners, as well as barriers that impeded these processes; and, (3) a stage-like transformation of the collaboration dynamic within the LAC as the initiative progressed (see the Methods section of each paper, in Chapters 3-5, for a detailed description of the data analysis procedure). A second level of analysis (i.e., conceptual thematic analysis) attempted to examine these tensions, dynamics, and strategies through a resource interdependence lens. Here, driven by a conceptual framework (i.e., a few concepts from RDT), the analysis sought to examine how organizational resources and capacities, autonomy, and ownership were managed, supported, and negotiated in KIS. Hence, analysis took place both during and following periods of data collection. This allowed for the specific research questions to evolve during the study (through inductive thematic analysis), and then to guide and focalize analysis and interpretation on the conceptual framework (through theoretical thematic analysis; Paquette, 2007).

Although this case analysis provides the perspective of the intermediary change agent, steps were taken to enhance the credibility of the findings, including recordings of seven of the 15 monthly LAC meetings, triangulation of data collection methods (field notes, personal reflective notes, monthly LAC meeting transcripts and notes, written and electronic material including e-mail conversations), and the presence of participants' accounts in the thesis so as to allow readers to connect analytical findings with the raw data from which they were derived (Mills et al., 2006). Debriefing meetings with KIS's research team also helped to critically reflect on the community mobilization and management process.

The next three chapters present the results of this doctoral research, examined as three distinct research articles. It is worth mentioning that each article takes a moderately different

orientation, focusing on specific research questions of this thesis and illustrating varied roles of the intermediary change agent in this case study, which are later integrated in the discussion chapter.

Chapter 3 addresses key tensions, dilemmas, and dynamics I faced as KIS's intermediary change agent throughout the course of the KIS project. Using a first-person, insider action research approach, dilemmas encountered from the unique posture of the intermediary change agent are examined and framed in terms of tensions occurring along three continuums: (1) *process-product*, defined by the challenge of finding a balance between facilitating community capacity processes and KIS outcomes; (2) *insider-outsider*, characterized by the polarity of roles, identities, territories, loyalties, and accountabilities; and (3) *bottom-up/top-down*, associated with the difficulty of respecting local circumstances and needs while simultaneously operating within parameters set by KIS. In this article, I critically reflect on the role of institutions involved as partners in CII and draw attention to the complexity of the intermediary change agent's role in such initiatives.

Chapter 4 takes a partnership management perspective, examining key managerial strategies and barriers to the practice of KIS's intermediary change agent which contributed to (or impacted) the development of collective capacities and community mobilization dynamics operating horizontally among LAC partners within the Rideau-Vanier LAC. Strategies are examined using Agranoff and McGuire's (2001) framework of network management processes.

Chapter 5 explores the dynamics underlying community mobilization in the LAC from a developmental perspective, as well as the key roles I played in guiding LAC partners through each stage of the community mobilization developmental process. The stages through which local organizations moved as they learned to work together and achieve

collective goals involved: (1) connection and formalization; (2) cooperation; (3) collaboration; (4) concerted action; and (5) ownership. A sixth stage, transformation, is projected based on the latest developments that occurred at the end of stage five. Stages were examined along five dimensions: (1) local organizations' time and resource investment; (2) exchange relationships; (3) collective capacity; (4) community action and change; and (5) intermediary change agent's role. This stage-based process was not linear and involved periods of ambiguity, conflict, negotiation, and learning.

The general discussion and conclusion of this thesis, which integrate the results from all three manuscripts to build a construct of interdependency dynamics involved in KIS and examine key strategies and approaches I used to foster and manage the community mobilization, capacity building, and ownership process, appear in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 3

Manuscript I: Tensions and Dilemmas Experienced by an Intermediary Change Agent in a
Community-Institution Initiative

Tensions and Dilemmas Experienced by an Intermediary Change Agent in a Community-
Institution Initiative
Christine Faubert

This paper is a modified version of an article published in *Critical Public Health*⁶

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Introduction

Over the past three decades in Canada and other countries, community-institution initiatives (CII) have emerged to address complex health and social issues whose solutions lie outside the scope of any single organization, sector, or level (Health Canada, 1999; Higginbotham, Albrecht & Connor, 2001). CII embrace the notion that communities, governments, and stakeholders from multiple sectors and levels must be involved as partners in the design, implementation, and evaluation of intervention programs if community health goals and objectives are to be achieved (Green & Mercer, 2001).

Although locally based and operated within community settings, most CII are initiated by institutions often external to the community (typically called change agents; Ford, Ford & D'Amelio, 2008), such as foundations, private philanthropies, corporations, universities, or governmental bodies, which typically set the broad parameters for the project and invite the community for a joint enterprise (Chaskin, Brown, Venkatesh & Vidal, 2001; Williams, Labonte, Randall & Muhajarine, 2005). Individuals hired by external institutions to support and monitor CII implementation are referred to here as intermediary change agents, and can assume different roles (e.g., initiator, director, expert, consultant, resource, facilitator, collaborator, co-manager) depending on the level of control they exert over the process of change (Collerette, Delisle & Perron, 1997; Dimock, 1992; Stoecker, 1999). The participation of organizations and actors at the community level may range from little power over decisions to shared decision-making and goal setting. The latter type of agreement usually takes the form of a community advisory board or local steering committee whose role is to identify, develop, and implement the means for carrying out the external change agent's vision within the targeted community (Chaskin et al., 2001; Fulbright-Anderson,

Auspos & Anderson, 2001; Kubisch, Brown, Chaskin, Hirota, Joseph, Richman & Roberts, 1997).

One potential danger of CII is to supply communities with financial support and pre-defined solutions to address the issue and, as a result, hinder the development of local capacities and a sense of ownership (i.e., a feeling that it equally belongs to the community) towards the project (Himmelman, 2001; Simpson, Wood & Daws, 2003). Unless change agencies foster community capacity, autonomy, and ownership of CII, initiative sustainability after the funded period is endangered (Chaskin et al., 2001). Although not always a formal objective, community capacity building is increasingly seen as a critical element of CII success and sustainability (Kubisch, Auspos, Brown, Chaskin, Fulbright-Anderson & Hamilton, 2002; Nee & Schram, 1999), and entails strengthening community participation and leadership, interorganizational relationships, and local organizations' capacities to mobilize resources needed to take action together (Crilly, Kloseck & Lubell, 2003; Labonte & Laverack, 2001). Evidence suggests that for community capacity and autonomy to develop, sufficient resources, time, and space must be provided for community partners to actively engage in and contribute to all aspects of the project—such as through the establishment of strong, lasting governance mechanisms (Stoecker, 1999).

By their very nature, CII may give rise to a number of tensions, particularly when they adopt community capacity and autonomy approaches (Kubisch et al., 1997; Frisby & Millar, 2002). Tensions and dynamics inherent to CII have been addressed in the literature (e.g., Bourque, 2008; Burgess, 2006; Chaskin et al., 2001; Duperré, 1992; Kubisch et al., 1997; Brown & Stetzer, 1998; Chavis, 2001; Frisby & Millar, 2002; Labonte, 2005; Williams et al., 2005; Humphrey, 2006; Lamoureux, 1994; Proulx, Bourque, & Savard, 2007), and point to polarities of goals, self-interests, and power relations. For instance, CII

have been criticized for adopting a utilitarian approach to community participation, using local communities as settings to implement pre-packed public programs and/or offset the costs of providing services (Doré, 1991; Labonte, 2005; Larivière, 2005). A number of authors have highlighted the dynamics associated with a desire to decentralize and democratize the management of public programs on the one hand, and a risk of using local communities as instruments for their implementation on the other hand (Bourque, 2008; Duperré, 1992; Labonte, 2005; Lamoureux, 1994; Proulx, Bourque, & Savard, 2007). Essentially, these dynamics allude to tensions inherent to organizations' need to have autonomy in, and power over, their own resources and practices, yet be dependent on other, more or less powerful organizations, to exercise this autonomy and power.

Extensive work on physical activity CII (e.g., Frisby & Millar, 2002; Park Tanjasiri, 1999) and other comprehensive community initiatives (e.g., Annie E. Casey Foundation; Aspen Institute; Better Beginnings, Better Futures; Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago) have also noted that a trade-off between building capacity (i.e., process) and getting things done (i.e., result) must often be negotiated by collaborating agencies and community participants. Similarly, bringing together communities with high-ranking institutions may raise issues of “power, legitimacy, accountability, representation, and respect” (Kubisch et al., 1997, Introduction section, para 8), especially when the joint enterprise does not originate from the community, and when the institution is the grant holder.

In sum, the literature suggests that CII adopting community mobilization strategies tend to be marked by tension because of three co-existing yet conflicting realities: (1) CII constitute a source of valuable resources for local organizations; (2) CII seek to increase the capacity of local communities to work together on common issues and develop community

ownership over the solutions developed; and (3) CII rely on sustained community participation to realize their mission and achieve their objectives (Bourque, 2008). All three realities imply a degree of interdependence and complex resource exchange relationships between local organizations and the external institution, and among local organizations. Moreover, the potential divergence of capabilities, contributions made, and inducements received by the various organizations involved in CII suggests differences in power, control, influence, and autonomy between organizational participants.

The recent interest in, and funding allocation for, community mobilization CII, particularly in the public and population health area, suggests that a growing number of researchers, managers, and practitioners are embarking in projects espousing community mobilization approaches. While CII designed on a community mobilization approach is a growing trend, the literature on the dynamics and tensions operating in CII remains underdeveloped. Furthering our understanding of the dynamics and tensions operating in CII is crucial to manage interdependencies and power relations among the various actors involved, and strategically adjust CIIs' operations and activities to balance multiple organizational interests, missions, and objectives. Moreover, the (limited) state of knowledge about CII dynamics and tensions almost exclusively focuses on the institution/funders perspective and, to a lesser extent, the community perspective. Missing in the literature is an exploration of inherent dynamics and tensions as experienced from the intermediary change agent's standpoint (Rethemeyer & Hatmaker, 2007). This type of analysis is essential to present a more critical view on the value, promises, and risks of CII in developing community capacities, and to elucidate the complex role of the intermediary change agent in such initiatives.

Building on previous work (e.g., Duperré, 1992; Lamoureux, 1994; Brown & Stetzer, 1998; Chaskin et al., 2001; Chavis, 2001; Frisby & Millar, 2002; Labonte, 2005; Williams et al., 2005; Burgess, 2006; Humphrey, 2006; Proulx, Bourque, & Savard, 2007; Bourque, 2008), notably the work of Kubisch et al. (1997), this paper examined key tensions and dilemmas faced by the author, a doctoral student, who operated as an intermediary change agent for community intersectoral collaboration, capacity, and autonomy, and whose role was to support local organizations throughout a process of joint planning and implementation of a community-university initiative (i.e., one type of CII). The first-person pronoun “I” is intentionally used to stress the account of her personal experience in the initiative (Marshall & Mead, 2005). As such, how these tensions were perceived is very much influenced by her specific posture in the initiative, and provides a perspective that potentially differs from that of community partners and (external) University researchers/evaluators.

It should be noted that this paper does not seek to unravel each dilemma presented, as many of these tensions appear to be inherent to the nature of CII. Rather, tensions and dilemmas are explored with the goals of raising more questions than answers, critically examining the role of institutions and community organizations involved as partners in CII, and encouraging those who share a practical interest in building community capacity to reflect on and question their own practice on an on-going basis. Readers are referred to Chapter 1 for a description of the KIS project and the intermediary change agent’s roles and specific posture in the initiative. Keeping these multiple roles in mind will help readers understand the different tensions I faced over the course of the project as KIS’s intermediary change agent.

It is worth mentioning that the decision to undertake an intermediary change agent role for my doctoral studies was non-conventional but certainly very much engaging and

stimulating. As a novice with no “expert knowledge” or prior field experience in community mobilization and capacity building (my background was primarily qualitative, intervention research and community, youth services work), I engaged with LAC partners and KIS researchers in a dynamic process of collective dialogue, action, reflection, and learning. The experience of simultaneously facilitating, participating in, and researching a CII rendered critical reflections on my role and practice both highly pertinent and necessary (Boutilier & Mason, 2006). The methods used to conduct this study are described next.

Methods

To examine the emerging dilemmas, tensions, and dynamics I faced in the midst of intermediary change agency practice, a reflective, first-person insider action research approach was used (Marshall, 2001; Burgess, 2006; Coghlan & Holian, 2007). Reflective, first-person insider action research is an approach whereby researchers observe, document, and reflect on their own practice as actors actively involved and intimately immersed in the action and change process (Marshall, 2001). This approach was favoured over other qualitative designs (e.g., conducting interviews with a third person, independent change agent) on the basis of the substantially fine, rich, and contextualized analysis of CII *dynamics* and community capacity and autonomy *processes* insider action research allows.

In order to understand the tensions and demands of the project from an intermediary change agent perspective, it was important that the data collection allow for the capturing of my personal experience, insights, and feelings. As such, the major data source for this study was the set of field (i.e., observation) notes and personal reflections I compiled in a research journal over the course of the project. These notes and reflections were recorded every day or every few days in a research journal (initially in a paper format and later in an electronic format). Participant observation and descriptive notes comprised notes recorded with regards

to various behaviours, situations, circumstances, activities, and events which I observed but also enacted throughout the KIS initiative, and which captured important aspects relevant to the research questions. These included observation and descriptive notes deriving from conversations and encounters with various KIS participants (i.e., LAC partners, KIS's research team, youth leaders, children and their parents, QEF colleagues), LAC meetings or sub-committee meetings, and various other KIS operational activities. Reflective notes represented thoughts, feelings, and impressions of what I experienced, I observed, or I did and what happened in the context of my everyday activities and interactions with the variety of project participants.

An important characteristic of data analysis was its on-going nature (Reason & Bradbury, 2001). To efficiently manage information, field notes and reflections were summarized (i.e., data reduction) and imported into the software program NVivo (Fraser, 1999) on approximately a monthly basis. While field notes and reflections were extensive and very broad in the early stages of data collection, they progressively converged around a few central constructs. The data were analyzed using the inductive thematic analysis procedure described by Braun and Clarke (2006). First, meaningful units of text that captured important dynamics occurring in KIS were identified. Then, units of text which dealt with the same issue were organized together to form meaningful categories. Third, the set of candidate categories were reviewed and refined to eliminate the ones that were not clearly distinguishable from other categories, or which lacked sufficient data to support them, and to collapse categories that actually formed one category. Finally, the categories which showed distinctiveness and coherence among the data extracts, and which were supported by a considerable set of data, were given a definition and name (Patton, 1990). Inductive thematic analysis resulted in a total of 32 distinct categories grouped into 3 key tensions each

characterized by 2 themes forming opposing dynamics (refer to Tables 3 to 5 for a full list of themes and dimensions). The data that appear in these tables are reflections taken from my research journal. Reflections that appear in italics are direct quotes from my journal, while the remaining reflections have been paraphrased to summarize sets of descriptive and reflective notes with similar meanings to help readers understand the polarity of issues encountered.

Although this case analysis provides the perspective of the intermediary change agent, steps were taken to enhance the credibility of the findings, including recordings of monthly LAC meetings and triangulation of data collection methods (field notes, personal reflective notes, monthly LAC meeting transcripts and notes, written and electronic material including e-mail conversations). Debriefing meetings with KIS's research team also helped to critically reflect on the partnership and community capacity and autonomy building process. Formal agreement to participate in this study and to record monthly LAC meetings was obtained from all LAC partner representatives through a consent form approved by the ethics review committee at the University of Ottawa (see Appendix G).

Results

This section presents the tensions and dilemmas that emerged throughout the course of the project. As KIS's intermediary change agent, I continually felt pulled between what I often perceived as conflicting ends and dynamics but which needed to be negotiated and integrated to help the project progress. These tensions resulted from the necessity to: (1) facilitate both the means (*process*) and ends (*product*) of the project; (2) deal with varying perspectives of *insider-outsider* positioning; and (3) respect context-specific issues, circumstances, and needs (*bottom-up*) while at the same time operating within pre-defined parameters (*top-down*). Each tension is described below, along with specific examples.

Process vs. Product Tension

Tensions experienced along the process-product continuum are presented in Table 3. In essence, process-product dilemmas highlighted the challenge of balancing ownership and capacity building processes with the timely delivery of tangible results. On the one hand, my role was to encourage and support LAC partners' active participation in project planning, implementation, and evaluation processes. On the other hand, the LAC governance structure, by its very nature (i.e., intersectoral/interorganizational, "bottom-up," horizontal decision-making), was relatively slow in producing results. The community planning and building process did not always match the timetable and efficiency needs set by KIS for the grant's deliverables; as a result, capacity building efforts sometimes had to be sacrificed. One major challenge was thus to identify mechanisms enabling local governance and ownership without placing additional pressure on partners' already over-extended and finite resources and capacities.

One example was whether or not to provide the LAC with additional technical assistance for program implementation. On the one hand, I was concerned that this person would end up operating programs LAC partners were supposed to be jointly operating. On the other hand, partners expressed the need for this resource due to their lack of time and staff. At one LAC meeting, the decision to create a program coordinator position was made. This led to a clear goal conflict: while it was the LAC partners' decision, it counteracted KIS's goal of helping community partners work together in a more complementary, concerted, and autonomous way, and resulted in partners pulling back from their program development and implementation roles and responsibilities. Interestingly, partners later realized that they were not building their capacity to make interorganizational linkages and

Table 3

Tensions Encountered along the Process-Product Continuum

Dimension	Process	Product
<i>KIS's Objectives</i>	KIS sought to develop local capacity, autonomy, and ownership of the project by the LAC partners.	KIS also sought to enhance children's participation to sport and PA programs.
<i>Change Agent's Roles and Responsibilities</i>	I was mandated to foster local capacity and ownership over planning and project implementation, and thus shared leadership and responsibilities with partners.	I was also responsible for bringing the project into fruition and producing visible outcomes for funders, and thus initiated program implementation for partners.
<i>Partnership Efforts' Focus</i>	<i>"Is it better, in the early phases of the project, to work on capacity and autonomy, even though it means the project takes longer to produce results and build momentum?"</i>	<i>"Or should I focus on achieving quick results in order to mobilize more partners, build momentum, maintain interest, and then work on building capacity?"</i>
<i>Participation/Contribution</i>	<i>"Lending partners too many responsibilities may overwhelm them and exhaust their limited resources and capacities."</i>	<i>"Partners may disengage if they see I am operating the project on my own and/or do not feel they are contributing to the project."</i>
<i>Technical Assistance</i>	<i>"Providing partners with excessive technical assistance impeded participation, responsibility, and ownership."</i>	<i>"Providing partners with sufficient support was crucial to sustain their commitment and contribution."</i>
<i>Timelines</i>	<i>"Because KIS was time-limited, developing community capacity and ownership was essential but this process was long and continuous."</i>	<i>"It was often more time efficient to do the work by myself rather than to form working groups and ensure follow-ups."</i>
<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>"Pressing the LAC to deliver an action plan within a seven-month period was in a sense counteracting the community building agenda."</i>	Funders and KIS wanted an overview of the LAC action plan and detailed programmatic activities.

work together, which led to the elimination of the program coordinator position seven months later.

Considering that KIS was time-limited, taking the time to build local capacity and autonomy during the mobilizing and planning phases (i.e., Year 1) of the project was important to allow partners to get to know each other, build relationships and mutual trust, engage in concerted action, and develop a sense of ownership toward the project. Trading process for product, especially during the early phases of the initiative, could have permanently disengaged community actors and organizations. At the same time, I also felt the need for the LAC to produce quick results, especially at the beginning of the implementation phase, to keep partners motivated and engaged in the project and show them that the time, energy, and organizational resources they invested were paying off. Early on, measurable successes were also important to secure additional sources of funding to ensure the sustainability of the project. Clearly, the danger of emphasizing early products by valuing speed and efficiency at the expense of community capacity was imminent.

Insider vs. Outsider Tension

The second set of tensions, presented in Table 4, described the difficulties of dealing with blurred and shifting definitions and delineations of insider/internal and outsider/external in the context of the project, as well as ensuing conflicts of membership, role, territory, loyalty, and accountability. For instance, a number of problems were raised around which organizations could and could not be a LAC partner, what exactly constituted the “community,” and whom the LAC was targeting. Although an initial pool of local partners had first been identified and invited by KIS’s research team to form the LAC, subsequent decisions regarding membership criteria, community definition/delineation, and expansion to

Table 4

Tensions Encountered along the Insider-Outsider Continuum

Dimension	Insider/Internal/“Us”	Outsider/External/“Them”
<i>Membership and Community</i>	“ <i>What constitutes the community? Who should form the LAC? Organizations located or operating exclusively within the Rideau-Vanier community? Parents?</i> ”	Organizations located outside the Rideau-Vanier community but which may provide valuable resources to the community?
<i>Target Population</i>	“ <i>Should the LAC target children residing in and/or attending schools in the neighbourhood only?</i> ”	“ <i>Should it also target non-resident children/families LAC partner organizations are serving?</i> ”
<i>Change Agent’s Posture</i>	“ <i>As the change agent working in the community, do partners perceive me as internal to the LAC and to the community?</i> ”	“ <i>As a University doctoral student and non-resident of Ottawa, do partners perceive me as external to the LAC and to the community?</i> ”
<i>Terminology</i>	Using a collaborative terminology (“us/we/our”) with partners may foster a greater sense of engagement, community ownership, and collective action.	“ <i>Using a more external terminology (“them/you”) may reinforce my catalyst role and promote community collaborative action, autonomy, and self-direction.</i> ”
<i>Human Resources</i>	Maximizing the use of local human resources (i.e., organizations’ own staff/youth leaders) may enhance local appropriation and responsibility for the project.	“ <i>Using external (i.e., University students) resources may hinder local appropriation and responsibility as partners may perceive they are not under their responsibility.</i> ”
<i>Role Duality and Accountability</i>	Organizational representatives and I shared roles, responsibilities, and accountability for the LAC’s mission, vision, and objectives we set as a group.	Organizational representatives were also answerable to their own organization’s mission and goals; I needed to adhere to the KIS’s principles, procedures, and objectives.

other neighbourhoods were left to the LAC. This created conflicts among LAC partners, most of which revolved around the issue of sharing resources with others, and required divergent viewpoints, interests, mandates, and organizational cultures to be negotiated and reconciled.

Another fundamental tension related to the duality of roles and accountabilities of LAC partners. On the one hand, LAC representatives were accountable to their organization. However, as LAC partners, they were also answerable to the LAC's mission and objectives. While mechanisms for collaboration, joint responsibility, and accountability needed to be established to encourage concerted action and share successes and failures among the group, it was also important that partners' participation in the LAC contribute to the pursuit of their own organization's mandate. As such, supporting the development of a common vision and objectives while simultaneously supporting participant organizations' goals required significant tradeoffs and flexibility to work effectively as a group and ensure/sustain everyone's participation.

My double insider-outsider status (i.e., wearing both LAC and KIS hats) in the project was also an important source of tension. On the one hand, some of my own efforts for being considered fully part of the community by LAC partners (i.e., using "us/we/our" terminology when talking about PA programs developed by the LAC; ensuring a regular presence in the schools and community centres; initiating PA projects and other activities on my own) had a negative impact on their autonomy, capacity, and ownership over the project, as they relied on me to provide most of the leadership and take on primary responsibility for program planning and implementation. On the other hand, I felt there was a credibility issue of being perceived as too much external to the LAC, for instance, by not being able to fully share the partners' intimate knowledge of community needs and issues. It was important that

partners see me in the community and that I stay connected with them to gain their trust and respect; yet, I had to balance “initiating action” with “facilitating and supporting partners” in their own efforts of doing the work. Whether partners and community members perceived me as internal or external to the LAC and to the community, I was inextricably linked to, and associated with, any project’s successes and failures, which placed significant strain on me.

Bottom-Up vs. Top-Down Tension

The third category of tensions emerged from the fact that KIS was meant to be locally driven and governed, but it was initiated, facilitated, and evaluated by the University. Essentially defined by the relationship between the community and the University, dilemmas faced along the bottom-up/top-down continuum related to issues of power, ownership, and responsibility for project sustainability (see Table 5).

While it was agreed that the LAC was to operate autonomously through its local governance structure, many questions appeared throughout the project as to *who* – KIS’s research team or the LAC – had decision-making power over certain issues (e.g., LAC membership and representation, nature of LAC expenses, type of activities being financed). On the one hand, KIS sought to support community decision-making, capacity building, and program implementation based on local needs and circumstances. Accordingly, I felt that KIS should be focused on creating the vision that the community wants rather than the one that KIS’s research team envisioned for the community. On the other hand, the LAC could only operate within the vision and boundaries defined by KIS’s research team and the funder. However, the pilot nature of KIS and goal of adapting the project to the local context meant that these boundaries and guidelines were not clearly defined, creating confusion and communication conflicts. Because the community and the KIS’s research team (or the University) sometimes had differing objectives, priorities, expectations, and timetables,

Table 5

Tensions Encountered along the Bottom-Up/Top-Down Continuum

Dimension	Bottom-Up	Top-Down
<i>Ownership</i>	Given KIS's "bottom-up" mechanism (i.e., LAC), I made every effort to respect local needs, circumstances, and capacities, and encourage innovation.	"Given the funder's constraints and KIS's guiding principles modeled after QEF, I was responsible for preserving the project focus and original structure."
<i>Decision-Making Power (Governance)</i>	LAC partners had decision-making power over programmatic activities; my role was to influence the LAC to make certain decisions in line with KIS's principles.	"I had the final say over the LAC's decisions because, ultimately, daily operational activities were constrained by KIS's set limits which I was mandated to enforce."
<i>Responsibility & Conditions for Project Sustainability</i>	"Given that the University's long-term support was not guaranteed, partners were encouraged to make grant applications to sustain KIS, with certain conditions."	"I felt it was KIS's role to proactively secure long-term funding for the initiative given its third objective and for having initiated such a resource-intensive project in the first place."

I found myself in an on-going process of negotiation, reconciling inquiries from LAC partners with KIS's expectations, testing the flexibility of KIS's boundaries to be adapted to the local context and thus testing the relative power of the local community vs. the instigators and the funder.

Another tension related to KIS's pilot nature and model borrowed from QEF. While QEF was a valuable partner for KIS and the LAC, it evolved in a very different context and organizational structure (i.e., 10-year, province-wide public-private partnership) than KIS. For this reason, I felt that following QEF's pace and imposing their tools and resources in my work with the LAC would hinder partners' autonomy and sense of ownership toward the project. One of my roles involved helping partners maintain the original project focus and objectives, defined by the funder and KIS's guiding principles, while at the same time helping partners identify their own capacity and respecting local conditions, priorities, and needs. Yet, balancing the transposition of the QEF model and tools with the identification of a local vision, structure, and capacity created a fundamental tension.

Tensions also appeared with regards to responsibility and conditions for project sustainability following the pilot period. While KIS sought to ensure the sustainability of the project beyond the initial three-year funding period (KIS's third objective), the University's commitment was obviously governed by external research grants. It was obvious to me that KIS's three-year financial commitment was one (if not the most) important factor that had mobilized partners in the first place and kept them engaged over time. Conversely, the continuity of KIS and its research activities were highly contingent upon LAC partners' buy-in and active participation. Understanding that project sustainability was hardly possible without on-going funding and support from a coordinator/intermediary change agent, and that the University's first mandate was to conduct research, not operate programs, I pushed

the University to assume leadership in securing alternative funding options for having initiated such a resource-intensive project in the first place, and kept reinforcing KIS's vision and guiding principles with LAC partners. At the same time, because long-term support from the University was not guaranteed, LAC partners were also supported in making grant applications to sustain KIS and encouraged to pursue their own vision of the project, with certain conditions (i.e., University as a research partner; KIS as the prohibited mark/intellectual property of the University; preserving the general model and objectives). Sustaining partners' engagement in an initiative whose future was uncertain was both challenging and frustrating, especially in light of their significant investment of time, energy, and resources in the project.

Discussion

This case analysis sought to explore the tensions and dynamics operating in KIS, and the dilemmas I faced as an intermediary change agent from this specific perspective or posture in the initiative. Overall, the results from this study suggest that KIS united community partners with University researchers (i.e., KIS's research team) in a joint effort characterized by conflicting goals, perspectives, and needs, as well as contentions over various types of resources (i.e., financial, human, political), but which seemingly provided each partner with benefits and/or exchange opportunities that were worth sustaining the effort jointly. The divergence of goals, perspectives, and needs, and the conflicts that revolved around the issue of resources, inexorably created tension for the LAC and KIS's research team, as well as considerable dilemmas for me as I operated at the core of this complex interdependent relationship and attempted to reconcile conflicting demands and realities.

Although this study revealed three key dynamics or tensions (i.e., process-product, insider-outsider, bottom-up-top-down) operating in KIS, the notions of autonomy and ownership (i.e., control) over various types of resources and processes appeared at the center of most of them. In essence, the LAC wanted to have decision-making authority (i.e., power or control) over the planning and implementation process; however, it also expected continued financial and coordination (human resources) support from KIS throughout this process (i.e., the LAC did not have the capacity to be completely autonomous financially and operationally, at least at the beginning, and thus did not want to have the responsibility of securing financial and human resource support). Conversely, KIS's research team sought LAC partners' identification with and responsibility (i.e., ownership) over KIS's implementation, including financial autonomy past the pilot period; however, it was not ready to concede the University's and its own visibility, intellectual property, and evaluation authority (i.e., KIS did not wish to completely cede decision-making authority over KIS's developments and ownership of the initiative). Thus, most tensions appear to be linked to the fact that expectations were not clearly defined. Autonomy and ownership involved different dimensions or meanings and entailed different resources that each partner did not have and wanted, or had and did not want to give up.

CII based on community mobilization strategies typically promote the importance of maximizing community autonomy and ownership (Kubisch et al., 2002; Grandchamp, 2003; Ninacs, 2007). Conceptually, within organizational theory, ownership provides a basis for exerting control over a resource (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). Control derives from the ability to make regulations or rules that determine the possession, allocation, and use of resources. The ability to control others increases one's autonomy, notably, by increasing others' dependency on one's resources. In KIS, the extent to which KIS's research team vs. the LAC

had responsibility and decision-making power over various aspects of the initiative were initially set by KIS, but were most oftentimes (involuntarily) kept implicit. Certainly, financial autonomy vs. operational autonomy brings different implications for both community and institutional partners, just as ownership over program implementation vs. ownership over the orientations (e.g., issue addressed, priorities, operation principles, etc.) and developments of the initiative. Given the LAC's relatively high degree of dependence on KIS's research team for financial and other critical resources (e.g., LAC coordinator) at the beginning of the initiative, preserving operational capacity, political resources (i.e., involvement of organizations, notably organizational decision-makers), and decision-making power over LAC program implementation-related resources appeared essential for LAC partners to use as countervailing power and maintain a level of reciprocal interdependence necessary to negotiate with KIS's research team.

One construct that appears to be of central consideration in intermediary change agents' attempts to reconcile divergences of goals, perspectives, and needs in initiatives like KIS, as well as conflicts over critical resources, is building community capacity. Over the course of the project, my discourse over LAC partners' contribution shifted from participation and involvement to engagement and investment. This shifting discourse depicts a change in paradigm throughout the course of the project that alluded to the notion that KIS was not an all-inclusive program meant to be delivered in the community but rather a lever for building community capacity for change. For one part, building community capacity in KIS involved ensuring LAC partners assumed responsibility over the planning, implementation, and evaluation process so as to build their capacity to work together and collectively address the issues that were important to them. In this context, whether or not KIS would be financially sustained and officially owned by the University, collective

capacities developed through strengthened interorganizational linkages and partnerships, organizational and individual leadership, collective reflection, local governance mechanisms, and external political support and influence, are likely to stay with the community (i.e., capacities might be reinvested in other issues and initiatives) and reduce the community's dependence on the institutional partner.

For institutional partners like KIS's research team, investing in building community capacity may likewise enhance the potential for actions implemented by community partners to produce concrete results. Building capacity was particularly critical in the planning phase, and served as an important vehicle for implementing actions and achieving outcomes. Early, concrete product (i.e., program activities for children) kept partners committed to the project and mobilized additional partners. Kubisch et al. (1997) have argued that capacity building should not be viewed as being in opposition to getting things done and that both realities can be reconciled, for example, by devoting the collective's attention and resources to both types of goals and by developing both process and product markers of progress. At the same time, the data suggest that time was a critical resource to capacity building, and that substituting LAC partners' time investment for additional human resources was not conducive to proper interorganizational linkages and capacity building. While researchers generally agree that capacity building processes are critical to ensure the sustainability of community-based initiatives (Alexander et al., 2003; Shediak-Rizkallah & Bone, 1998), the relative importance of time (i.e., for processes to develop) and human resource support at different stages of CII, and the intermediary change agent's and other human resources' role in supporting both process and product goals throughout these stages, nonetheless need to be examined more closely.

It is possible that KIS's advantage to build community capacity, from my own view, at different stages of the initiative is representative of its degree of dependence on its community partners. From a resource dependence perspective, it could be argued that the University of Ottawa (KIS's research team) was in a potentially powerful position in the relationship as the main funding group. In fact, the data suggest that KIS research team's ability to regulate the allocation and use of financial resources by LAC partners through various programming and partnership principles concentrated power in the hands of the University (and in my own hands), who could use this power to influence or constrain the behaviour of LAC partner organizations. Conversely, LAC partners' participation, knowledge of community needs, and capacity to plan and implement physical activity programs provided the LAC with a source of countervailing power, as KIS's research team and I were technically dependent on this capacity to reach KIS's objectives and to conduct research. However, it is not clear whether both partners (i.e., the LAC and KIS's research team) shared the same degree of dependence on each other. In KIS, not all LAC partner organizational resources were invested and organized in the initiative. KIS only provided them with an opportunity to advance one part of their mission. Moreover, any other (financial) opportunities made available to LAC partner organizations might have jeopardized their choice of joining and investing time and resources in KIS. Conversely, all of KIS's resources were invested in the Rideau-Vanier LAC. Hence, KIS's ability to realize its mission and attain its objectives relied entirely on its community partners. This suggests that KIS's dependency on the LAC was higher than the LAC's dependency on KIS, and to some extent, it was determined by the (lack of) competing financial opportunities in the external environment. Hence, although KIS was relatively powerful, this suggests that KIS

was in a sense more vulnerable, which might account for my decision to invest in building community capacity in the early stages of the initiative.

In sum, the results from this study suggest that the notions of capacity, autonomy, resources (i.e., financial, in-kind, political) and ownership might need to be considered in an integrated model in order to understand the interdependence dynamics operating in CII. Moreover, mutual dependence (i.e., interdependence) between CII partner organizations, when properly managed, may work to prevent an organization from dominating others and, as a result, enhance collaboration.

Resource dependence theory would predict that organizational participants come into a coalition when there are some advantages to be gained and leave when there is no longer any perceived advantage (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). In light of LAC partners' decision to stay involved in the initiative over the three years (and most of them are still currently involved after four years), the results suggest that sufficient advantages brought LAC partners to join and sustain their investment in KIS over the years. Research suggests that interorganizational collaboration provides the opportunity for an organization to access various resources and build social and political capital (Harvey et al., 2005; Tsisis, 2008). It is possible that the benefits (i.e., resources gained and capacities built) outweighed the costs (i.e., tensions, conflicts) despite the uncertainty that confronted the LAC, while at the same time, partly explained LAC partners' initiative to stabilize this uncertainty by making grant applications on top of the University's efforts. Certainly, the nature or type of resources and capacity development opportunities KIS provided LAC partners' organizations with, and how these were shared and controlled, would be worth exploring further.

Recommendations for Practice

Overall, the results of this study support and reiterate key recommendations that have already been made (e.g., Alexander et al., 2003; Williams et al., 2005; Israel et al., 2006) to funders and institutional partners, including Universities, who operate on rigid, external grant schedules and accountability procedures. These include: (1) making capacity building a clearly stated objective and granting requirement of CII; (2) allocating sufficient time, resources, and flexibility in the start-up phase of CII to allow for community capacity building processes to develop; (3) providing funding for time periods that go well beyond the typical one to three year cycle; (4) and making funds admissible for core infrastructure and capacity building activities including interorganizational collaboration, leadership development, resource mobilization, support staff, and general operating expenses. Certainly, in intersectoral contexts such as KIS, sufficient time needs to be initially provided for partners to build strong linkages and establish collaborative decision-making processes. This has important implications for CII staffed by full-time employees whose capacities to move initiatives forward (i.e., in favour of product) often exceed that of their community partners.

One important contribution this study brings, however, is that it challenges institutional partners, especially higher education institutions whose primary purpose is not to operate initiatives but to conduct research, to think of their commitment to and investment in such time- and resource-intensive enterprises. Initiating a community-university initiative for the benefit of conducting research when the sustainability of the partnership or the project beyond the initial funding period is uncertain may pose moral concerns, especially when these initiatives require community partners to devote considerable energy and resources. Institutions initiating such initiatives must show commitment to and leadership in ensuring long-term support and participation, or otherwise be clear with their community partners

about their expectations, including that funding is short-term and that the community will need to work toward becoming independent and self-sustainable.

As for most community-institution partnerships, CII must work within defined boundaries established by the funder and/or the institution, negotiate between unequal contributions and power relations, and work through compromises each partner must make when confronted with unforeseen issues and developments (Chavis, 2001; Himmelman, 2001; Pettigrew, 2003). My experience in the KIS project has allowed me to reflect on the specific roles, beyond providing financial support, institutions may need to play when they partner with communities in capacity building endeavours. One such role is to be clear from the outset of the project what decision-making power each party holds within the initiative. KIS's research team arrived in the Vanier community with its money, created a LAC, set clear guidelines on what it could do and could not do, hired an intermediary change agent, and then asked the LAC to be autonomous. The paradox here is that KIS was originally defined as a bottom-up project when in fact it was initiated through what seemed more like a top-down approach. While it may be inconceivable for CII to adopt a true bottom-up approach, considering the accountability of external institutions to their financial partners (i.e., funders of the CII), community capacity building initiatives, particularly externally-catalyzed ones, need to concede enough resources, power, and autonomy to community partners so they can perform their new roles, take independent action, and become the legitimate actors in their community. This implies a redefinition of each CII partner's role and responsibilities, and a careful consideration of who or what is being promoted – the institution's initiative and/or the community partners whose capacity is being built through the initiative (Labonte & Laverack, 2001)? Bourque's (2008) notion of the "negogenous" partnership, in which goals, rules and operational modalities of functioning are co-

constructed by institutional and community partners, might be considered by CII so as to reduce hierarchical and asymmetric power relations that most often play against community partners. In this model, ownership and power are not absolute but shared, and depend on the consent of all actors involved in the CII.

Devolving decision-making power to community partners in community capacity building initiatives also has important implications for grant proposals' usual level of rigidity. Funders and higher-level institutional partners need to work within grant proposals which are flexible enough to account for communities' needs, circumstances, and agendas, and be clear to community partners about the flexibility level of the initiative's boundaries. As a pilot initiative based on QEF, a project which still considers itself "under construction," many issues raised throughout the project had to be negotiated to account for the different context of KIS versus QEF (different province, institutions, organizational structure and resources, etc.), or simply to adapt to unforeseen circumstances. Ultimately, these negotiations shaped KIS. KIS's transparency and willingness to adapt the project to the local context (Rideau-Vanier, Ontario), but also to the specific evolution and needs of the LAC partners, were definitely an asset for community capacity building and ownership. Finding a forum for open and transparent communication is a well-known element of success of any partnership and capacity building initiative (Robinson et al., 2006; Park Tanjasiri, 1999). Given that the actors of CII are diverse and have differing objectives and priorities, all partners must be ready to be influenced by, and learn from, each other. Community partners certainly bring a vision and perspective that reflect the needs of the community, and they may be best positioned to identify what needs to be done and how. For this reason, funders and institutions investing in community capacity building initiatives also need to develop

their own capacity to partner with and support communities. In other words, capacity development and learning must happen both ways.

This case study also highlighted various tensions of shifting insider-outsider positioning produced in the context of the project. The conflict between the demands of different roles in different structures or groups has been referred to as interrole conflict (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). The concept of interrole conflict illustrates the basis of power that intermediary change agents have in orienting and determining the CII's decisions and activities. Intermediary change agents holding both an insider and an outsider posture may be particularly influential because they are embedded in relational systems that allow them to challenge organizational authorities in decision-making situations, yet stay connected enough with the community to gain their trust and respect. This negotiation power constitutes a valuable resource for a CII intermediary change agent. As an insider, I could more fully appreciate the merits and demands of intersectoral collaboration and community capacity building, while as an outsider, I could contribute a more distanced and strategic perspective for the benefit of KIS and the entire LAC rather than individual organizations. Wearing both hats also allowed me to travel between two different worlds, combine knowledge and views of each perspective, and negotiate and reconcile divergent needs and accountability mechanisms.

The practice of change agency in the context of CII faces many complex challenges and appears to be an under-developed work culture (Chaskin et al., 2001; Hartley, Bennington & Binns, 1997; Frisby & Millar, 2002; Pettigrew, 2003). The results from this study suggest that intermediary change agents, at least those operating within projects that specifically emphasize community capacity and autonomy strategies, occupy vulnerable and uncomfortable positions when they are accountable to both the institution which hires them

and the community they represent, support, and work with on a daily basis (Boutilier & Mason, 2006). Intermediary change agents play multiple roles, and must compose with many hurdles and uncertainties. In the context of KIS (and QEF), intermediary change agents are asked to understand and manage complex partnership processes, governance mechanisms, community context and dynamics, power relations, and institutional hierarchies, while at the same time carrying out core activities, such as facilitating organized and coordinated programmatic activities (Lévesque et al., 2006). Ignoring the tensions that define their role could have important implications for the practice of community capacity building.

The importance of clearly defining the intermediary change agent's multiple role identities and properly supporting them in their core functions should not be underemphasized. Because there is no formal degree or training required to become an intermediary change agent or "community capacity builder," these individuals come more or less prepared with different backgrounds and skills, and may not be experienced dealing with the complex processes underlying community capacity building and organizational resource interdependence. The ambiguity and tensions inherent to the intermediary change agent's role may bring about frequent turnover or exhaustion of staff, and as a result, prevent CII from moving forward. Providing intermediary change agents with specifically tailored training opportunities in the early stages of the initiative, and allowing sufficient time for all parties to discuss and distinguish roles and responsibilities are components which should be incorporated into the initiative's work plan. In addition, because they are frequently confronted to new or unexpected developments, capacity building initiatives often require intermediary change agents to take on new roles for which they may not be prepared (Chaskin et al., 2001). Helping intermediary change agents move successfully into their new roles may be critical for community capacity building initiatives to be successful.

Encouraging a culture of reflection among the many actors of CII appears to be important for these partnerships to succeed (Boutilier & Mason, 2006). Some of my most valuable experiences in KIS were when I could discuss, exchange, and look at the big picture with various individuals (KIS staff, LAC partners, colleagues from QEF, etc.), whether they shared a similar or completely different perspective than mine, and then reflect on these differences. To properly act as an intermediary change agent and ultimately work within convergence points, first-person action inquiry skills were essential. Certainly, community capacity catalysts will benefit from constantly questioning themselves and critically examining whether their actions are consistent with the processes (e.g., strengthening local capacity) they are mandated to facilitate. This again calls for the need to provide intermediary change agents with adequate support and training if they are to survive and succeed in their multifaceted position.

Conclusion

As this case illustrates, bringing together the knowledge, resources, and capacities of communities and institutions to address the major health and social challenges facing our society is a challenging venture. On the one hand, we must ensure that community change is community-driven. At the same time, institutions can provide communities with valuable resources, leverage, and expertise. Being attentive to inherent tensions and identifying creative means to transform them into creative possibilities and opportunities is essential for CII to succeed (Kubisch et al., 1997).

The tensions presented above may reflect a divisive tone implying rigid boundaries and further exacerbating the tensions. However, my experience in KIS suggests that genuine collaboration, openness, and respect can reconcile and advance CII efforts. Results from this case study also suggest that each tension may be viewed as existing along a continuum,

where the ideal varies according to the evolution of a partnership's needs and development phase, as well as various partnership characteristics and contextual factors. Given that many of the tensions underlying organizational resource interdependence are likely to be expected in collaborative endeavours like CII, future research should examine more thoroughly how they are negotiated among the various partners involved, and how negotiations impact interorganizational collaboration and capacity development. In addition, a more critical view is needed on the value of CII as a means to develop community capacities, and the conditions and factors that facilitate and hinder the exchange of critical resources necessary to the achievement of both organizational and collective goals.

This paper is about one perspective (i.e., intermediary change agent), as different players or stakeholders (i.e., community partners, "external" University researchers) may have different perceptions about the same issues. Yet, since there are limits to any account a researcher can give, its legitimacy should not be undervalued. Individuals acting as liaisons between communities and institutions play a critical role, one that is challenging, stimulating, but above all, central to CII. While practitioner and insider action research is gaining recognition and popularity among scholars (Coghlan & Holian, 2007), it nonetheless remains an underdeveloped research area. Our knowledge of the characteristics, competencies, and learning mechanisms and tools that support effective agency practice needs to be expanded considerably. This paper is meant to be an initial step in such research.

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CHAPTER 4

Manuscript II: Fostering Community Mobilization and Collective Capacities in a
Community-Institution Initiative: Key Strategies and Barriers to an Intermediary Change
Agent's Practice

Fostering Community Mobilization and Collective Capacities in a Community-Institution Initiative: Key Strategies and Barriers to an Intermediary Change Agent's Practice

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Introduction

The recent years have seen a surge of community-institution initiatives (i.e., CII) embracing the common objective of building community capacity to address neighbourhood health issues in a more integrated and efficient way (e.g., Frisby, Crawford, & Dorer, 1997; Israel et al., 2006; Savan, 2004, Seifer, 2006; Spoth & Greenberg, 2005; Vail, 2007; Williams, Labonte, Randall, & Muhajarine, 2005). CII typically emanate from institutions external to the community such as universities, foundations, private philanthropies, and governmental bodies. In general, CII seek to mobilize community organizations and stakeholders with more or less prior collaboration experience, but who share mutual intention to pursue common goals, work together within some type of organizational structure, and develop, implement, and evaluate community-based intervention or programming within a pre-defined vision of change and set of parameters (Chaskin, Brown, Venkatesh, & Vidal, 2001; Fulbright-Anderson, Auspos, & Anderson, 2001; Green, Daniel, & Novick, 2001).

Whether in the form of community coalitions, community advisory boards, coordinating councils, task forces, steering committees, or interorganizational alliances, community-based partnerships established as part of CII will differ in their goals (i.e., research, policy, educational, and/or action) and member composition depending on the nature and complexity of the issue being addressed, the organizational structure adopted, and the context within which it occurs (Baker, Homan, Schonhoff, & Kreuter, 1999; Chinman et al., 2005; Seifer, 2006). Yet, an inclusive and intersectoral approach is generally favoured to enhance the potential for synergy among the participating organizations and stakeholders (Lasker & Weiss, 2003).

Despite their growing popularity and practice, questions remain as to whether community-based partnerships, particularly those emanating from external institutions such

as in CII, truly foster local organizations' capacity to work together towards a common vision and goals (Kubisch, Auspos, Brown, Chaskin, Fulbright-Anderson, & Hamilton, 2002). The literature suggests that collaborative relationships of shared governance established as part of CII to reach change objectives can be difficult when partners with varied levels of power join their efforts (e.g., Pettigrew, 2003), or when one partner has control and discretionary power over financial and/or other key resources (e.g., Tsisis, 2008). In more horizontal and decentralized approaches to governance, where power tend to be more equally shared among participants, each organization has some level of control but cannot exercise it fully because each must negotiate and exchange with other partners in order to make decisions and access key resources (Burlone, Andrew, Chiasson, & Harvey, 2008). Where collective problems are resolved through the operation of mutually dependent relationships, such as in CII, mobilizing organizations with resources needed by the partnership increases horizontal interdependence and reduces control over resources by creating a "negotiated environment" (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). However, how the processes governing community mobilization, collective capacity, and organizations' access to and contribution of resources are managed in such a complex environment remains unclear.

Although a fundamental step of community-based partnerships, funders and the general academic community generally undervalue the process of building and nurturing community mobilization, collective capacities, and exchange relationships (Seifer, Shore, & Holmes, 2003). Collective capacities have been defined as the knowledge, skills, resources, and power a community (i.e., individuals, organizations, and institutions) possesses to affect larger systems issues (Chinman et al., 2005). According to Foster-Fishman, Berkowitz, et al. (2001), collaborative capacities can be developed at the member, relational, intra-coalition/operational, and programmatic levels. Member capacity involves core skills,

knowledge, and attitudes such as conflict resolution skills, understanding of the targeted problem, and knowledge in group development. Relational capacity comprises the ability to develop a shared vision, promote power-sharing and a positive work climate, and develop positive external relationships. Intra-coalition capacity includes effective leadership, formalized procedures, sufficient resources, and effective communication. Finally, programmatic capacity entails ecologically valid and innovative programs, as well as realistic and clearly focused programmatic objectives.

Externally catalyzed community-based partnerships have sometimes been accused of embracing an idealistic, forced, or phony notion of collaboration (Minkler, 2000; Rowe, 2006) and cultivating only insubstantial collaborative and exchange relationships (Alexander et al., 2003; Flicker, Savan, Mildenberger, & Kolenda, 2007; Kreuter, Lezin, & Young, 2000). Despite their objective of increasing collective capacity at the community level using a community mobilization approach, CII face the risk that local organizations strategically join such efforts to diversify their resource streams or gain access to valuable resources, but fail to genuinely mobilize, engage in, and develop collective capacities for the long-term change envisioned.

To mobilize local organizations around the CII's vision and objectives and provide technical assistance to sustain the mobilization effort, CII typically hire intermediary change agents acting as partnership coordinators, managers or liaison officers (Bourque, 2008; Cabaj et al., 2002; Québec en Forme, 2008). When universities are the catalyst institution, the intermediary change agent role is typically assumed by a graduate student or research fellow working under the supervision of one or more lead investigators (Savan, 2004). While staffing is known to constitute a critical element of the overall infrastructure necessary to support community-based partnerships established as part of CII (Chinman et al., 2005;

Child & Faulkner, 1998; Seifer et al., 2003), information is lacking with regards to key roles and strategies pursued to facilitate community mobilization and capacity building among local organizations, and the barriers which impede these processes.

In light of CII's goal of building community capacity and maximizing local ownership of the initiative, CII intermediary change agents are typically asked to encourage local and horizontal decision-making processes and foster local organizations' autonomy and appropriation of the solutions developed by them. At the same time, given that CII are allegedly not viable without the sustained participation of and resource investment from community organizations, CII intermediary change agents are led to use a variety of strategies to manage and strategically adjust CIIs' operations and activities to the local context and multiple organizational interests and missions. The results from Chapter 3 suggest that intermediary change agents holding both an insider and an outsider posture may be particularly influential because their position allows them to have a fine understanding of organizational needs and realities on the one hand, and challenge organizational decision-makers on the other hand. This is consistent with Pfeffer and Salancik's (2003) description of organizational managers as enactors manipulating and adjusting to the constraints of the social context within which the organization is embedded to promote certain behaviours or actions. According to resource dependence theory (RDT), two functions of management involve influencing others' behaviours and actions so as to make one's internal and external environment more *munificent* (i.e., prolific) to bring about desired outcomes, and adjusting organizational strategies to the realities of groups or organizations on which they depend for support and survival of the organization.

Although intermediary change agents' strategies to promote community mobilization and objectives pursued in CII have received limited attention in the public health,

organizational, and partnership management literature, there is a relatively rich literature within the network management domain. For instance, Agranoff and McGuire (1999; 2001; 2003a; 2003b; McGuire, 2002) identified four processes underlying network management: (1) activation/deactivation; (2) synthesizing; (3) framing; and (4) mobilizing. In essence, activation/deactivation involves engaging the right participants (and/or disengaging participants that are counterproductive) with the right resources (e.g., skills, knowledge, in-kind and financial resources) in the network. Synthesizing refers to developing the conditions necessary for the establishment of proper relationships between network participants to maximize co-production or collective action. Framing focuses on manipulating (in a non-pejorative sense) participants' beliefs, motivations, and perceptions about the resources, relations, and outcomes that are at risk and/or up for grabs so as to convince organizations to commit resources. It also involves establishing and influencing the operating rules of the network, as well as its prevailing values and norms. Finally, mobilizing involves building and sustaining participation, support, and commitment of resources within the network all through the joint endeavour. According to Rethemeyer and Hatmaker (2007), activation/deactivation and synthesizing will allow network managers to manipulate dependence *relations*, while framing and mobilizing will serve to manipulate partners' *perceptions* of dependence.

Agranoff and McGuire's (2001) network management processes suggest that, in the context of CII, intermediary change agents can manipulate participants' perceptions and operational conditions for community mobilization and collective capacity development (i.e., interdependence) and, as a result, promote collective action in support of a particular issue (i.e., CII's vision and objectives). However, strategic management research to guide managers' practice and decision-making in the context of CII is lacking. Thus, this study

seeks to increase our understanding of key strategies and barriers to the practice of an intermediary change agent's practice in a CII (i.e., the KIS project) whose role was to promote community mobilization and capacity building around children's sport and physical activity participation, as well as maintain a coalition of partner organizations who contribute the resources and support necessary for KIS to pursue its activities and goals. This paper will contribute to the gap in the public health, organizational, and partnership management literature on the actual practice of intermediary change agents in CII by examining key managerial strategies, barriers, and issues encountered throughout this process. The impact of such research is important in a context where CII are an increasingly common type of organization to achieve public health objectives, but which rely on the buy-in, investment, collaboration, and coordination of very diverse organizations that also fight to survive and achieve their own objectives.

It should be noted that the results presented in this paper reflect a specific case, context, and point in time. Thus, the conclusions drawn from this study are meant to generate knowledge that can be valuable, if properly integrated and adapted by intermediary change agents and other CII managers, to other situations (i.e., CII with other missions and objectives) they may encounter.

Contextualizing the Case of Kids in Shape (KIS)

The strategies used by KIS's intermediary change agent to promote community mobilization and collective capacities, and the barriers that impeded this process, were examined in the context of the pilot phase of KIS (see Chapter 1 for a complete description of the KIS project). Unlike most of community-university initiatives, which primarily focus on collaborative research with the community, KIS's main objective was the establishment of a community structure connecting community actors and agencies with the goal of

enhancing interorganizational linkages, resource coordination, and collective action around the promotion of sport and physical activity among children aged four to twelve.

KIS's core infrastructure for enhancing community mobilization and collective capacities included three components: (1) the Local Action Committee (LAC); (2) an initial three-year funding commitment to support core operations and programming; and (3) the LAC coordinator (hereafter intermediary change agent). The decision for KIS (and QEF) to operate through a LAC is founded on the following beliefs and principles: (1) new initiatives should support, build on, and strengthen existing community resources and expertises rather than replace existing ones; (2) local actors are better positioned than higher-level agencies to identify and address community needs; and (3) horizontal, fluid participative initiatives and shared decision-making mechanisms and processes enhance opportunities for collective action. It should be noted that operation and decision-making rules were to be negotiated among LAC partners; however, all partners were expected to contribute some kind of resource (time, expertise, knowledge, equipment, access to infrastructure, money) to the partnership, and were granted equal decision-making power.

LACs are not advisory committees, nor taskforces or boards. They provide shared platforms for action at the community level. LACs' collaborative efforts culminate in the production of an action plan, which is developed, implemented, and evaluated on an annual basis. To assist KIS's pilot LAC through this process, KIS's research team provides financial and human resources to support the partnership's activities. Funds invested through KIS in the community are managed by the LAC and cover expenses linked to programming, primarily financing human resources (i.e., sport instructors and youth monitors). Unlike most community-university initiatives, local organizations embarking in the LAC were expected to take full ownership of and manage the sport and physical activity initiatives, and

accordingly, invest considerable resources (mostly in-kind) into program planning, implementation, and evaluation.

The intermediary change agent is a liaison and mobilization officer hired by KIS's research team to work closely with LAC partners and engage them in autonomous dialogue, on-going planning, shared decision-making, and collective action. One key role of the intermediary change agent consists in helping LAC partners build strong linkages and lasting capacities to collaborate on the planning, implementation, and evaluation of an annual action plan. The intermediary change agent also acts as a vertical bridge between LAC partners and the University (i.e., KIS's research team) to ensure that program implementation conforms to KIS's guidelines, to negotiate context-specific needs and issues, and to communicate important project developments. While the University provides the broad parameters and resources needed to reach the project's objectives, with the help of the intermediary change agent, KIS plays a guidance, coordination, and oversight role to support intersectoral action at the community level. Given this framework, KIS can be viewed as one approach to action research, with strong collaboration, capacity-building, and community change goals and values (Reason & Bradbury, 2001).

Methods

This case analysis draws on data collected over the pilot phase of the KIS project, the period during which the first author conducted her doctoral research. The Rideau-Vanier LAC constituted the infrastructure from which the development of interorganizational collaborative capacities was examined. The LAC comprised 25 organizational representatives from five francophone elementary schools, two school boards, five community organizations and recreation centers, and two municipal authorities (i.e., public health and parks & recreation departments). The first author assumed the role of the

intermediary change agent and insider action researcher (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005; Coghlan & Shani, 2008), and facilitated interorganizational collaborative capacities by engaging with LAC partners in recurring cycles of planning, action, observation, and reflection (Marshall, 2001, Torbert, 2001). Insider action research is an approach whereby practitioners observe, document, and reflect on their own practice as actors actively involved and intimately immersed in the action and change process (Coghlan & Shani, 2008).

This study is based on a qualitative approach with the aim of furthering our understanding of a single phenomenon in its complexity. The data derived from five sources: (1) the intermediary change agent's participant observation and descriptive notes, (2) the intermediary change agent's reflective notes, (3) LAC monthly meeting transcripts and notes, (4) written and electronic material (i.e., e-mail conversations, official documents produced by the LAC or by KIS's research team, etc.), and (5) debriefing notes from KIS research team meetings. An important characteristic of the data collection and analysis was their on-going nature (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Reason & Bradbury, 2001; Patton, 2002). The data were imported into the software program NVivo (Fraser, 1999) and analyzed as a two-stage process: (1) inductive thematic coding and analysis of the raw data (Patton, 1990); and (2) conceptual coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006) based on Agranoff and McGuire's (1999; 2001; 2003a; 2003b; McGuire, 2002) four network management processes. In accordance with this thesis' conceptual framework, the interpretation of the results is focalized using a RDT lens (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003).

Inductive thematic coding and analysis involved four steps. First, meaningful units of text that captured strategies used by KIS's intermediary change agent to promote community mobilization and collective capacities among LAC partners, as well as barriers that worked against these processes, were identified. Then, units of text which dealt with the same issue

were organized together to form meaningful categories (i.e., themes). Third, the set of candidate categories were reviewed and refined to eliminate the ones that were not clearly distinguishable from other categories, or which lacked sufficient data to support them, and to collapse categories that actually formed one category. Finally, the categories which showed distinctiveness and coherence among the data extracts, and which were supported by a considerable set of data, were given a temporary definition and name (Patton, 1990; Braun & Clarke, 2006). Throughout this process, the data were coded without trying to fit them into a pre-existing coding frame. Inductive thematic analysis resulted in a total of 21 distinct strategies and 15 barriers. Conceptual thematic coding involved a second level of analysis in which emerging themes that spoke to the intermediary change agent's strategies (but not the barriers) were coded using Agranoff and McGuire's (1999; 2001; 2003a, 2003b; McGuire, 2002) four network management processes framework (i.e., activating/deactivating, synthesizing, framing, and mobilizing). All themes emerging from the inductive thematic analysis process were found to fit into one of Agranoff and McGuire's framework.

Strategies Promoting Community Mobilization and Collective Capacities

The key strategies used by KIS's intermediary change agent which helped to promote the process of community mobilization and the development of collective capacities among LAC partners are presented in Table 6, along with descriptions and effects observed. It should be noted that several of the strategies implemented by the intermediary change agent were suggested by LAC partners; thus, they do not solely result from the intermediary change agent's ingenuity.

Activating/Deactivating

Activating strategies involved mobilizing new participants and engaging organizational decision-makers in the LAC. Through the LAC governance model,

Table 6

Key Strategies Used by KIS' s Intermediary Change Agent to Promote Community Mobilization and Collective Capacities

Strategy	Description	Perceived Effect
<i>Activation/Deactivation (engaging the right participants)</i>		
Mobilizing (new) partners	Recruiting additional partners (i.e., community, public, for-profit, and private organizations) to deliver specific sport programs, buy basic equipment and materials, or acquire additional capacity.	Enhanced linkages; strengthened collaborative and operational/programmatic capacities.
Engaging organizational decision-makers	Engaging local organizations' top management (i.e., decision-makers) in the LAC as they are the ones who make decisions and have control over critical organizational resources.	Enhanced local organizations' engagement in the LAC's orientations; secured the commitment of critical organizational resources; helped the LAC move from an operational to a more strategic mechanism.
<i>Synthesizing (establishing relationships for collective action)</i>		
Holding LAC meetings on a regular basis	Led by the intermediary change agent; served as a forum for interorganizational linkages and exchange relationships, mutual learning, and information sharing, and as a vehicle for mobilizing and leveraging new partners and resources; organized around local programming efforts.	Brought partners together and focused on a common vision and objectives; facilitated sharing of information, needs, and existing community resources; built trust and rapport; increased mutual awareness and understanding; coordinated resources and programs; minimized duplication and inefficient use of efforts and resources.
Encouraging the formation of informal, ad hoc sub-committees	Formed to perform operational tasks (e.g., publicity, communication plans, press releases, training sessions, resource inventory) and jointly plan, organize and oversee physical activity initiatives.	Facilitated mutual learning and relationship building; enhanced opportunities for participation; allowed leaders to emerge.

Promoting healthy working relationships	Promoting a positive climate; encouraging open discussions and respectful confrontation of ideas; emphasizing transparency, respect, and understanding of others' perspectives; being sensitive to competition and turf issues, self-interests, and power imbalances; sharing successes and failures among the group.	Fostered trust and collaboration between partners and within the LAC; enhanced opportunities for vertical learning among the diversity of actors (i.e., managers, directors, and frontline staff).
Encouraging interorganizational communication, linkages, and exchanges relationships	Deliberately not being present to subcommittee meetings; making partners' contact information available to the group; redirecting interorganizational requests and communications initially addressed to the intermediary change agent directly to partners, reducing intermediary interventions from the intermediary change agent; encouraging feedback about program success and suggestions for improvement at LAC meetings; linking the LAC to ongoing community and institutional efforts.	Reinforced direct communication channels and coordination between organizations; created space and increased opportunities for communicating and sharing accomplishments, concerns, and difficulties.
Harmonizing the integration of new LAC partners	Organizing orientation meetings with new partners and representatives; allowing time for new partners to understand the notion of the LAC and its mandate.	Allowed partners to get acquainted with the LAC's mode of functioning and with partners around the table, and gradually assume more active roles and responsibilities when ready.
Providing partners with planning, operation, and evaluation tools	Developing a planning and evaluation tool to help partners elaborate and assess concerted and complementary PA initiatives; supporting the production of an annual action plan.	Forced partners to meet, develop joint initiatives, share roles and responsibilities; facilitated direct relationships; alleviated operational tasks and reporting burden.
<i>Framing (establishing/influencing operational rules and norms; manipulating cognitions, motivations, and beliefs)</i>		
Establishing formal operational rules, norms, and principles	Clear rules and principles for operation, including guiding programming principles (e.g., what types of initiatives are to be funded), promotion principles (e.g., whose visibility should be maximized/who should be promoted), and funding allocation rules and mechanisms, were established and formalized.	Enhanced collaboration and trust within the LAC; built the overall infrastructure of the partnership.

<p>Adapting the governance structure to the partnership's stage of development</p>	<p>Not imposing structures on the LAC until it is ready to do so; allowing different structures to be tested.</p>	<p>Respected the maturation and changing needs of the partnership; engaged partners in the process of self-organizing.</p>
<p>Valuing partners' resource investment</p>	<p>Estimating and emphasizing partners' in-kind and financial contribution to the initiative; encouraging partners to garner additional resources and support.</p>	<p>Reinforced partners' sense of ownership and contribution to the initiative; enhanced partners' commitment of time and resources.</p>
<p>Adapting language and terminology</p>	<p>Talking the community language as opposed to academic jargon; using terminologies that emphasized direct collaboration between partners (e.g., "together, you can..."; "your project..."; "collectively, you achieved...").</p>	<p>Fostered a sense of common purpose and a culture of collaboration; enhanced partners' ownership of the project and their capacity to engage in genuine and direct exchange relationships.</p>
<p>Referring to KIS's funding as an investment and lever</p>	<p>Alluding to KIS's financial support as an investment in the Rideau-Vanier community and a lever for collective action/change; channeling community will for action.</p>	<p>Leveraged organizations' investment of time and resources (in-kind and financial); enhanced engagement in change.</p>
<p>Expanding the LAC/KIS to other communities</p>	<p>Exploring avenues and initiating steps to expand the LAC and KIS to other communities.</p>	<p>Kept institutional partners (i.e., school boards, city's recreation department) on board.</p>
<p>Enhancing LAC partners' sense of ownership towards the project</p>	<p>Holding LAC and subcommittee meetings at different, off-campus, community sites; encouraging partners to create the meetings' agenda; allowing partners to self-determine problems and identify solutions; using the strong francophone identity as a mobilizing factor.</p>	<p>Allowed partners to visit each other's organizations; ensured meetings were relevant to partners; encouraged local autonomy, self-determination, and capacity.</p>
<p><i>Mobilizing (sustaining engagement and commitment of resources)</i></p>		
<p>Developing local leadership</p>	<p>Developing a broad base of leaders within the LAC; engaging all partners in the mobilization and change process; building on the partners' strengths; emphasizing organizations' visibility; engaging partners in collective reflection and problem-solving; matching</p>	<p>Strengthened internal capacity to mobilize neighbourhood organizations and residents to take action on children physical activity issues; enhanced the LAC's legitimacy in the community and its ability to get things done.</p>

<p>representatives' and organizations' knowledge, expertise, and skills to appropriate projects and tasks; placing partners at the forefront of LAC activities.</p>	<p>Contributed to collective action; promoted partners' engagement and investment of resources as opposed to passive participation to acquire resources from the LAC/KIS.</p>
<p>Keeping partners centered on the LAC's vision and objectives</p>	<p>Contributed to collective action; promoted partners' engagement and investment of resources as opposed to passive participation to acquire resources from the LAC/KIS.</p>
<p>Accomplishing early successful activities</p>	<p>Kept partners at the table; secured schools long-term support and commitment to the project; catalyzed the mobilization of additional partners (e.g., financial).</p>
<p>Respecting the pace and capacity of LAC partners</p>	<p>Sustained the participation of partners; allowed for member, organizational, interorganizational, and programmatic capacities to develop.</p>
<p>Reducing barriers to participation and collaboration</p>	<p>Facilitated collaboration and partners' contribution of time and energy to the initiative.</p>
<p>Preserving organizational identities yet maximizing complementary</p>	<p>Kept everyone committed and engaged; enhanced partners' ability to contribute time and resources; made the LAC an added value in the community.</p>

organizational representatives had the ability to commit resources from their organization and influence LAC decisions with respect to LAC operations. As the initiative and the community mobilization process evolved, efforts deployed by the intermediary change agent to engage the right participants in the LAC and KIS project moved from getting organizational representatives to participate in LAC meetings and planning, implementation and evaluation activities, to convincing organizations' top management and decision-makers to make decisions and commit resources on behalf of their organization. As the following excerpts illustrate, organizational decision-makers were in a better position to engage their organization in the orientations planned by the LAC and commit critical organizational resources necessary for collective action on the change envisioned:

What can each partner individually but also collectively do to influence the accessibility and availability of sport and physical activity infrastructures and equipments in their community (influencing who, for what purpose, and how)? Even LAC partner organizations' decision-makers can come and leave, so it's important to influence them to influence their organization's structure. (Reflective note, March 13, 2007)

[A school principal] told me that as a school principal, he has very limited power to influence the school board, for example, on the need to increase the number of staff at lunch recess to do physical activity with the kids. When I told him that [a school principal from the other school board] thinks she will be able to convince her school board's superintendent to assume expenses related to one or two additional recreation leaders at lunch time to make kids more active, he was glad and encouraged me strongly to inform his school board's superintendent when we'll be meeting her next

week so as to influence them to engage the school board in the same orientation.

(Descriptive note, April 10, 2007)

That morning, I went to see [one city recreation center supervisor] to give her a printed copy of the LAC's action plan and at the same time, influence her to have the Centre take charge, along with the school principals and physical education teachers, of sports programming at lunch time in two of our LAC partner schools. We cannot say that I did not try. She told me that she does not have staff at that time, that she is overwhelmed, and that her managers need to understand that she needs additional staff to take charge of additional programs. Following my meeting with her, I changed my strategy and worked more closely with both city parks and recreation managers. (Descriptive note, August 8, 2007)

Synthesizing

Synthesizing strategies involved establishing patterns of interdependent relations between LAC partner organizations and representatives to promote interorganizational linkages, exchange relationships, and collective action. For instance, LAC and subcommittee meetings served as a forum for community mobilization, information sharing, resource coordination, relationship building, mutual learning, and local programming efforts. They enhanced opportunities for partners to build rapport and trust, learn from one another, allow leaders to emerge, and involve partners in various aspects of the project. Allowing sufficient time and space for these processes to emerge was essential to enhance the partners' ability to build strong working relationships.

According to the LAC partners, the intermediary change agent played a key role in establishing and facilitating a variety of mechanisms and processes intended to enhance

collective capacities both within and beyond the LAC, as suggested by this community organizational representative:

The LAC coordination position is essential because we need the person who will take the lead, who will build and maintain the connections across the multiple projects and organizations, and who will keep us focused and centered on KIS's goals and vision; yet, this person has to be impartial and independent from any of the LAC partner organizations. (LAC meeting transcription note, January 23, 2007)

The intermediary change agent's extensive mobilization, liaising, and coordination efforts over the second year of the project helped to expand connections and exchange relationships between the various organizations, which were not fully collaborative during the first year (i.e., they were happening almost exclusively within LAC meetings and/or through the intermediary change agent). These efforts included linking schools from two school boards to coordinate programming efforts and share service provider contacts; liaising organizations from different sectors offering a similar leadership program to maximize resources, expertise, and coherence; and coordinating programs from a city-wide physical activity initiative with that of the LAC. Linking and coordinating activities were facilitated by having the intermediary change agent sit on various committees within and outside the LAC, by having the intermediary change agent's office within one of the LAC organizations, and by inviting representatives and stakeholders from various organizations to attend LAC meetings.

Framing

A number of strategies were used by the intermediary change agent to manipulate LAC partners' perceptions (i.e., cognitions, motivations, beliefs) towards KIS's objectives and other organizations to enhance the rationale for developing interorganizational relationships and promote collective action around the issue of increased children physical

activity participation. One strategy consisted in changing LAC partners' perception of KIS's initial three-year funding as an investment in the Rideau-Vanier community to leverage local organizations' engagement and investment of resources in the change envisioned, as illustrated by the intermediary change agent's discourse during one LAC meeting:

The project cannot rely on one single individual in the LAC, on a single person within an organization, and on a single funding pocket. KIS is here to invest in the Rideau-Vanier community, so it expects that the community will also invest time and resources in the collective project. I think the more the project rely on a diverse group of individuals, of organizations, and of financial levers, the higher the chances are that it will help move things forward and ensure some level of sustainability. (LAC meeting transcription note, April 18, 2007)

One LAC partner later echoed this framing strategy when he said:

Like you (intermediary change agent) said before, when we receive a grant, it's not about spending funding monies, it's about managing an investment. So not always see the funding we receive as a one-way process. One good example is when people come around a table. We are all solicited to join various meetings and tables. Usually when we sit around at a table as partners, we ask ourselves "What am I going to get from my participation?" with our palm facing up. But when we sit at the LAC, we must ask ourselves "What can we do together?" as when partners are shaking hands.

This reflects how a partner should evolve around the LAC. (LAC meeting transcription note, June 25, 2007)

Another example where the intermediary change agent used framing to influence LAC partner organizations' beliefs of the value of the LAC was through the use of terms which emphasized collective action and ownership. The following excerpt illustrates well how the

intermediary change agent tried to reinforce partners' perceptions of the value of interdependence, collective action, and appropriation of the programs developed:

Planning and implementing physical activity initiatives is not my role. It's your (the community's) role to collectively self-organize and put various initiatives in place for kids because if the program coordinator and I continue to assume program planning and implementation and we leave, you will not have learnt to work together because we did it for you. I am not saying that you did not do anything, absolutely not, I think everyone here contributed considerably and in the way they could but it's just doing things differently, it's not my role to manage human resources, that's not the LAC's objective. (...) We are talking about developing capacity, establishing links between organizations. If I always do the work with each of you individually, you will not have the opportunity to work together on joint projects and efforts, exchange information and resources except here once a month or so. (LAC meeting transcription note, February 27, 2007)

Establishing clear rules and principles for operation, including the clear delineation of roles and responsibilities, also emerged as an essential mechanism to enhance collaboration within the LAC and to build the overall infrastructure of the partnership. Even though it took almost two years for the LAC to establish formal rules and procedures for shared decision-making, funding allocation, and accountability, this process enhanced partners' feeling of ownership and contribution to the initiative, and strengthened collaborative and operational capacities within the group. Flexibility regarding collaboration principles, mechanisms, and degree of formalization was intentionally provided to account for the maturation and changing needs of the partnership. This was crucial to sustain partners' interest to remain involved.

The intermediary change agent, being an impartial figure (i.e., in the sense that she was not hired by, nor associated with, a specific school, community organization or municipal department), could keep an eye on the overall picture and help partners critically assess whether their interventions were consistent with the LAC's mission and objectives. As such, building interorganizational linkages and capacity required time and a balance between formalized rules/procedures and flexibility, as well as an independent coordinator. At the same time, the intermediary change agent was not completely impartial in the way she managed the process of control over resource allocation and use, as she plainly explained:

I agreed with the idea of establishing equity principles for the allocation of program resources but at the same time, I would like to privilege organizations that demonstrate autonomy, and invest time, effort, and resources in the project, thereby showing that it is important to them. (Intermediary change agent's monthly report, July 9, 2007)

Mobilizing

Mobilizing strategies involved encouraging and sustaining LAC partner organizations' engagement and commitment of resources in the collective effort (i.e., KIS). One recurrent strategy consisted in respecting the pace and capacity of LAC partners to engage and invest in the community mobilization process by providing realistic and flexible timeframes and sufficient time for partners to develop interorganizational relationships and collaborative initiatives, as illustrated in one of the intermediary change agent's monthly reports:

Despite my attempts to combine kids' needs (as advocated by the schools) with programs proposed by community and municipal partners, as the date to deliver the LAC's action plan was fast approaching, the most effective strategy turned out to be

to not precipitate things up and let school principals present themselves their perceived needs at the LAC so that community and municipal partners feel directly compelled by the schools. In fact, since April, I was desperately trying to influence community and municipal partners to provide lunch time and after school physical activities, but without success. (Intermediary change agent's monthly report, July 9, 2007)

Balancing collective capacity building activities with organizational capacities emerged as a central strategy to sustain participation, support, and resources exchanges within the LAC all through the project. This required that the intermediary change agent pay close attention, and constantly assess and gauge how much partners could take on given their finite resources of time, energy, and operational capacities. One municipal partner gave a particularly good example of what he experienced in his attempt to contribute to the LAC's activities:

Most partners that joined the LAC have significant capacities in the community; however, their capacity is not at the lunch time during school days, and curiously this is where we started with the LAC. It has become the LAC's mission but most community and municipal partners do not have the human resources capacity to meet this need. (...) So it remains problematic if we want to keep our focus on these times in the schools because our contribution will only be minimal because we don't bring much capacity to this large group. So we seem to have two options: we either find partners that have human resources capacity during the day or we change our priority and action strategy. We understand that it remains a need in the community but if we don't have the capacity to meet it, what can we do? Summers, weekends, evenings, we have capacity there and can contribute. (LAC meeting transcription note, February 27, 2007)

On a similar vein, another strategy used to keep partners committed and engaged in the LAC and enhance their ability to contribute time and resources was ensuring that the achievement of the LAC's goals contributed to the realization of LAC partners' organizational mission and goals. The intermediary change agent expressed her thoughts on the rationale behind this particular strategy:

[One community partner] reminded me today that her mission is to prevent drug and alcohol abuse among kids, not necessarily promote physical activity, and that it is important that her organization's mission can be found, to some extent, within the LAC's mission, vision, and objectives if she wants to have her funder's endorsement to invest in the LAC/KIS project. In other words, how does the LAC contribute to the realization of her organization's mission and vice versa? One important strategy to keep partners at the table and sustain their participation in the project thus appears to be to make sure that LAC partner organizations' investment in the LAC also allows them to pursue their own organizational goals. This will involve providing flexibility in the type or nature of initiatives that the LAC will support in the context of KIS.

(Reflective note, January 14, 2007)

Barriers to the Community Mobilization and Collective Capacity Building Processes

Key aspects relating to KIS's approach, the intermediary change agent's interventions, and the contextual environment which worked against the community mobilization process and the development of collective capacities within the LAC are presented in Table 7. Barriers were generally similar to those found in the community-based partnership literature, with a few exceptions for which more attention is provided below.

An important set of factors had to do with the pilot nature of KIS, and the LAC's intersectoral context. While all partners agreed that more coordinated efforts were required in

Table 7

Barriers to Community Mobilization and the Development of Collective Capacities

Barrier	Description	Perceived Effect
Lack of clear definition and formalization of roles and responsibilities	The core principles, roles, and responsibilities (i.e., who is responsible for decision making, implementation, and accountability) were not addressed explicitly nor formalized at the beginning of the initiative; individual participants' understanding of core principles, roles, and responsibilities differed; failure to assign roles for all partners.	Created ambiguity over decision-making power and role confusion within the LAC; intermediary change agent assumed program implementation role, reducing time devoted to capacity building activities; disengaged some partners.
Failure to establish a number of operation rules and principles	Clear rules for decision-making and accountability, equity principles for funds allocation, norms and policies for participation and contribution, and specific criteria for LAC membership and target groups were not formalized during the first year of the LAC.	Created confusion, ambiguity, and disagreements over decision-making power and resource use and allocation.
Time	Tight timelines and time constraints (i.e., to produce first action plan, to produce concrete programs); the LAC governance structure, which demanded partners to meet, collectively plan projects, etc., was not the fastest mechanism for delivering product.	Often led to "forcing"/precipitating linkages, partnerships, and project implementation; sacrificed collaborative capacity development for quick results, slowed down the emergence of genuine collaborative initiatives.
Centralized activities and program implementation site	Programming was highly concentrated at lunch time in the three participating schools.	Disengaged some partner organizations; limited the LAC's capacity to deliver programs/fulfill program needs (i.e., lack of human resources).

Divergent visions, viewpoints, priorities, cultures, values, and personalities	Lack of a common vision and competing interests/priorities, differences in languages, values, agendas, organizational cultures and policies; intersection of divergent perspectives, needs, and institutional approaches to project management and reporting; personality conflicts.	Limited communication and collaboration across organizations even between closely related sectors; created conflicts, notably over the LAC's role and the allocation and use of resources.
Limited organizational capacities	Limited capacity, particularly among small community organizations, to invest human, material, and financial resources when current resources are already overstretched to run existing programs.	Impeded progress in developing collaborative partnerships and initiatives; limited LAC capacity to deliver planned programs; limited participation, linkages, and collaborative opportunities.
Unwillingness to invest resources	Limited resource investment from institutional organizations.	Limited institutional organizations' engagement in the collective effort; impeded the processes of community mobilization and capacity building;
Limited communication channels	Deficient communication channels within LAC partners' own organization (i.e., failure to inform their personnel about the LAC's mandate, activities, and development).	Hampered operational capacity and interorganizational trust; slowed down the impetus and progression of the project.
Excessive technical assistance	Providing the partnership with too much technical assistance (beyond that of the intermediary change agent) to assist partners in coordinating initiatives planned and alleviate the intermediary change agent's workload.	Disengaged partners from program planning and implementation roles and responsibilities; hindered fragile linkages and collaborative efforts that had appeared during the first months.
Frequent turnover rate of LAC representatives	Numerous changes in school principals and community organization staff; maternity leaves.	Impeded progress and flow of the LAC's collective effort and actions; the fragile links, trust, and collaborative experience developed had to be rebuilt with new representatives; impacted inter- and intra-organizational communication.

<p>(Lack of) recruitment of, and active involvement from, critical stakeholders</p>	<p>Poor representation from sports and recreation service providers; limited involvement from the city's recreational department; inconsistent representation from decision-makers at the LAC.</p>	<p>Limited the LAC's ability and capacity to take action, make decisions, integrate the LAC's activities within organizational mandates and structures, and develop roots in the community.</p>
<p>Limited institutional recognition and support systems for partnership work in schools</p>	<p>Time devoted by physical education teachers to the partnership activities was not formally recognized by school boards (i.e., for one school whose physical education teacher did not want to get involved, capacity to collaborate was especially limited); school boards' rigid internal operational practices and infrastructure.</p>	<p>Limited schools' capacity to develop genuine collaborative partnerships; time devoted to the coordination of programs with community and municipal partners rested on the good will and volunteer time of physical education teachers.</p>
<p>Limited experience and qualifications of the intermediary change agent, insufficient training opportunities</p>	<p>The intermediary change agent's limited experience in community-based partnership management and capacity building; insufficient resources allocated to partner and intermediary change agent skills training and development (e.g., to develop a strong communication plan, to advocate for change in government policies).</p>	<p>LAC coordination time had to be devoted to learning basic management skills, thereby reducing time dedicated to capacity building activities; partners had to learn to do certain tasks by themselves (although this in a sense increased the community's capacity).</p>
<p>Pilot nature and uncertain future of KIS</p>	<p>The fact that KIS was piloted within one small community; the LAC's high-impact, low-reach nature; ambiguity about the financial sustainability of KIS; considerable time spent by the intermediary change agent to identify potential financial partners with KIS's research team.</p>	<p>Impeded investment from municipal or city-wide organizations with broader mandates and clientele; slowed progress in LAC coordination and mobilization activities.</p>
<p>Other contextual factors in which the partnership operated</p>	<p>Prior history of, and ongoing, turf issues; competition for resources and clients; recruitment of francophone human resources; features of the physical environment (e.g., major road barriers); adapting KIS to a different provincial and institutional context.</p>	<p>Slowed down the development of linkages and collaborative capacities within the LAC; led to conflicts between partners; took some time for the LAC to identify its own capacity and identity.</p>

the community to significantly increase and facilitate access for children's participation in sport and physical activity programs, they disagreed as to how the LAC was going to help make it happen. LAC partners and the coordinator shared KIS's core principles; however, an initial misunderstanding of the operationalization of KIS's mission and governance principles led the LAC to become an additional agency in the community. This additional structure exacerbated rather than supported and built upon existing community structures, as expressed by a municipal representative:

There are many resources in the community that we did not use or maximize. We didn't push existing agencies for them to do more for the community or work together to see what we could do collectively. Instead, we created something that did not exist before and that is artificial in the sense that its programs and the structure that support them depend on financial and human resources that are short-lived and that cannot continue to exist without an intervention from [the funder] or from the University. It gives us a real challenge. (LAC meeting transcription note, February 27, 2007)

Resource concentration primarily in schools also demobilized a few community and municipal partners. As a partnership uniting representatives with a variety of positions and power (i.e., from city division manager to physical education teacher), negotiation and reciprocal measures within the LAC were essential for finding common ground on the LAC's mandate and strategies, keeping partners engaged, and harmonizing working relationships.

Given that the original model was borrowed from QEF, partners expressed concerns and the need for caution in implementing KIS based on the QEF model and

pace given KIS's considerably different financial and organizational structure. For instance, unlike QEF, the intermediary change agent was not a full-time employee and had limited support for the management of the partnership. One LAC partner eloquently expressed this concern in this way:

It's important to bear in mind KIS's specific context. QEF is currently in its fifth year. We cannot make an exact photocopy and apply it here in Vanier, Ottawa.

We are talking about two very different structures here, financially and in terms of operations, human resources, etc. It's important to identify our own capacity and identity, independently from KIS or the University, the jug in which we are ready to live and in which we will evolve, because we are at the beginning of our second year now, right? Two realities, two different plates really. (LAC meeting transcription note, January 23, 2007)

Although representation from a variety of actors (i.e., managers, directors, and frontline staff) in the LAC provided enhanced opportunities for vertical learning, the inconsistent representation from decision-makers at the LAC hindered the LAC's ability and capacity to make timely and strategic decisions, integrate its mission within organizational structures and systems, and achieve strong legitimacy in the community. This was especially true for schools, which were represented by physical education teachers with very limited decision-making power and institutional recognition and support systems for their participation.

Individual perspectives about the role of the LAC differed. Some partners were at the LAC to maximize existing programs and resource use rather than share management tasks for additional programs. Others thought the LAC should be a strategic planning and

development committee rather than an operational or managing committee. Divergence of vision regarding the LAC's role disengaged some partners when the LAC was too operational (i.e., city division manager) or too strategic (i.e., physical education teachers).

Another barrier to collective capacity development was the high-impact, low-reach nature of the LAC governance structure. Indeed, it appeared that the limited capacity of the LAC to attract larger, more powerful organizations limited its capacity to garner critical resources necessary to achieve the LAC's goals set collectively. One LAC partner best illustrated this point:

Keeping the LAC at a micro level makes the involvement of the city very difficult because we cannot provide critical city resources in every single community. I think it would be wise to attach it to a larger structure that encompasses the whole city as we cannot allow ourselves to be involved and holding hands forever because we don't have enough resources. The city's model is to implement city-wide, intensive projects in a number of communities, and then move to other communities. The LAC is a model specific to one little community, three schools. It's not realistic for the city, given its finite resources, to get involved in every single community initiative. Attaching the LAC to a larger, city-wide structure would enhance our capacity to generate provincial interest. I don't think the LAC is there yet. Maybe the University will have success in selling this model but, from my perception, it's not a given. (LAC meeting transcription note, April 18, 2007)

While some partners expressed the importance of building local capacity and coordination between local agencies before the end of the University's financial and

human resource support, others thought that the University had some level of responsibility for having instigated the project in the first place, as expressed by this community partner during a personal conversation with the intermediary change agent:

The LAC is gaining maturity. However, it's important that the entity which created us [the University] stays present and ensures long-term support. It's like being a parent. We are parents for life. The nature of parents' intervention and support will change throughout the different life stages, but they are always there and responsible to some extent. (Descriptive note, April 2008)

Uncertainty with regards to the financial sustainability of KIS hampered time, energy, and resource investment from some institutional partners, although it also impelled partners to seek additional funding opportunities.

Discussion

This study sought to examine the strategies used, and barriers faced, by an intermediary change agent in the context of KIS, a CII, as she attempted to promote community mobilization and capacity building around enhanced children physical activity opportunities and participation and concurrently maintain a coalition of local partner organizations who contribute the resources and support necessary for KIS to pursue its mission and objectives. The results from this study contribute to Rethemeyer and Hatmaker's (2007) resource dependence framework for network management by examining how the strategies used to manage interdependencies in CII map into RDT's theoretical perspective using an in-depth case study of managerial action from the intermediary change agent's experience.

Overall, the data suggest that the intermediary change agent used various strategies throughout the initiative to influence and constrain the community mobilization environment and/or the behaviour of LAC partner organizations in an attempt to encourage collective action and change. She did so by stimulating interdependent relationships developing out of KIS's principles and criteria (i.e., interorganizational collaboration, partnerships, resource exchanges, capacity building) through the use of various activating/deactivating and synthesizing strategies, and by manipulating LAC partners' perceptions of interdependence through the use of framing and mobilizing tactics. In other words, influence and constraints exerted by the intermediary change agent (to some extent) directed or focused local organizations' choices and decisions, thereby promoting desired behaviours and actions throughout the community mobilization process.

The finding that reinforcing interdependence among LAC partner organizations fostered community mobilization, collective action, and ownership over the initiative initially appears to go against one of RDT's principle postulates, which suggest that organizations will try to increase their control over resources so as to decrease their level of interdependence on other organizations (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). However, as the results from Chapter 3 suggested, at the higher level of analysis of the LAC, where LAC partner organizations are forming one collective/organization involved in a partnership with a relatively powerful partner (i.e., University), reinforcing interdependence between the LAC and the University (i.e., KIS's research team) may be conducive to a survival advantage of both organizations (i.e., the LAC and KIS), at least in the short-term (0-3 years). This suggests that RDT's postulate may not necessarily apply to the context of

community-based partnerships in which shared governance and control over resources are favoured and collective action and ownership are sought.

The network management literature suggests that network managers will either try to manipulate the social structure to help it achieve a particular outcome, or modify the network itself by activating different (i.e., more powerful) actors and, as a result, leverage more profitable patterns of interactions and resource exchanges necessary to produce the desired outcome (Agranoff & McGuire, 2001; Klijn, Koppenjan, & Termeer, 1995). In KIS, as the initiative evolved, the intermediary change agent's attempts at influencing local organizations were increasingly targeted at decision-makers, who possessed control over critical organizational decisions and resource allocation and investment (e.g., city manager, school board superintendent, etc.). This supports the resource dependence view that activating/deactivating, synthesizing, framing, and mobilizing strategies should be directed at organizational decision-makers who have the power to "span" the organization's boundaries (Agranoff & McGuire, 2001; Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). Otherwise, attempts aimed at engaging and influencing local organizations to secure formal organizational support, invest critical resources, and change organizational practices, structures, and/or policies are contingent on organizational representatives' (limited and precarious) will and capacity to influence their organization's top management.

It could be argued that as the complexity of the changes envisioned increases, governmental actors become necessary components of CII. In fact, the data highlighted that in CII with community change objectives, a model which integrates both local actors and more regional organizations may be more conducive to sustainable collective action

and change, provided that there is a commitment to the sharing of decision-making and the transfer of power and control from organizations and professionals facilitating the change to the local organizations involved. As the CII progresses, deactivating could be used to rearrange and shift the LAC member composition if it is not producing the expected results by gradually incorporating organizational decision-makers and as a result, change the collaboration dynamic, facilitate opportunities for interorganizational influence, and enhance the political capacity of the LAC (O'Toole, 1988; Klijn, 1996; Klijn et al., 1995). However, such managerial strategy should not be to the detriment of the shared governance process and local partners' ownership over the project. In light of the intermediary change agents' relative power advantage over the conditions regulating the use and distribution of resources, they may be more successful if they convince LAC partners of the need to revise their strategies to reinforce the LAC's membership base and political capacity rather than impose it.

RDT posits that the nature or importance of the transactional interdependencies and costs implicated in coalitions is critical to organizations' decision to join or not. The data highlighted KIS's limited capacity to engage and influence large organizations' decision-makers given the nature of its community model, which concentrates resources in a few neighbourhoods and schools. RDT would predict that for larger organizations, sustaining intensive resource investment in concentrated areas may not be as advantageous as dispersing resources more widely. This was the case for institutional partners such as the city and school boards, who were reluctant to invest considerable resources when only a small segment of their clientele (i.e., 1 city ward out of 23; 1 school out of 22 and 5 schools out of 39 for each school board, respectively) would

benefit from their investment. The LAC's concentration of resource control, or the extent to which it could substitute sources for the same resource, was thus reduced when it stayed at a micro-level. Strategically speaking, synthesizing allowed the intermediary change agent to broaden the LAC's connections and exchange relationships with other, more influential external organizations and coalitions, thereby keeping functional and strategic ties with institutional decision-makers. Moreover, exploring possibilities for expanding KIS in other communities the institutions were serving, and making sure institutions were on board and supported the change process, served to enhance their perceptions of incentives associated with their participation (i.e., framing and mobilizing).

Research suggests that there is no one best way to implement community-based, intersectoral collaborative partnerships (Bolda, Saucier, Maddox, Wetle, & Lowe, 2006; Lasker, Weiss, & Miller, 2001; Mitchell & Shortell, 2000; Parent & Harvey, 2009; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000). In the intersectoral and multi-organizational context of the LAC, representatives' active participation in the LAC's micro-managerial tasks did not appear to be as significant to the development of interorganizational collaborative capacities as the extensive rapport, relationship, and trust building that emerged from knowledge and resource exchange mechanisms and collaboration opportunities provided within and outside of the LAC. This seems to support existing literature on successful governance and management mechanisms (Green et al., 2001; Kreuter et al., 2000) demonstrating that coalitions should primarily stay in a leadership/strategic role (i.e., achieving a common vision, agreeing and collaborating on common goals and specific strategies) rather than managing role (i.e., micro-managing programs as large

committees). For LAC partners, assuming a strategic role entailed that they know about their organization's strategic positioning, priorities, and daily operations, have decision-making authority (or are delegated this authority), and are able to commit resources and unreserved support from their organization.

The results suggest that the LAC's ability to collectively control, through horizontal governance and shared decision-making authority, the rules and conditions for the allocation and use of funding granted by KIS, concentrates power in the LAC, who can use this power to exert influence or constrain the behaviour of LAC partner organizations. Because LAC partners could control who they were sharing resources with and how through a variety of self-determined criteria (i.e., membership, geographical/community boundaries, resource investment requirements, programmatic principles, outcomes, etc.), this ensured that funding allocation and operation regulations were to the advantage of each and every LAC partner organization. Contrary to what would be predicted by RDT, the establishment of horizontal mechanisms emerged as a condition for community mobilization and collective capacities to develop. However, it is not clear whether the LAC allowed LAC partner organizations to improve each other's resource/dependence position, as would be predicted by RDT. One tendency observed among LAC partners' approach (and notably among the intermediary change agent's attitude) was the desire to "split the pie" among partners or ensure every organizations benefited from their participation and investment in some way. At first sight, this strategy may seem to promote organizational time and resource investment and collective action. However, it may also prevent LAC partners to think strategically about which strategies and actions are most relevant and efficient to achieve the LAC objectives set collectively,

no matter whether each organization gets a “piece of the cake” or not. Although finding a balance between the achievement of collective vs. organizational goals is known as one necessary condition for organizations to invest time and resources in initiatives such as CII, further research needs to explore more thoroughly what local organizations specifically derive from their engagement and investment in CII, how the engagement of relevant community actors can be sustained, and how necessary organizational investments can be promoted given the objectives set by CII.

The findings suggest that for the LAC to develop collective capacities, partners’ own organizational capacities and commitment to the partnership’s goals needed to be developed. In fact, when the LAC’s action plan was not formally integrated within LAC partner organizations’ structure and action plan and planned within organizations’ decision-making process, their capacity to invest time and resources, develop strong collaborative relationships, and engage in collective (intersectoral) action was limited or fragile. In contrast, representatives whose organization acknowledged, supported, and planned their participation in the LAC were more likely to show commitment, act as leaders, and develop genuine collaborative relationships with other partners. This adds to Foster-Fishman, Berkowitz, et al.’s (2001) capacity framework, which comprises capacity development at the member, intra-coalition/operational, relational, and programmatic levels, by highlighting the importance for CII and community coalitions to develop capacity at the *organizational* level. Strategically speaking, when faced with partners who cannot commit their organization’s support and resources to the partnership’s goals, intermediary change agents must consider whether they should invest energy on identifying means to build the organization’s capacity to invest in the

partnership, or deactivate (i.e., disengage) the organizations from the partnership so as to protect partnership effectiveness.

Collaborative capacity development models (e.g., Alexander et al., 2003; Dressendorfer, Raine, Dyck, Plotnikoff, Collins-Nakai, McLaughlin, & Ness, 2005; Foster-Fishman, Salem, Allen, & Fahrbach, 2001; Smith et al., 2003) have placed emphasis on building local leadership, strengthening interorganizational networks and infrastructures, and bolstering political will/support as key elements to capacity building. Our experience suggests that for KIS and the LAC to be an added value within the community, the partnership would need to integrate and complement existing structures rather than create additional ones. For instance, linkages, collaboration, and capacities among LAC partner organizations were enhanced when emphasis was placed on coordinating new and existing local initiatives and programs. Linking organizations from the outset with similar goals, programs, and clientele within and beyond the LAC decreased perceptions of the LAC as being an additional service provider in the community in competition with local organizations with a similar mandate, and as a result, fostered collaboration between organizations and the intermediary change agent. LAC partner organizations were also in a better position to invest time and resources into the partnership when the LAC helped them work together in a more coordinated way toward pursuing their own mission.

One challenge faced by intermediary change agents in CII is to sustain engagement and resource mobilization from local organizations in the face of uncertainty (i.e., funding coming to an end). One strategy to sustain community engagement and interorganizational resource investment and exchange may be to mobilize and develop

local organizations' collective capacities not only around the initiative but also around the overall process of change. In a context where CII aspire community ownership over the initiative and the sustainability of actions and programs put in place, capacity building implies that intermediary change agents share activating/deactivating, synthesizing, framing, and mobilizing functions with LAC partners and actually encourage them to increasingly play these roles. However, as the results from this study suggest, developing ownership (including financial autonomy) and collective capacity for change may imply the need for community partners to develop political capacities and strengthen political will and support so as to garner the necessary resources for achieving LAC objectives. Hence, in the face of uncertainty, local organizations can use these enhanced collective capacities to achieve a degree of autonomy from the institutional partner on which they depend for critical resources such as funding.

Community-based partnerships established as part of CII are typically depicted as interdependent relationships based on reciprocity and mutual trust where organizational self-interests are sacrificed for common goals. As the data revealed, not all participants contributed in a way that was equally valued by other LAC partners and by the intermediary change agent. This suggests that those partner organizations which provide resources and take actions that are most needed or desired by the CII may come to have more influence and control in the community coalition, as one of the inducements received for contributing the most critical resources is the ability to influence or shape organizational action (Boyd, 1990; Oliver, 1991; Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). This puts intermediary change agents in a delicate and dangerous situation. Intermediary change agents must exercise caution in the way it uses control and decision-making power they

ultimately hold on the community mobilization and change process. Reciprocal dependence between the institutional and community partners may work to discourage intermediary change agents from exercising excessive control over local partner organizations and promote CII outcomes at the expense of community mobilization and capacity development.

The role of the manager within the resource dependence perspective involves recognizing the social context within which the organization operates, and making appropriate organizational adjustments to these realities so as to ensure continued support from the other organizations on which it depends for resources and survival (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). The results from this study suggest that the nature of intermediary change agents' role in CII is highly strategic. On the one hand, they have to identify strategies to facilitate CII implementation and attain the objectives pursued. On the other hand, they must make sure that CII implementation is community-driven and that local organizations are genuinely engaged and taking action together. The concurrent pursuit of both objectives requires intermediary change agents to have a good understanding of the environment in which the CII is embedded. Intermediary change agents' strategic role entails that they deepen their understanding of organizational and interorganizational dynamics and pay close attention to, question, and assess the community's potential for development, capacity building, and change so as to adjust their strategies accordingly. Failing to adjust CII activities and intermediary change agent strategies to local organizations' capacities jeopardize their ability to sustain their engagement and investment of resources in the initiative. In fact, finding a balance between a community's potential and capacity for change on the one hand, and the CII's objectives

on the other hand, may be central for intermediary change agents to be able to exert a healthy pressure on the movement towards change.

While the intermediary change agent function was assumed by a graduate student hired by the university through a graduate research assistantship, questions remain as to whether this person should be a university or a community staff, and whether he or she should fall under (and be accountable to) the university, community partners, or the LAC as an entity, given that these other models were not piloted. RDT predicts that if an intermediary change agent lacks functional, effective, and influential links to the funding partner, his or her ability to activate/deactivate, frame, synthesize, and mobilize will diminish as coalition members will question the intermediary change agent's capacity to negotiate. From the intermediary change agent's perspective, there were several advantages to having an intermediary position with some form of power over the LAC's decisions on the one hand, KIS's orientations on the other hand, as well as negotiation capacity between KIS's research team and LAC partners. Advantages included the ability to keep partners focused on the LAC's shared objectives, influence the LAC to make certain decisions, shape KIS's orientation and developments based on the local context and needs, and ensure LAC partners operated within KIS's defined parameters. Nevertheless, advantages and limitations of each scenario warrant further research, especially in light of the discretionary control and powerful position the intermediary change agent has when it is hired by the funding partner (i.e., University). As Mandell (1988, in Agranoff & McGuire, 2001, p. 300) put it in reference to network management, the intermediary change agent "requires a view of the strategic whole and an ability to develop and achieve a set of common objectives based on this whole."

What appeared clear, however, is that the involvement of an independent, permanent person facilitated the coordination of community-based partnerships in KIS. This finding is in line with the broader management literature (Child & Faulkner, 1998). Intermediary liaison officers must often link funders, community partners, and lead agencies; manage logistics, budgets, initiatives, conflicts, numerous communication channels, and complex participation processes; handle ambiguity, complexity, and impatience to achieve results; reconcile diverging perspectives, needs, interests, mandates, and organizational cultures; as well as understand and take into account the local context. Given the complexity of their role and the fact that community-based partnerships are becoming an increasingly common mechanism for action, research and policy endeavours, intermediary change agents' function may need to be formalized and adequately trained and supported. Moreover, considering that many CII are held together by one or a few individuals, mechanisms may need to be put in place to reduce reliance on only a few leaders and ensure coordination and collaboration between partners, including sharing responsibilities among partners, documenting activities and practices, and planning an adequate transition and training period upon arrival of the new staff. Some initiatives (e.g., Québec en Forme, 2007) have linked communities with catalyst institutions through liaising teams composed of two or more individuals, some associated more directly with communities and others with the catalyst institution. Regardless of the staffing configuration chosen, for initiatives with community capacity building goals, caution is warranted when support staff's operational capacity, through their full-time position, exceeds that of their community partners who can only devote a finite portion of their time and resources to the partnership work.

Concluding Remarks

This paper sought to contribute to the gap in the public health, organizational, and partnership management literature on the key managerial strategies used and barriers encountered by a CII intermediary change agents. From a CII intermediary change agent's perspective, reinforcing LAC partner organizations' interdependence and collective capacity (i.e., by increasing local organizations' control over the process of sharing resource), as well as the LAC's political capacity (i.e., by mobilizing decision-makers so that they can take on the influence role in their community and leverage additional resources), strengthened the LAC's ability to invest and sustain the resources necessary to engage in collective action and in the overall process of changing the conditions that influence children's participation in sports and physical activities. This suggests that intermediary change agents' strategies aimed at manipulating both the social structure and composition of the local partnership (i.e., LAC) may leverage patterns of interactions and resource exchanges that are more successful in bringing about desired outcomes. However, how these patterns of interactions and resource exchanges develop and evolve throughout the community mobilization process to produce desired changes warrants more research attention. These dynamics are examined more thoroughly in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER 5

Manuscript III: An Analysis of Community Mobilization Development Related to
Children Sport and Physical Activity: A Case Study of Kids in Shape

An Analysis of Community Mobilization Development Related to Children Sport and
Physical Activity: A Case Study of Kids in Shape

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Introduction

Integrated, intersectoral partnering and action at the community level is central to current community mobilization strategies addressing enhanced sport and physical activity opportunities for children in Canada (e.g., Active Communities, 2003; Québec en Forme, 2007; Government of Québec, 2006; Saskatchewan *in motion*, 2003) and worldwide (e.g., US Department of Health and Human Services, 2000; WHO, 2007). Partnerships and other collaborative efforts have been strategically used to develop community capacities to initiate, mobilize, and sustain change (Chavis, 2001; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000). Experience from Canadian community-institution initiatives (CII) such as the National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention (Hastings & Jamieson, 2002), *Québec en Forme* (Québec en Forme, 2007), Youth Net/*Réseau Ado* (Austen, 2003), Vibrant Communities (Leviten-Reid, 2006), *Initiative montréalaise de soutien au développement social local* (Grandchamp, 2003), and the Project on Community Mobilization Against HIV/AIDS-Related Stigma and Discrimination (Garmaise & de Bruyn, 2004) suggests that there is no one blueprint for community mobilization; however, all agree that a multidimensional approach is needed to examine its development. While the literature in public health (e.g., Bourdages, Sauvageau, & Lepage, 2003), sport management (e.g., Frisby & Millar, 2002), social science (e.g., Bourque, Barette, & Vézina, 2002; Wharf & Clague, 1997), and political science (e.g., Fisher & Kling, 1993; Kretzman & McKnight, 1993) has contributed to our understanding of community mobilization, there is currently no accepted definition and integrated theory of community mobilization.

Community mobilization has been conceptualized as a strategy or a means used to strengthen and transform community capacities into concerted action and change (e.g., Austen, 2003; Grandchamp, 2003; Foster-Fishman, Fitzgerald, Brandell, Nowell, Chavis, & Van Erogen, 2006; Kretzman & McKnight, 1993; Hastings & Jamieson, 2002; Howard-Grabman, & Snetro, 2003; Public Health Agency of Canada, 1999; Williams & Olano, 1999). However, others have conceptualized community mobilization as an outcome resulting from enhanced participation and identification with the community, capacity development, interorganizational collaboration, collective action, and problem solving (e.g., Cheadle et al., 1998). Community mobilization thus remains an elusive concept used more or less interchangeably with closely related concepts such as community capacity (Chaskin, Brown, Venkatesh, & Vidal, 2001), community development (Frisby & Millar, 2002), community organizing (Wharf & Clague, 1997), and interorganizational collaboration (Foster-Fishman, Salem, Allen, & Fahrback, 2001). In this chapter, community mobilization is broadly defined as a process which seeks to develop the capacity of communities to assemble resources, assets, and efforts in an attempt to take action in a complementary, integrated, and sustained way and produce desired change. In other words, community mobilization is seen as a catalyst of intersectoral action and change.

Whether defined as a strategy, a means, or an outcome, it is generally agreed (e.g., Austen, 2003; Grandchamp, 2003; Hastings & Jamieson, 2002; Québec en Forme, 2008; Williams & Olano, 1999) that community mobilization is highly context-dependent, and linked to a dynamic and continuous process of community participation, collective capacity development, and action for change. For example, Bourdages et al. (2003)

argued that community action generated through intersectoral community mobilization relies on key components, including the active participation of local organizations and influential actors, the establishment of clear operation rules and horizontal decision-making processes (i.e., governance mechanisms), and the development of trusting relationships and partnerships, joint learning mechanisms, and integrated intervention strategies.

Other authors have also highlighted the importance of creating and supporting conditions conducive to the development of local capacities and ownership for community action and change to occur and be sustained over time (e.g., Simpson, Wood, & Daws, 2003; Chaskin et al., 2001). This may be especially true for community-institution initiatives (CII), where community mobilization is generally initiated by an external organization which will invite local organizations to partner around a shared vision and objectives, and commit core financial and technical (i.e., human, expertise) resources to support the initiative's implementation and attainment of results. For example, Harvey et al. (2004; 2005; 2006; 2007) underlined that the mobilization of local communities around the development and implementation of sport and physical activity programs for underprivileged children by Québec en Forme (2008) led to new and strengthened exchange relationships (i.e., tangible and intangible resources) between local organizations from different sectors, thus enhancing the value of their social capital. However, it is not clear from Harvey et al.'s research, and others who have examined community mobilization in the context of CII (e.g., Bourdages et al., 2003), the extent to which local organizations strategically join community mobilization efforts in an attempt to gain access to key resources (e.g., financial) necessary to advance their own

organizational objectives, and to what extent they genuinely work together and exchange resources among themselves in the pursuit of a collective vision of change and goals.

According to resource dependence theory (RDT), organizations will exercise a wide range of strategic behaviours (e.g., join coalitions or establish external linkages with organizations from which they can acquire valuable resources, etc.) to manipulate external dependencies or exert influence over the allocation or source of critical resources (Boyd, 1990; Oliver, 1991; Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). Indeed, one of the basic tenets of RDT is that in order to survive and function, organizations are dependent on their external environment for acquiring the resources which are critical to their operation, but over which they have limited control. A lack of control over valuable resources creates uncertainty for organizations. To minimize this uncertainty, organizations will interact with other organizations, actors, or entities in their environment which control the sources of finite and valued resources. While RDT would predict that access to critical resources may motivate local organizations to join a community mobilization effort established in the context of a CII, it is not clear how the process of community mobilization and the inherent distribution and exchange of resources among local organizations develop as CII progress. CII typically seek the development of collective capacity and local ownership over the issues identified, the process of community mobilization, and the outcomes attained. The extent to which local organizations will invest resources, engage in exchange relationships, and develop collective capacities for and local ownership over the change envisioned by the CII in a context where critical resources can be easily accessible is not clear. Moreover, we do not know whether the type of resources (i.e.,

tangible, intangible) acquired by and/or exchanged among local organizations, and the capacities built collectively, change as the community mobilization evolves.

The dynamic and continuous nature of the community mobilization process suggests that variations in participation (i.e., time and resources investment), exchange relationships, collective capacity, and/or collective action and change may impact the development of community mobilization. It also implies that the process of community mobilization needs to be nurtured on an ongoing basis. Yet, exactly how community mobilization develops in the context of CII remains unexplored. Moreover, the key role played by the intermediary change agent throughout the process of mobilization so as to foster local organizations' collective capacity, autonomy, and appropriation of the solutions developed by them on the one hand, and their sustained participation and resource investment on the other hand, deserves more research attention. This chapter seeks to examine the emergent development of community mobilization within the Rideau-Vanier LAC, established as part of the Kids in Shape (KIS) project, a community-university physical activity initiative.⁷ Using an exploratory, insider action research approach, the process through which local actors and organizations moved as they learned to work together and achieve collective goals over the first three years of the KIS project are examined from the perspective of the intermediary change agent (i.e., first author). This process is examined along five specific dimensions: (1) local organizations' time and resource investment; (2) exchange relationships; (3) collective capacity; (4) community action and change; and (5) intermediary change agent's role. Each dimension is operationalized in the methods section.

⁷ Refer to Chapter 1 for a complete description of the KIS project.

Methods

The present case study focuses on KIS's pilot Rideau-Vanier LAC and draws on data collected over a 29-month period (December 2005 to April 2008). KIS can be viewed as one approach to action research, with strong collaboration, capacity-building, and community change goals and values (Reason & Bradbury, 2001). The first author assumed the role of the intermediary change agent and insider action researcher (Coghlan, 2001; Coghlan & Shani, 2008), and engaged partners in an on-going process of interorganizational dialogue, shared decision-making, and collective action. Initial LAC partner organizations were identified and recruited by the RCSCS to form the LAC on the basis of their mandate to offer services for children in the neighbourhood, mainly in the area of physical activity and sports, regardless of the sector in which they operated (e.g., education, sports and recreations, social and community services, etc.). By the end of the data collection period, the LAC comprised 25 organizational representatives (thirteen more than the set of partners mobilized at the start of the initiative) from five francophone elementary schools and two school boards, five community organizations and recreation centers, and two municipal authorities (i.e., public health and parks and recreation departments). The increase in the number of organizational representatives is due to LAC partners identifying and recruiting additional organizations and individuals as the project progressed.

The data derived from five sources: (1) the intermediary change agent's participant observation and descriptive notes, (2) the intermediary change agent's reflective notes, (3) LAC monthly meeting transcripts and notes, (4) written and electronic material (i.e., e-mail communications, LAC meeting minutes, official

documents produced by the LAC or by KIS's research team, etc.), and (5) debriefing notes from KIS research team meetings. Data collection and analysis were ongoing and iterative in nature (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Reason & Bradbury, 2001; Patton, 2002). The data were imported into the software program Nvivo (Fraser, 1999) and analyzed using conceptual thematic coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006) based on the following five operational dimensions:

1. Local organizations' investment of time and resources (i.e., tangible and intangible) in the LAC's overall planning, implementation, and evaluation activities;
2. Exchange relationships among partner organizations, notably the extent of tangible (e.g., financial, material, human resources) and intangible (e.g., information, knowledge, expertise) resource exchanges and interorganizational collaborative linkages;
3. Collective capacities, including LAC partners' capacity to take action (e.g., planning, coordination, implementation, communication, evaluation, etc.) collectively and autonomously (i.e., *programmatic capacity*); to mobilize new partners (i.e., *relational capacity*); to establish governance mechanisms and procedures (i.e., communications structures, decision-making processes, sharing of roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities; *intra-coalition/operational capacity*), and to respect and seek divergent perspectives, contributions, experiences, and advices from each other (i.e., *member capacity*);
4. Community action and change, notably sport and physical activity programs developed, actions aimed at influencing decision-makers or other organizations not involved in the LAC, and changes in organizational practices, programs, and policies; and,

5. Intermediary change agent's role played throughout the process of community mobilization.

Conceptual thematic coding involved the following steps. First, meaningful units of text that captured characteristics or features related to each of the four dimensions were identified and inserted into a time-framed, analysis grid. This analysis grid served to track, in a chronological way, features of the dataset that were linked to the five dimensions examined as the process of community mobilization evolved. Units of text which dealt with the same issue were organized together to form general themes (e.g., tangible resource investment, interorganizational linkages, autonomous program implementation, etc.) reflecting each dimension, as defined above.

A second level of analysis involved inductive thematic analysis of community mobilization developmental stages. That is, stage development and conceptualization of the community mobilization process were generated inductively following conceptual thematic coding of the data. The categories or stages which showed distinctiveness and coherence among the data extracts, and which were supported by a considerable set of data, were given a name (Patton, 1990; Braun & Clarke, 2006). Inductive thematic analysis led to the identification of six key stages presented in Table 8. The distinctiveness and integrity of each stage were driven by changes or notable signs of progress observed along the four aforementioned dimensions. Analytical memos served to complement the data analysis process, particularly in moving the analysis of raw data from a descriptive (i.e., thematic, semantic or explicit) level to an interpretative (i.e., conceptual, theoretical, or latent) level (Boyatzis, 1998; Patton, 1990). The results are interpreted and discussed using a RDT lens (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003).

Table 8

A Comprehensive Model Featuring the Community Mobilization Stages that Emerged within the LAC

<i>Operational Dimension</i>	<i>Connection and Formalization</i>	<i>Cooperation</i>	<i>Collaboration</i>	<i>Concerted Action</i>	<i>Ownership</i>	<i>(Transformation)</i>
<i>Time and Resource Investment</i>	Investment of time and intangible resources (information, expertise)	Early investment of material resources; reduced time investment	Enhanced time, material, and human resource investment	Resource investment is more significant	Investment of time and political resources is more predominant; early financial contribution	Significant time, material, human political, and financial resource investment
<i>Exchange Relationships</i>	Limited to sharing information, experiences, and needs within meetings	Information and knowledge exchanges; resource exchange is limited	Interorganizational linkages, resource exchanges, and collaborative efforts are enhanced	Exchange relationships are more genuine; partnerships are based on trust	Resource allocation and exchanges are maximized; partnerships are consolidated	Links with external resources are strengthened; resource exchanges outside the LAC
<i>Collective Capacity</i>	Capacity is weak and limited getting familiar with others' needs and perspectives; partners mostly work individually with intermediary change agent	Capacity is limited to planning and management tasks; leadership rests on same individuals; limited responsibility and ownership over implementation	Capacity to work collaboratively and rally additional partners/resources; increased mutual appreciation; establishment of mechanisms for collaborative action	Capacity to jointly operate programs; common purpose beyond self-interest and organizational idiosyncrasies; enlarged membership and resource base	Political capacities start to develop; capacity to take action together is more autonomous; shared responsibility and accountability; strong network of committed partners	Strategic and political capacities are strengthened; knowledge and linkages are applied beyond the LAC's objectives
<i>Community Action and Change</i>	Program planning activities	Early program implementation but limited in scope and concentrated in schools	Development of collaborative projects; early changes in attitudes and organizational practices	Significant sport opportunities offered; broader changes in attitudes and organizational practices	Initiatives are more integrated and complementary; the LAC is gaining influence in the community	Early changes in organizations' programs, structures, and policies
<i>Int. Change Agent's Role</i>	Leader	Operator; coordinator	Liaison officer	Facilitator	Facilitator; catalyst	Catalyst

It should be noted that the insider action research approach, whereby the first author immersed herself in the LAC as an intermediary change agent, a participant, a facilitator, a researcher, and a co-learner in the change process, was complex and demanding. However, this research approach allowed for a fine and context-specific analysis of the mobilization experience, as well as gaining substantial “internal” insights into community mobilization processes and dynamics which might otherwise not have been captured by more traditional (i.e., external, non-participant evaluation) data collection methods (Coghlan, 2001).

Results

Table 8 presents the process of community mobilization that emerged within the LAC’s first 3-year experience. The key stages of community mobilization consisted of: (1) connection and formalization; (2) cooperation; (3) collaboration; (4) concerted action; (5) ownership; and (6) transformation. Transformation is a projected one reflecting the latest developments that occurred at the end of stage five and at the beginning of what appeared to be a new stage, distinct from ownership. Each stage is defined and described next with respect to the five operational dimensions identified in the previous section of this chapter (i.e. methods).

It is noteworthy that the stage process represents the general group experience as LAC partners were evolving at different paces. Indeed, community partners were generally faster in moving through the stages than institutional (i.e., school, municipal) partners, possibly because they are more vulnerable than public organizations, for securing the resources needed for survival, to shifting funders’ priorities and political agendas. Finally, facilitating intersectoral community mobilization required that the intermediary change agent play different roles at different stages of the process. Even though multiple roles were

assumed concurrently (e.g., leader, facilitator, liaison, mobilizer, operator, etc.), the key roles taken on at each stage of the mobilization process are presented.

Stage One: Connection and Formalization

The bulk of the first months focused on making interorganizational connections, defining their shared vision and goals, and identifying operating principles, joint opportunities and strategies towards the production of an annual action plan. Upon its establishment, the LAC comprised nine organizations (three elementary schools, four community organizations and centres, and two municipal departments) represented by 13 individuals, mainly organizational decision-makers (i.e., school principals, community centre directors, city managers, etc.). LAC partners' level of participation and input was significant, and translated into high attendance rates and active involvement during LAC meetings. Partners shared planning tasks and established working groups to identify community needs, resources, and programming priorities. Although partners invested significant time, knowledge, and expertise, project leadership and direction primarily came from the intermediary change agent.

Except for partners with a history of prior collaboration, interorganizational relationships were generally limited to LAC meeting and sub-committee meeting interactions. For most partners, the LAC constituted the first time all organizations from the community were united around the same table to work together around a common issue. The LAC essentially served as a meeting point for local organizations to connect and learn about KIS's general framework and values. Interorganizational exchange relationships were limited to getting familiar with other partners' needs and perspectives, but they allowed partners to realize that "others" were also facing similar problems and issues. In general, the partners' vision was narrowly focused on their organizational needs and the resources that

could be gained from their participation in KIS. This was evidenced by the nature of discussions which often focused on organizational issues as opposed to children's needs, and by the initial participation of decision-makers as the intermediary change agent later reflected:

In hindsight, the involvement of institutional decision-makers at the beginning/planning phase of the project probably reflects their interest in knowing what opportunities KIS could bring to their organization before deciding who to designate as their organization's representative, and their attempts to influence the LAC's orientation and strategies prioritized. For instance, when school principals could secure access to LAC resources (i.e., sport and physical activity programs delivered in their school), their attendance at LAC meetings diminished. They started to send their physical education teachers. This was also the case for the city Parks & Recs. and Public Health managers, who attended LAC meetings until they could determine the nature and extent of their organization's investment in the project, or until they could no longer influence resource allocation and programmatic-related decisions. (Reflective note, March 23, 2008)

While institutional partners dominated discussions during LAC meetings, sharing experiences and perspectives and highlighting their needs, most of them were reluctant to share material resources and infrastructures, as exemplified by the intermediary change agent's observation notes: "Schools and municipal partners are currently unwilling to share sport equipment for the project, even though it is intended for children from their school and/or community" (Reflection note, February 11, 2006); "The availability of gymnasiums after school is limited and/or non-existent because they constitute sources of revenue for schools, which they would lose if they'd lend them to other partners as part of the KIS

project.” (Descriptive note, March 7, 2006) Collective capacity was limited to getting familiar with others’ needs and perspectives. Partners counted on the intermediary change agent for engaging in collective planning and for establishing governance mechanisms.

During stage one, the intermediary change agent played a leadership role and primarily focused on developing a sense of direction, common purpose, and goals. Organizations’ interest and participation were catalyzed; community values, needs, and resources were identified; and time was provided for partners to develop a shared understanding of the collaboration context. Intentional efforts from the intermediary change agent to share leadership with LAC partners, as well as be “neutral” (i.e., not favouring one partner over another), seemed crucial to the early development of community mobilization.

Stage Two: Cooperation

While stage one reflected a general enthusiasm about KIS, the second stage was characterized by tension, ambivalence, and disagreements, notably with regards to program implementation roles and the allocation of LAC resources. Institutional partners were generally more disinclined than community organizations to take ownership of programs developed. For example, the intermediary change agent noted:

One school principal [did] not want to assume responsibility for an after-school program taking place in the school’s gymnasium for his own students in case of parents’ complaints or failure to pick up their children. He preferred to indicate that it was a program offered by KIS and that the contact person was me [intermediary change agent].” (Descriptive note, November 2006).

Another school principal shared;

If we are starting to say that LAC programs have to become more autonomous, then it does not work for us because programs that come in our schools have to be very self-

contained the way it was this year otherwise they may just fall down” (LAC meeting transcription, February 2007).

LAC partners contributed material resources by borrowing equipment and giving free access to their infrastructures for LAC-related activities (e.g., “it was agreed that the school would take charge of registrations and provide access to the gym and sport material” – Observation note, December 1, 2006). However, because they perceived KIS as a program delivered in their community, most partners did not see their contribution of resources as an investment in a collective initiative that belonged to them, but rather as a service lent to the “KIS program”, as evidenced by this organizational representative’s remark:

It will be my pleasure to loan the gymnasium and sport material to KIS for lunch time activities with kids from our school. However, I would appreciate that you make sure your staff be careful with our sport material as this is all we have for gym classes for the entire year. We cannot afford to buy new material as the budget has all been worn-out. (E-mail communication, September 29, 2006)

Hence, once LAC programming and resource allocation were completed, partners disengaged from program implementation by assuming it was the intermediary change agent’s role. Leadership mostly relied on the same few organizational representatives and the intermediary change agent.

While LAC partners were developing a relationship based on cooperative, planned action, most partners were at the table to see what their organization could gain from their participation in the LAC. Incongruence of goals, interests, and favoured strategies between some organizations slowed down the collaboration process. Interest in learning with each other was still superficial. Relationships primarily focused on exchanging information, knowledge, and to a lesser extent, resources. Direct linkages and exchange relationships

outside LAC meetings were few and worked through the intermediary change agent as a liaison.

Although children physical activity opportunities and participation rates were significantly enhanced during the first implementation months, programs developed were centered on the needs of the schools (i.e., reduce kids' violent behaviour and thus, school principal interventions) and did not build on local partners' capacities and resources. Several community and municipal partners became unmotivated. As few partners took responsibility over program implementation, the intermediary change agent assumed most of that role. At that period, LAC partners played a cooperative role in the KIS project and worked with the intermediary change agent in advisory capacities. As a result, LAC partners' capacity to collectively take action was limited and very fragile.

During stage two, the intermediary change agent focused her time and energy on cultivating an open attitude within the group, encouraging dialogue and mutual understanding, and organizing small, successful collaborative projects. While she played program operator and coordinator roles, efforts were made to encourage partners to stay focused on the LAC's collective objectives and children's needs rather than on the narrower interests of their organization. Allowing partners to identify their own capacity for action and change was crucial for the partnership to move to the next stage.

Stage Three: Collaboration

Stage three was marked by a gradual shift in LAC partners' understanding of the goal of the project away from being an all-inclusive program delivered in the community and towards a community-driven, collaborative project aimed at enhancing linkages and concerted action between local organizations. Working through tensions that arose in stage two allowed partners to better understand and appreciate each other's perspectives and

experiences, and community needs more broadly. Roles and responsibilities were clarified within the group, and operational modes and agreements were formalized, leading to enhanced participation, leadership, accountability, and power sharing. The establishment of mechanisms and principles for collaborative partnering and action was essential to find common ground, harmonize working relationships, and keep partners engaged and committed to their collective vision and goals.

The exchange of both tangible (i.e., access to infrastructures, sport material and equipment, human resources) and intangible (i.e., information, expertise) resources among LAC partners became more prevalent during this stage. LAC partners showed openness to collaboration; however, they were resistant to sharing financial resources from the LAC, but also human resources recruited, given their scarcity, with other organizations not involved in the LAC and in the Rideau-Vanier community. One school principal expressed it best when the question of expansion the LAC to nearby neighbourhoods was addressed during one LAC meeting:

My opinion is that we are learning to work together, and that takes time, getting to know the other partners, developing direct linkages. Adding additional partners around the table, first, there is no room left here around the table, and I think that on that aspect, we have to be careful not to skip steps. However, I think about the soccer league, it comes from here (LAC initiative) but it will reach to Lowertown kids so there are ways to involve kids from outside the community targeted by the LAC without necessarily inviting new partners to join. It's just that eventually, let's just take the [community organization] as an example; it took a lot of time before we were able to integrate it in our practice. Now we can say that it's part of our nature, it's an

integral part of our school but it took how many years? (LAC meeting transcription note, April 18, 2007)

The same observation was noted by the intermediary change agent in her monthly report to KIS's research team:

I sent an e-mail to all LAC partners to present [partner X's] request to join the LAC as an official member. This had been suggested by partners as some had appeared reluctant to take the decision in group during a LAC meeting. Partners sent me their decision by e-mail or phone. Everybody agreed that they join; however, I had no response from the schools. Either they were too busy at this time of the year, or they opposed the idea of having to share services, programs, or resources with other schools in [partner X's] neighbourhood should they eventually also ask to join the LAC. (Intermediary change agent's monthly report, July 9, 2007)

Resource exchange increased among LAC partners, as well as linkages with other sport and physical activity programs and organizations outside the LAC. Interorganizational communication and exchange relationships were more direct, tangible, and autonomous. Partners met outside LAC meetings and engaged in new projects jointly. Good working relationships emerged within the LAC. Reflection and evaluation mechanisms were established, enhancing opportunities for collective learning, and generating changes in attitudes and perspectives. For some partners, the initial attitude: "What can I gain from the LAC?" gradually changed into a more proactive attitude: "How can I contribute using my own expertise and resources?" (Reflective note, March 15, 2007).

During stage three, the LAC became a vehicle for collaboration. LAC partners' capacity to connect and work together without an intermediary bolstered, and translated into small working groups collaborating on specific initiatives. Partners became more active

participants in program operation and delivery. To enhance organizations' capacity to engage in true exchange relationships, the LAC coordinator had to "encourage direct communications, linkages, and exchanges between LAC partners, discourage intermediary interventions, and learn to make herself more invisible" (Reflective note, April 4, 2007). To do so, she provided partners with various collaborative planning, implementation, and assessment tools, which enhanced opportunities for social interactions and allowed for concerted and complementary sport and physical activity initiatives to be developed. Partners became more active participants in program operation and delivery. New and more tangible linkages were formed between recreation, schools, and community organizations over the second year, leading to more than ten collaborative sport and physical activity projects being developed and implemented in the community. While the initiatives were supported by KIS's funds, they all involved resource exchanges from organizations and, for a few of them, minor financial contributions. Additional operational/programmatic and financial partners were mobilized to assist in the implementation of the action plan.

In stage three, the intermediary change agent played more of a liaison role, connecting organizations, programs, and external resources, and supporting partners in building their collective capacity. Fostering a culture of collaboration and shared leadership among the group was fundamental in this stage. Partners were encouraged to contribute to the initiative the way they could, although they were invited to think about the sustainability of the initiatives developed:

Last year, I was pushing for developing programs. We probably didn't take enough time to develop real partnerships, find new ideas, and ask ourselves the right questions. This year, if we want to take the time, I think it would be important, especially if we want to create something that will stay in the community should

KIS's funding comes to an end, and I am not saying that this is what is going to happen, I mean they want to continue to sustain the LAC financially, but what is important is to make sure that what is created around KIS's money is grounded in the community and can be sustained. (LAC meeting transcription note)

Stage Four: Concerted Action

Stage four was characterized by the development of a more transparent working environment and genuine exchange relationships based on trust. Following an expansion of the LAC to two adjacent neighbourhoods, the diversity and scope of LAC membership and participation enlarged significantly. New partners with complementary expertises, capabilities, and resources joined the LAC, then uniting 14 organizations (five elementary schools, six community organizations and centres, and two municipal departments) represented by over 20 individuals. Communication mechanisms were established and decision-making principles and procedures were revised and formalized.

On a general basis, LAC partners engaged in interorganizational exchanges and collaboration in new and expanded ways. Linkages started to form with citywide and regional organizations, enhancing the LAC's resource base and capacity to provide physical activity opportunities for children. By the end of the second year, organizations' exchange of human and material resources became a funding allocation norm, as suggested by the following excerpt derived from LAC meeting minutes:

With regards to the selection of initiatives (programming), decisions will be made based on the following five principles: (1) each initiative should involve at least two organizations; (2) LAC partners should be involved, in consideration of its capacities and resources, in at least one initiative in the LAC's annual action plan; (3) (...); (4) projects that show potential for sustainability will be privileged; and (5) (...). These

criteria will guide partners while developing projects and initiatives that will be proposed next Spring, and will facilitate decision-making while assessing the relevance of projects submitted to the LAC. (LAC meeting minutes, December 11, 2007)

Greater trust and respect led to an enhanced ability to develop new partnerships, openly share personal and organizational struggles and aspirations, and seek ideas and advice from others. Building trusting, horizontal relationships required that LAC partners step out from their comfort zone and address issues beyond the boundaries of their organization.

Interest in learning together increased as a result of perceived mutuality and trust. For instance, most partners recognized that they needed each other to achieve their collective (i.e., LAC) goals, but also their organizational goals. Once partners' reached a certain level of trust towards each other, they were more open to recognize each partner's contributions and opinion. However, the high representative turnover rate made exchange relationships and mutual learning still fragile. New partners joining the LAC had to be familiarized with the project, and relationships had to be rebuilt. Respecting individual mandates and intervention spheres was essential for maximizing collaboration and engagement in the LAC.

Relationships and collaborative efforts could break down if trust was compromised.

Horizontal relationships and collaboration within the LAC sometimes demanded that partners work outside usual organizational boundaries, as expressed by this municipal liaison officer:

Sometimes we have to think outside the box because even if we are part of a public health, education, recreation, or social services agency, there are many partners from other sectors that we can reach to so as to help us better fulfil our mandate (LAC meeting, October 2007).

Another partner also echoed the same idea:

The importance of influence, I mean, political pressures, pressures on our managers, a little bit sometimes to make policies more flexible, to remove the sticks in our wheels, by working together and by trying to create, together, again it's all linked to the positive energy the LAC has and the impacts that we have in schools, we see increased participation among kids and the impact of that on violence in the school yard. So sharing that but also considering our organizational limits, respecting those limits and the fact that they differ across organizations, but working together and trying to find alternatives so that we don't stay at the level of "Oh no, we can't do that, it's not possible." Like ok, we can't do it this way but how can we do it differently to still accomplish our goal? So sometimes we hit walls, but we have to stay open and see how we can overcome them, be a little bit more flexible and creative in our approach, in our work. (LAC meeting transcription note, April 18, 2007)

However, LAC partners' capacity to influence their own organization was limited by their being spokespersons of, and accountable to, their organization's mission, vision, and objectives, as this school principal eloquently put it:

If we are starting to talk about political pressures, then I cannot stay at the table, and I'm sure other school principals can't neither, because we have to make sure that what we say represents the position of the school board, and we don't want to put you [other LAC partners] in a position where you cannot say what you want to say because the school board's position may not always be in the children's best interest. And I believe it's the same thing with the City. So if for francophones, it's better to go against the City, then we can't have City representatives representing the LAC on

that issue, so it's the same thing with the school board. (LAC transcription note, February 27, 2007)

During stage four, the LAC developed better rootedness in the community, and became a mechanism for concerted action. Partners demonstrated the capacity to reach consensus, mobilize and rally resources, and jointly coordinate and operate programs. Conflict resolution mechanisms built the partnership's capacity and made the LAC stronger. Collective critical reflection challenged existing practices and led to more extensive changes in partner organizations' decisions and practices.

The intermediary change agent's work primarily focused on facilitating collaborative processes and supporting action. Programs delivered provided significant physical activity opportunities for children, leading to increased participation rates among both children and parents, and greater involvement from local organizations and the community as a whole. Identifying common learning imperatives across diverse organizational contexts was crucial for keeping the range of representatives engaged in meaningful collaborative work.

Stage Five: Ownership

In stage five, the development of community ownership was particularly predominant. Leadership, responsibilities, and accountabilities were more equally shared among partners. Partners envisioned common goals, assessed and reflected on the progress and outcomes of the partnership, and communicated their accomplishments in the community. Representatives from two school boards and external community developers and professionals joined LAC meetings and activities to learn from the partnership model and practices with the goal of implementing a similar model in their own communities.

The relative importance and meaning of tangible and intangible resources in the exchange relationships changed as the KIS project and the community mobilization process

evolved. LAC partners' contribution of financial and "political" resources, such as their linkages with external, influential organizations and city-wide initiatives and the involvement of decision-makers, became particularly important after two years into the initiative. Garnering the support and involvement of LAC partner organizations' decision-makers was particularly important to ensure that representatives could engage their organization in the objectives and strategies privileged by the LAC, as expressed by this physical education teacher:

I think that [the school principal] has to make a decision with regards to the direction she wants to take with our participation on the LAC. Does she want me to engage in this activity or not and engage our school in this specific direction? I mean all other school principals are around the table. [She] needs to really understand what the LAC is all about and what it really implies to engage in the project. Then, if she can't manage this on her own, she'll have to decide whether she wants to set up a LAC committee in the school and if the other teachers are not interested to get involved, then she'll have to make a decision whether we continue or not. Because really, LAC programs have contributed to keep children more active and busy at lunch time and reduce violence rates in our school. (LAC meeting transcription note, December 11, 2007)

New programs were developed within the LAC, maximizing human, material, and financial resource allocation and exchanges, and consolidating partnerships. Partners' contribution to and resource investment in the LAC increased significantly and became more deliberate. The meaning of KIS's financial contribution changed, from being seen as "additional money" to develop physical activity programs, to a "lever" for building Rideau-Vanier's capacity to

increase opportunities for children to be physically active, as evidenced by this community organization director's comment:

The University was able to secure three years of funding to bring KIS in our community, and they are currently working to get us a fourth year. We have the choice of either spending this money until there is no more left, or use it as an opportunity to leverage our efforts and build something that will stay with us. (LAC meeting transcription note, December 11, 2007)

The active and sustained participation from diverse representatives reinforced opportunities for interorganizational collaboration. Mutual influence was facilitated by the culture of collaboration and collective learning nurtured within the LAC. For example, "The parks and recreation city division manager invited frontline staff from two community organizations to collaborate on and share best practices regarding a physical activity outreach initiative they had developed and implemented with great success in the neighbourhood" (Descriptive note, March 15, 2008).

With enhanced ownership, the capacity of the LAC to take action together was stronger, and rested on partners' sustained commitment and willingness to work and learn together to make a difference in their community. Even during precarious transition periods (i.e., uncertain KIS continued funding, intermediary change agent's imminent departure, expectations from KIS to be financially self-sustainable), partners demonstrated leadership and capacity to collectively address issues, share responsibilities, and manage change. While sport and physical activity programs supported through the LAC still rested on ongoing financial support from a funding agency, community self-direction and autonomy in guiding the mobilization and change process were now appearing as attainable goals.

The LAC gained more influence in the community, mobilizing local resources and actions from other organizations, and becoming the reference point for issues related to children sport and physical activity, as noted by the intermediary change agent: “Today, LAC partners and I met with Rideau-Vanier and Overbrook-Forbes councillors to share concerns with regards to the accessibility of city infrastructures, financial assistance for underprivileged families, and the need for subsidized summer day camp registrations for low-income families in two parks” (Observation note, March 23, 2008). “Organizations (i.e., [Football organization], [city-wide initiative]) come to the LAC when they want to provide disadvantaged children with sport and physical activity opportunities because we are recognized as the community’s entry door on that aspect.” (Reflection note, January 30, 2008)

The following note from the intermediary change agent also illustrates this point:

Two out of the three sites nominated by the LAC to participate in the *I Love to Skate* initiative offered by Active Ottawa Actif have been selected among eight other communities across the city. The wealth of partners united around the LAC certainly increased our chances of being selected. The LAC has a power advantage over other communities by demonstrating a real commitment and mobilization around children sport and physical activity. (Observation and reflection note, December)

In sum, the LAC’s enhanced legitimacy, visibility, external linkages, and actions to influence decision-makers contributed to increasing its political capacity.

In stage five, a key role for the intermediary change agent was to push individual organizations to do more for children’s participation in sport and physical activities within their community and, as a group, to work together in a more integrated way. The intermediary change agent strategically took steps to incite LAC partners to examine their

assumptions and practices more critically, notably, by planning reflection time during LAC meetings to discuss and constructively challenge practices and programs developed.

Maintaining the partnership as vibrant and engaging was also important in view of the fact that the LAC was going through important changes.

Projected Stage Six: Transformation

A number of developments which occurred at the end of stage five allow us to foresee a sixth stage, primarily marked by the transformation of partner organizations' programs and structures. By its third year, the LAC was better positioned to address community needs, develop initiatives that complemented existing services and programs, and influence local and regional decision makers. Partners were at the foreground, initiating actions to challenge institutions to think and do things differently. For example, meetings were organized with city councillors and school boards to advocate for increased access to sports and recreation infrastructures and programs. Communication structures and constructive ways of managing conflicts were in effect. Complementarities and exchange relationships among LAC partners and with external organizations were consolidated.

While early changes in organizational practices and programs (e.g., schools providing physical education teachers with management time to attend LAC meetings and coordinate joint physical activity programs; two rival community organizations sharing human resources, equipment, and space; recreation centres modifying their programs to facilitate access) took place during stages three to five, many partner organizations were starting to modify their practices, as well as some of their structures and policies, by the end of their third year of participation in the LAC. Already by the end of stage five, other initiatives emerged outside of the LAC based on linkages formed within the LAC. While the participation of individuals and organizations transformed the LAC, for some partners, the

LAC also transformed and expanded their own organization's capacities. Some partners internalized what they learned from other partner organizations and reproduced this knowledge as part of their own organizations. Others reported having their practices and/or programs transformed by participating in the LAC. Examples include a community organization broadening its mandate to offer youth programs when the local agency responsible for youth services saw its mandate being modified, municipal partners sharing youth leader training opportunities with community organizations and groups, and community organizations applying for funding to develop a soccer league for older children no longer eligible for the junior soccer league they established as part of the LAC.

From such evidence, it is projected that by stage six, the knowledge, strategies, and action generated within the LAC will be gradually applied beyond the project's objectives into other contexts (i.e., evidence that the project is truly grounded in the community – local ownership). A case in point is actions initiated by school boards to establish LACs in other sectors of the city and in rural communities as vehicles to enhance children sport and physical activity participation, as well as other goals (e.g., bullying prevention, enhancing children's francophone identity and sense of belonging). In the longer-term, the LAC's activities may become more strategic and political, its influence in the community more important, and changes at the organizational and community level, more extensive.

At the transformation stage, it is believed that the intermediary change agent will work further from the background and support partners in leveraging collective action and, particularly, change. The intermediary change agent will gradually become a catalyst for the LAC's leadership and initiative. However, the need for a permanent staff to coordinate the collective effort on a long-term basis has been underlined by partners. Sustaining partners'

commitment, resource investment, relationships, capacities, as well as partnership outcomes, may also become the main challenge at this stage of the process.

The Evolving yet Dynamic Nature of the Community Mobilization Process

As is the case with any developmental process or sequence of stages, the stages were not structurally discrete, the transitions between the stages were not precisely clear-cut, and the process was not always linear and irreversible, for instance, when new partners joined the LAC or when goals, operating norms, and strategies were revisited or refined throughout the process of community mobilization. One ongoing challenge to the overall mobilization process was the high turnover rate of partner organizational representatives. Frequently, new representatives had to be familiarized with the project, objectives had to be reminded, and relationships and trust had to be re-built. At other times, the LAC needed to take a step back in order to progress. Community mobilization evolved in jagged ways, with ups and downs and setbacks.

Community mobilization was thus a very fragile and human process, first and foremost embedded in relationships, hindered by representatives sometimes not well (or not at all) substituted, and enhanced by the commitment of a few exceptional leaders and organizations. However, the apparent linearity of the community mobilization development model reflects the progression and growing maturity of the LAC (from connection and formalization to ownership and early transformation) throughout the KIS project. In sum, the mobilization process was dynamic and bi-directional in that it involved periods of ambiguity, conflict, and negotiation that led to enhanced collective capacity, learning, and growth. The dynamic nature of community mobilization will be examined more thoroughly in the next chapter.

Discussion

This chapter provided a comprehensive model featuring the stages of community mobilization development linked to key components of intersectoral community action and the intermediary change agent's role within the context of the KIS project. In essence, the findings reveal that within a three-year period, the LAC evolved from being a platform for local organizations to connect and self-organize around enhanced children sport and physical activity participation, to becoming an agent of change within the community to modify some of the conditions that determine children's participation in sports and physical activities. More specifically, the data showed that as participation, linkages, and collective capacity increased, community ownership also increased, leading to community action and physical activity programs that were more likely to be sustained over time. Community ownership emerged as a key stage of the mobilization process. The findings suggest that for community ownership to develop, the community mobilization process needed to promote the development of a common set of goals that also supported the participant organizations' mission and goals, and which emphasized partners' participation in decision-making and their sense of responsibility and accountability to the LAC.

An examination of the data suggests differences in the prominence and significance of various types of resources acquired, exchanged, and/or invested by LAC partners at different stages of the community mobilization process. Overall, securing financial resources (i.e., mainly through KIS) was important for the LAC from the start and throughout the initiative to get the project off the ground and sustain LAC partner organizations' commitment and exchange of in-kind resources such as time/energy, equipment, and access to infrastructures. However, as the initiative progressed, LAC partner organizations' investment of human and political (i.e., decision-makers) resources in the LAC turned out to

be central for increasing local ownership and the political capacity necessary to bring about organizational and community changes. Indeed, securing political resources within the LAC enhanced the LAC's political capacity, such as the ability to access or garner additional and critical resources needed for the continued survival of the LAC and KIS. Building linkages and partnerships, both within the community and in its external environment, with diverse organizations and influential representatives (i.e., municipal councilors) who could provide, control, or influence the allocation of critical resources also made the LAC and KIS project more legitimate and attractive to potential financial partners, who could see their visibility significantly enhanced as the LAC broadened its partner base. Finally, by ensuring its involvement and visibility within the community, such as through representation on intersectoral tables and participation in other community initiatives, the LAC could establish additional ties with important and influential constituencies and consequently, enhance its ability to mobilize the political capital needed to obtain scarce resources and realize its mission. In other words, initial external funding by KIS mobilized, engaged, and encouraged local partners to invest human and political resources from their organization. This enhanced the LAC's political capacity, external legitimacy, and visibility, which contributed to mobilize other partners with complementary capacities and secure additional external financial resources.

The results suggest that financial resources invested by KIS triggered the investment and exchange of in-kind, organizational resources such as time, information, expertise, and material resources among LAC partners. Interorganizational collaboration and investment of in-kind resources enhanced the LAC's *programmatic* capacity, the ability to implement ecologically valid, innovative, and clearly focused programs that addressed community needs, as well as its *intra-coalition* or *operational* capacity, the ability to establish formalized

procedures and ensure sufficient resources, leadership, and efficient communication (Foster-Fishman, Berkowitz, Lounsbury, Jacobson, & Allen, 2001). Furthermore, interorganizational linkages and exchanges, both within and outside the LAC, allowed for the development of *relational* capacity, the ability to develop a shared vision and positive relationships with external organizations, as well as promote power-sharing and a positive work climate within the LAC (Foster-Fishman, Berkowitz, et al., 2001). Nevertheless, garnering political resources from each partner organization (i.e., ensuring the engagement of and support from organizational decision-makers) and encouraging organizations to invest material, human, and financial resources within the LAC allowed LAC partner organizations to develop ownership over the initiative. Acquiring political (organizational) resources was central to ensure LAC partners incorporate, integrate, or institutionalize the LAC's objectives, values, and intervention strategies within their organization's practices, programs, structures, and/or policies. The emergence of a sense of ownership by LAC partners over the initiative through the investment of resources may also reflect a strategic response from the LAC and from the intermediary change agent each recognizing their reduced level of interdependence as the financial sustainability and survival of KIS became increasingly uncertain.

In fact, it is noteworthy that garnering political resources from each LAC partner organization also helped the LAC, as a collective, to build political capacity, or what some authors have called *centrality* (i.e., Bolda et al., 2006; Mitchell & Shortell, 2000). Indeed, building political capacities such as legitimacy, influence, and the ability to garner financial and other critical resources, especially as KIS's last funding year was imminent, allowed the LAC to reach a level of autonomy that reduced its dependence on KIS for financial resources. This is consistent with RDT, which predicts that local organizations involved in a coalition that relies on an organization for resources or operation but which faces financial

uncertainty, will either disengage from the coalition or stabilize the uncertainty facing the coalition (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003; Tsisis, 2008), for instance, by developing the political capacity required to influence municipal elects or to make grant applications, as was the case of the LAC. In the present case, it seems like political capacity (power) was a consequence of the leveraging of the sum of resources and capacities from a diverse group of actors in the community. This also suggests that in local partnerships established as part of CII, financial independence may be the last step of the capacity building and local ownership process, other aspects such as informational, programmatic, and human resources independence being developed first as they are vital for CII initiation and implementation. The importance that political capacity building played throughout the community mobilization process in the present case study also contributes to the capacity building literature by suggesting an additional and central type of collaborative capacity in Foster-Fishman, Berkowitz, et al.'s (2001) framework used in the context of community coalitions (the other types being member capacity, intra-coalition/operational capacity, relational capacity, programmatic capacity, and as Chapter 4 proposed, organizational capacity), at least in the context of CII.

The finding that building political capacity became more predominant as the community mobilization process progressed suggests that the individual who represents an organization within an intersectoral mobilization effort, notably his or her position, decision-making power, leadership, and attitude, is a critical factor to a coalition's success. For example, the action taken for implementing other LACs in schools from both school boards involved based on the pilot experience can be attributed to the exceptional leadership and vision of one individual in a more subordinate position. The results from this case analysis suggest that to advance community mobilization and reach collective goals, organizational representatives must be in a position to not only bring their contribution but also to secure

political resources from his or her organization and influence their organization's higher level management. Formal organizational support and recognition for the representative's participation emerged as being crucial to help the coalition move forward when staff leave and are replaced, to invest critical resources, and to formally engage the organization in the orientations taken by the partnership. Moreover, while frontline staff are usually the ones carrying out the work of community partnerships, the participation or involvement of individuals in top management positions appears to be crucial in initiatives with organizational and community change objectives, because they have more decision-making power and influence on their organization's practices, resources, structures, and policies.

One of the basic tenets of RDT is that organizations will engage in various behaviours to achieve a predictable or stable inflow of vital resources and reduce environmental uncertainty. Although each organization had its strategic reasons to get involved in the LAC, the results suggest that as the community mobilization process developed, LAC partners gradually stepped back from the idiosyncrasies of their organization and focused on collective objectives and action. However, this process took time and needed to be nurtured on a regular basis. Collective action implied that partners move beyond the traditional definition of their roles, and that these roles be intersecting; that is, that partners see how their participation complements each other and mutually appreciate and respect individual contributions in order to support the level of risk and interdependence involved in such initiatives. Helping partners transform initially narrow attitudes and perspectives into more proactive mindsets emerged as an important process for community mobilization development. In fact, participation in the LAC entailed that organizational representatives critically examine their views and practices and accept to influence others and be influenced by others. Yet, the extent to which LAC representatives and organizations

were ready to change their attitudes and practices varied greatly. Multi-organizational collaboration research suggests that for learning to be a changing experience of participation, individual and organizational/institutional capacities must be expanded and transformed (Breit, Engels, Moss, & Troja, 2003). However, from a resource dependence perspective, there may be risks associated with accepting to be influenced by others, including the possibility of losing power and control over critical resources and organizational instability (Olivier, 1991; Johnson, 1995). At the same time, accepting to change one's organizational practices and programs may very well represent an adaptive strategy or strategic compromise for an organization to acquire an important resource.

In KIS, LAC partners demonstrated some level of capacity transformation, for instance, by developing new networks and partnerships, improving information exchange, knowledge, and resources, establishing collective reflective mechanisms, and applying new knowledge and action beyond the LAC's set objectives. However, what specifically contributed to the change (or conversely, the status quo) of organizations and institutions seemed to be the learning (or lack thereof) LAC representatives derived from the collaboration experience, and most importantly, their ability and willingness (or conversely, their indisposition) to bring such learning back to their organization (Beeby & Booth, 2000). This has important implications for intermediary change agents who might encounter resistance and non-readiness to change in CII. According to Ford, Ford, and D'Amelio (2008), successful organizational change lies in the quality of the change agent-recipient (i.e., intermediary change agent-organizational representative) relationship, and should be emphasized early in the mobilization process, such as during connection/formalization and cooperation stages. It is possible that the power and ability of the intermediary change agent to influence organizational representatives through the resources that she brought from KIS

contributed to the change observed. More research needs to examine the relative power influence she had on local organizations' behaviour and response to KIS. This finding also links to the view of strategic alliances as being learning partnerships, which are different than other types of partnerships such as networks (cf. Child & Faulkner, 1998, O'Toole, 1997) and coalitions (cf. Chavis, 2000; Roberts, 2004). However, more research is needed to determine whether CII should be treated as forms of strategic alliances, notably when they emanate from an external organization and when they are developed to operate joint programming initiatives (rather than to achieve health/public policy or community change outcomes).

Consistent with the literature (e.g., Frisby & Millar, 2002; Harvey et al., 2004), transforming organizational and institutional practices, programs, and policies in a way that they are more supportive of underserved communities' accessibility and participation to sport and physical activity appears to require long-term work. This might be especially true for community mobilization demonstration projects limited in scope, capacity, and legitimacy like KIS. In fact, larger institutions such as urban cities and school boards might be more reluctant to allocate considerable resources and change institutional processes for initiatives with relatively trivial reach (i.e., targets 2 schools out of 23 for one school board, 3 out of 39 for the other school board, and 1 city ward out of 23 for the City of Ottawa) and thus impact. Although intersectoral community mobilization efforts can move from the local level to having a far-reaching impact (e.g., Austen, 2003; Québec en Forme, 2007), particularly as they gain political capacity or centrality (Bolda et al., 2006; Mitchell & Shortell, 2000) in the community, the impact of intersectoral community mobilization efforts on institutions and communities might be only potentially observable over extended periods of time. At the same time, local coalitions that do not mature from ownership to transformation may

contribute to preserving the status quo by provisionally addressing community needs through (most often short-term) mobilization initiative funding, and in doing so, giving larger institutions justifications for not changing the very conditions which determine children's access to sports and physical activities.

It is noteworthy that the precise operationalization of KIS and the LAC partnership model, albeit modeled after QEF, was still vague during the LAC's planning phase. Although this has been recognized as a potential problem to partnership planning (Frisby, Thibault, & Kikulis, 2004), clear delineation of roles and responsibilities for both LAC partners and the intermediary change agent was only possible once everyone understood the group's strengths, capacities, and limitations. This suggests that a period of trial and error may need to be accounted or planned for during the start-up phase of collaborative partnerships for partners to determine the governance arrangement that best fits the partnership, understanding that this will continue to evolve as the partnership matures. Enhancing relationships among local organizations as part of community-based partnerships entails having a good understanding of the environment in which partnerships are established, as well as paying attention to partnership maturation, associated transition periods, and needs (cf. Child & Faulkner, 1998), if mechanisms and strategies implemented are to be effective (Mitchell & Shortell, 2000). Thus, the prescriptive approach often taken by managerial texts discussing partnership creation and management, especially those relevant to strategic alliances (cf. Child & Faulkner, 1998), may need to be revisited. This also implies that intermediary change agents be properly trained and supported in their complex role to make sure they have the necessary analytical and strategic thinking abilities.

The results from this case study suggest that as collective capacity increased, the LAC's autonomy, legitimacy, and relationship with its broader environment changed,

leading to different types of support at different stages of the mobilization process to ensure partnership continuity and growth. The role of the intermediary change agent changed as the partnership matured. This supports the change agent literature (Collerette, Delisle, & Perron, 1997; Ford et al., 2008), which suggests a continuum of roles based on the degree of control (i.e., from “imposition” to “habilitation”) exerted on the change process. While the intermediary change agent played a critical role in bringing key players together, building connections across the multiple projects and organizations, and catalyzing action for change, community mobilization could not be forced. The intermediary change agent could only encourage, influence, or strategically take steps to incite partners to think differently, push their boundaries, and work more effectively together to do more for their community. Strategies to maximize LAC partners’ ownership over the project were emphasized from the very beginning of the project. Those early actions (e.g., encouraging time and resource investment from LAC partners) allowed for community ownership to fully actualize in a later stage. As LAC partners took on more control over the change process, the intermediary change agent’s role in doing so correspondingly diminished. The challenge for the intermediary change agent is to determine the degree to which s/he will invest in leading as opposed to preparing the ground and preconditions for partners to initiate action themselves. The ultimate goal of community mobilization initiatives is usually to support communities in sustaining the mobilization process and proceeding more independently over time. As such, sharing responsibilities for decision-making, accountability, relationship building, and collective learning and action with partner organizations need to be integrated early within the mobilization initiative’s plan.

The extent to which the sequence of community mobilization stages identified in our model – understanding that the process was not unidirectional – can be applied to other

intersectoral mobilization initiatives needs to be examined. Our model conceptualized community mobilization as an ongoing process linked to dimensions of community participation, exchange relationships, horizontal learning, collective action, and community change. However, other frameworks have conceptualized community capacity as a higher-level process construct, with other constructs (i.e., participation, cooperation, interorganizational linkages, co-learning, collective action, mobilization) as underlying dimensions or stages (e.g., Smith et al., 2003; Howard-Grabman & Snetro, 2003; Dressendorfer, Raine, Dyck, Plotnikoff, Collins-Nakai, McLaughlin, & Ness, 2005). This apparent lack of conceptual agreement and alignment in the literature limits progress in understanding key community change processes. At the same time, it also suggests that community mobilization processes are complex, highly context-dependent, and defined on a case-by-case basis. The temporal element to the stage-based process also requires further study, as the amount of time needed in one stage before a coalition can move to the next stage is likely to differ significantly across coalitions and communities. In fact, developmental models are only useful if they consider the context of community initiatives, and if they help communities identify high impact strategies and leverage points for improving the processes and outcomes of community mobilization (Simard, 2005; Smith et al., 2003). It is therefore hoped that our model will help inform conceptual refinement and community mobilization practice, or otherwise inspire other community mobilization initiatives and staff in their own unique developmental process and roles.

Concluding Remarks

The comprehensive model described in this manuscript featured the stages of community mobilization development linked to key components of intersectoral community action and the intermediary change agent's roles within the context of KIS. In sum, our

findings suggest that resource (i.e., time, human resources, material, financial) investment and exchange (pooling) among local organizations are central for developing ownership, as well as for building the collective political capacity needed for producing desired changes in communities mobilized as part of CII. The data, examined within a developmental perspective, suggested a number of levers of change in order to move the processes of community mobilization and collective capacity development forward, notably the active involvement and support of decision-makers, the establishment of strong linkages with external organizations, the investment of organizational resources, and the development of political capacities. Nevertheless, our understanding of strategic levers of change remains limited. Moreover, the extent to which community mobilization can produce real and enduring change (e.g., transforming organizations' relationships, norms, practices, policies, etc.) requires further examination. Although intersectoral infrastructures, such as community coalitions established in the context of CII, can gain importance and influence in their communities, partners engaged in mobilization initiatives must invest in an extensive process that challenges their own (and others') organization's assumptions, norms, and practices. This highlights the need to sustain community mobilization initiatives long enough for partnerships to mature, build strong partnerships, and leverage resources and influence in the community.

Future research is needed to examine the usefulness of the proposed model in other community mobilization initiatives, and more closely examine the stage of transformation (as well as subsequent stages) which appears to be fundamental to instil lasting action and changes. Moreover, advances to the theory and practice of community mobilization will require that the links between mobilization development stages, core processes and dimensions, change agency practice, and community mobilization outcomes be established.

Even if it stems from a single case study, this paper is an important contribution to existing organizational literature, considering the paucity of research that has examined community mobilization from a developmental perspective and through a resource dependence lens.

Certainly, this paper is a starting point to help strengthen collaborative efforts in mapping the community mobilization process and supporting the implementation of CII.

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CHAPTER 6

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This exploratory case study sought to provide an in-depth analysis of the processes, mechanisms, and dynamics underlying the mobilization of intersectoral local organizations (i.e., LAC partners) involved in the KIS project, as well as the role played and strategies used by KIS's intermediary change agent. As introduced in Chapter 1, the intermediary change agent role was assumed by myself in the context of my doctoral research work. As KIS's intermediary change agent, I was responsible for catalyzing a process of community mobilization, capacity building, and ownership among LAC partners over the initiative, as well as managing the process of allocation, contribution, and control over various types of resources within KIS. Consistent with inductive thematic coding and analysis of the raw data (Patton, 1990), patterns of meaning (themes) that captured important aspects and dynamics of the KIS initiative and which were particularly prevalent across the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006) were first identified. Then, theoretical conceptual coding and analysis of themes based on four notions deriving from RDT (i.e., resource interdependence, autonomy, ownership, and control over the use and contribution of resources) assisted in guiding and focalizing data analysis and interpretation (Paquette, 2007).

In Chapters 3 to 5, the results of this doctoral research were presented and discussed as part of three distinct research articles addressing specific aspects and/or research questions of this thesis. The present chapter seeks to transversally analyze, integrate, and discuss the results from all three chapters. Key findings from the previous three chapters are first summarized. Then, a theoretical construct of interdependence dynamics that emerged between organizations involved in KIS, and the strategies used by the intermediary change agent to manage these dynamics throughout the community mobilization process are

examined. A preliminary framework that lays out the key roles, managerial strategies, and core competencies of the intermediary change agent in the context of CII are next considered. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the thesis's research limitations, contributions to the literature, as well as future research directions.

Brief Summary of Key Findings

Chapter 3 examined key tensions and dilemmas I faced throughout the implementation process of KIS. In sum, the results revealed three tensions operating in KIS: process/product, insider/outsider, and bottom-up/top-down. The results highlighted that, inherent to these tensions, were the notions of organizational autonomy and ownership (i.e., control) over various types of processes/capacities and resources, notably between KIS's research team and LAC partners. One strategy that emerged to be central in the intermediary change agent's attempts to attenuate tensions and reconcile conflict over critical resources, capacities, autonomy, and ownership/control was building community capacity among LAC partners. In fact, the results showed that, in light of the LAC's relatively high degree of dependence on KIS's research team for financial and human resources (e.g., LAC coordinator) at the beginning of the initiative, preserving decision-making power over LAC program implementation-related resources, developing programmatic capacity, and investing material resources appeared essential for LAC partners to use as countervailing power and maintain a level of reciprocal interdependence necessary to negotiate with KIS's research team. Similarly, from KIS's perspective, favouring community governance/decision-making power over program implementation, soliciting material resource investment from LAC partners, and developing the LAC's capacity to operate programs with the help of the LAC coordinator (i.e., intermediary change agent) enhanced the potential that actions be implemented and concrete results be produced for KIS.

However, Chapter 3 showed that community capacity building could not be restrained to programmatic capacity development and material resource investment from LAC partners, at least not in the context of a CII seeking program sustainability yet community operational and financial autonomy. As highlighted in Chapter 3 and further emphasized in Chapters 4 and 5, the notion of community capacity building expanded as the initiative progressed, and involved encouraging LAC partner organizations to invest human, financial, and political resources (i.e., involvement of organizations, notably organizational decision-makers), develop interorganizational partnerships and resource exchange relationships, and build political capacity, among others.

In fact, Chapter 4 explored key managerial strategies and barriers to my practice as KIS's intermediary change agent which contributed to or impacted the development of collective capacities and community mobilization dynamics operating horizontally among partners within the LAC. Overall, the results revealed that, by using various rules, operating principles, and strategies, I was able to encourage targeted outcomes (i.e., community mobilization, interorganizational collaboration, collective action and change) to strengthen relationships of interdependence between local organizations. Activating/deactivating and synthesizing strategies served to stimulate *interdependent relationships* between LAC partners, while framing and mobilizing strategies worked to manipulate LAC partners' *perceptions of interdependence*. When possible, strategies aimed at influencing local organizations were targeted at organizational representatives who possessed decision-making power over the allocation and investment of critical resources from their organization (e.g., city manager, school board superintendent, school principal, community organization director, etc.). Altogether, these strategies served to influence and constrain the community

mobilization environment and/or the behaviour of LAC partner organizations so as to reinforce relationships (real or perceived) of horizontal interdependence among them.

From the intermediary change agent's perspective, reinforcing LAC partners' relationship of interdependence served to strengthen their capacity to work together and to enhance the LAC's political capacity (i.e., centrality). Again, in light of my role and specific posture in KIS, on the one hand, enhanced collective capacity (i.e., achieving a common vision, agreeing and collaborating on common goals and specific strategies, mobilizing necessary partners) at the community or interorganizational level allowed the LAC to leverage additional resources needed for program development and implementation and assume a leadership role in the community with regards to children sport and physical activity. On the other hand, it increased, for KIS, the LAC's potential to implement actions aimed at enhancing children's participation in sports and physical activities. The expanded definition of community capacity building was also demonstrated in Chapter 5. The results showed that LAC partners' time and resource investment, exchange relationships, collective capacities, and the nature of the action and change implemented changed as the initiative progressed.

More specifically, the data showed that as organizational resource investment, interorganizational exchange relationships, and collective capacity increased, community ownership also increased, leading to community action and physical activity programs that were more likely to be sustained over time. It is noteworthy that community ownership emerged as a key stage of the mobilization process. The findings suggested that for community ownership to develop, the community mobilization process needed to promote the development of a common set of goals that also supported the participant organizations' mission and goals, thereby enhancing LAC partners' engagement in decision-making and

their sense of responsibility and accountability to the LAC. In fact, when collective goals also advanced organizational goals, LAC partner organizations were more likely to invest time and other critical resources in the LAC and/or to engage in exchange relationships with other LAC partners. The investment of material, human, financial, and political (i.e., engagement of and support from organizational decision-makers) resources from LAC partner organizations likewise appears to have contributed to their enhanced sense of ownership over the initiative. As mentioned above, garnering political resources from each LAC partner organization and building their capacity to take action together (i.e., through shared governance, implementation, and learning processes and mechanisms) also helped the LAC, as a collective, to build its political capacity. Enhanced political capacities such as legitimacy, influence, and the ability to garner financial and other critical resources allowed the LAC to reach a certain level of autonomy that worked to partly reduce its dependence on KIS for financial resources.

In sum, the findings suggest that community ownership developing out of organizational resource exchange, investment, and capacity development to pursue both collective and organizational goals is central for building the collective political capacity needed by community-level partners to reach a higher level of autonomy. Altogether, the results from Chapters 3 to 5 suggest that the notions of organizational resources (i.e., financial, in-kind, political), capacities, autonomy, and ownership need to be considered in an integrated model in order to understand the complex dynamics, relationships, and processes operating among organizations involved in CII.

A Theoretical Construct of Interdependence Dynamics Operating in KIS

This section presents a theoretical construct of interdependence dynamics that emerged between organizations involved in KIS, and their relationship to organizational

resources, capacities, autonomy, and ownership. The strategies used by the intermediary change agent to manage these dynamics throughout the community mobilization process are examined concurrently. A few concepts linked to RDT are used to assist in, and deepen, the analysis of the emerging construct. It should be reminded that the objective is not to test, challenge, or support RDT, but rather to use RDT-related concepts to enhance our understanding and further develop a construct of interdependence dynamics that were operating in KIS.

The results from Chapters 3 to 5 suggest that KIS was characterized by interdependence dynamics operating between the external organization (i.e., KIS's research team) and the community partnership formed through the mobilization of local organizations (i.e., the LAC), as well as between local organizations united within the community partnership (i.e., LAC partner organizations). This characteristic of CII, as defined in this thesis, implies that different levels of analysis need to be considered in models and theories describing the management of such initiatives. As Chapters 3 and 4 revealed, the analysis of tensions and barriers that emerged during the course of the KIS project suggests that the notion of interdependence in KIS is particularly complex. Interdependence could be conceptualized at a vertical level, in terms of collaborations, resource exchanges, and power relations between KIS and the LAC as a collective. Furthermore, interdependence could be articulated horizontally, in terms of collaborations, resources exchanges, and power relations between LAC partner organizations united within the LAC.

From a resource dependence perspective, the complex and interdependent nature of relationships found in CII like KIS suggest that, in order to create a self-reinforcing set of relationships that makes interorganizational collaboration work and CII function and survive, vertical interdependencies between the external organization and local organizations, and

horizontal interdependencies between local organizations at the community level, demand to be managed. As this thesis highlighted, the intermediary change agent's role and practice lie at the heart of this complex web of relationships and interdependencies. According to RDT, "organizational stability is achieved through the exercise of power, control, or the negotiation of interdependencies for purposes of achieving a predictable or stable inflow of vital resources and reducing environmental uncertainty" (Oliver, 1991, p.149). This suggests that, at the vertical level of analysis, both KIS's research team and the LAC ought to control, gain power over, or negotiate interdependencies which tie them together in KIS if they are to secure a stable inflow of resources necessary to function together and allow KIS to survive.

Similarly, at the horizontal level, RDT suggests that LAC partner organizations will take steps to control, gain power over, or negotiate interdependencies that bond them together within the LAC to ensure a predictable inflow of resources and reduce uncertainties from the environment, such as through the formation of a coalition. In fact, the results from Chapter 4 showed that LAC partner organizations established various governance mechanisms, rules, and principles to share roles, leadership, and decision-making power among partners, ensure each partner contributes the necessary resources to achieve the collective goals, and reduce environmental constraints or instabilities (e.g., partner organizations leaving the LAC, new partners joining in, etc.). Yet, the results from this thesis suggest that, in a context where program sustainability and community operational and financial autonomy were sought by KIS's research team, the management of interdependencies between organizations involved in KIS emerged as a complex process modulated by various organizational needs, demands, and capacities necessary for KIS's functioning and/or survival. In other words, strategies used by the intermediary change agent

to manage relationships of interdependence between KIS's research team and LAC partner organizations emerged throughout the process of community mobilization.

Figure 2 presents interdependence dynamics that were operating in KIS (i.e., right side of the figure), and how they shaped intermediary change agent's role and practice as the initiative evolved (i.e., left side of the figure). As the figure suggests, the notions of resources (i.e., financial, in-kind, political), autonomy, capacity, and ownership were central to understand the interdependence dynamics that were operating in KIS, and the role I played in managing these interdependencies.

Reinforcing Vertical Interdependence

As Chapter 3 revealed, at the beginning of the initiative, external funding by KIS worked to mobilize and encourage LAC partners to invest time and material resources from their organization in KIS. Likewise, LAC partners' access to critical financial resources allowed for the development of various sport and physical activity programs for children. In KIS's early phase (Year 1), relationships of interdependence between KIS and LAC partner organizations sparked and enhanced collaboration. On the one hand, LAC partners' interest in KIS's financial support and their requirement to get involved in the LAC for accessing the resources allowed KIS's research team to enforce KIS's collaboration/partnership principles, strengthen LAC partners' adherence to KIS's vision of change, and motivate the production of concrete results. Indeed, achieving financial and human resources independence/autonomy was not on the LAC's agenda at the beginning of the initiative. This gave KIS's research team significant power over LAC partner organizations' behaviour to encourage specific outcomes. On the other hand, the production of concrete results by the LAC and the pressure from LAC partners on KIS's research team to sustain their financial support encouraged KIS's research team to secure additional funding for the LAC and the development of other

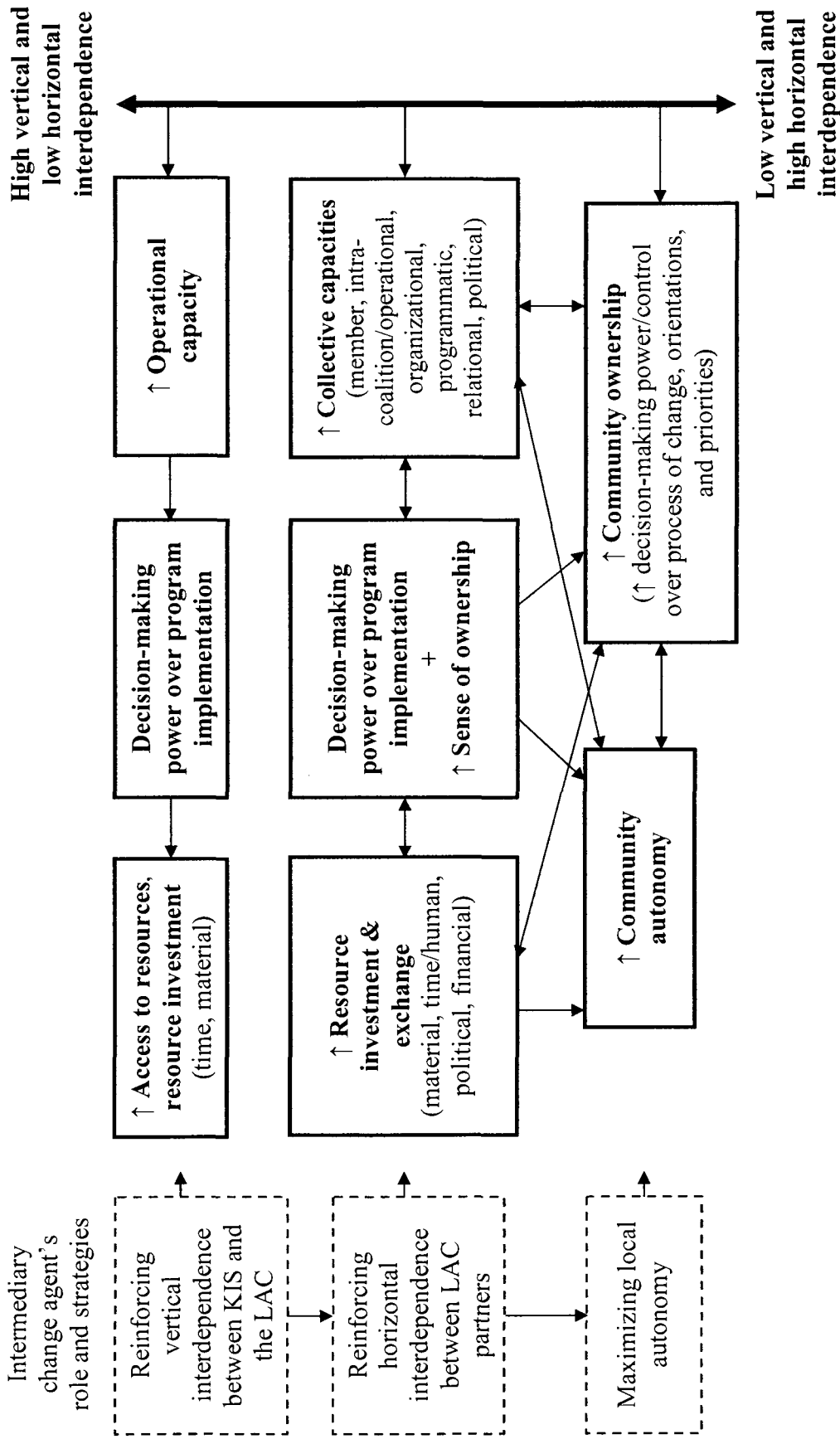


Figure 2. A theoretical construct of interdependence dynamics operating in KIS, and strategies used by the intermediary change agent to manage these dynamics throughout the process of community mobilization.

LACs. In other words, early into the initiative, the LAC and KIS's research team were in a relationship of relatively strong vertical interdependence.

Reinforcing and managing vertical interdependencies between KIS's research team and the LAC entailed devising strategies so as to ensure critical resource flow or investment from both partners (e.g., ensure LAC partner organizations' participation and contribution of resources, ensure KIS's financial and operational/technical support, etc.). Reinforcing vertical interdependence also involved ensuring local partners' adherence to KIS's vision of change, values, and operating principles, on the one hand, and KIS's flexibility to adapt to the local circumstances and reality of the Rideau-Vanier LAC partners, on the other hand. As Chapter 3 revealed, conflicts with regards to decision-making power over resources dedicated to program implementation was a source of tension between LAC partner organizations, KIS's research team, and myself (i.e., bottom-up/town-down), and had to be negotiated.

While relationships of interdependence between KIS and LAC partners worked to enhance collaboration, it also prevented one organization from dominating others. Given the LAC's relatively high degree of compliance with KIS's operating principles to access KIS's resources and its dependence on the LAC coordinator to manage activities of the LAC at the beginning of the initiative, preserving programmatic capacity and decision-making power over LAC program implementation-related resources was essential for LAC partners to use as countervailing power and maintain a level of reciprocal interdependence necessary to negotiate with KIS's research team. According to RDT, the level of uncertainty an organization confronts will be determined by the degree of conflict and interdependence present in the social system (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). Moreover, the level of dependence on particular resources is influenced by how important the resource is to the organization,

how scarce it is in the environment, and how sought or demanded it is by other organizations. As the data suggested, KIS research team's ability to regulate the allocation and use of financial resources by LAC partners through various programming and partnership principles concentrated power in the hands of the University (and in my own hands), who could use this power to influence or constrain the behaviour of LAC partner organizations. Conversely, LAC partners' participation, knowledge of community needs, and capacity to plan and implement physical activity programs provided the LAC with a source of countervailing power, as KIS's research team and I were technically dependent on this capacity to reach KIS's objectives and to conduct research.

Reaching a certain level of vertical interdependence appeared necessary to engage all partners to the goals and principles of KIS and achieve a sense of mutuality. However, this relationship of interdependence could not be maintained as is in the long run given the tensions arising from KIS's sustainability and community ownership/autonomy goals, the uncertainty with regards to KIS's long-term financial support, and the desire of KIS's research team to keep intellectual property (ownership) and discretionary power over certain decisions (orientations, operating principles, research agenda).

Reinforcing Horizontal Interdependence

The process-product tension found in Chapter 3 suggests that KIS was characterized by the need for the LAC to become autonomous in managing the initiative while, at the same time, advance the change envisioned by KIS. Although relationships of vertical interdependence brought various tensions between KIS and the LAC, one strategic compromise to resolve divergent KIS and LAC needs and expectations was to encourage the development of collective capacities among LAC partners. On the one hand, enhanced collective capacities among LAC partners allowed the LAC to develop collaborative and

exchange relationships that also served their own organizational goals. On the other hand, enhanced collective capacities among LAC partners allowed the LAC to leverage additional resources needed for broadened sport and physical activity program development and implementation, to the benefit of KIS. As the results from Chapter 4 showed, one strategy to encourage the development of collective capacities was to reinforce relationships and perceptions of horizontal interdependence between local partners.

Chapters 3 to 5 revealed that, in a context where KIS's financial and human resources support to the LAC was time-limited (like most CII), community capacity building could not be limited to programmatic capacity, material resource investment, and decision-making power over program implementation-related financial resources. Indeed, the construct of community capacity building was expanded to include LAC partner organizations' investment of human, financial, and political resources, the expansion of interorganizational partnerships and resource exchange relationships, and the development of political capacity. Chapter 5 revealed that LAC partners' financial contribution and investment of political resources (i.e., involvement of decision-makers) became particularly important two years into the initiative to develop external linkages, collective legitimacy, and the capacity to influence other organizational decision-makers. Acquiring political (organizational) resources was also critical to ensure LAC partners incorporate, integrate, or institutionalize the LAC's objectives, values, and intervention strategies within their organization's practices, programs, structures, and/or policies. Resource investment led to a heightened sense of ownership over the initiative.

In this context, reinforcing horizontal interdependence between LAC partners: (1) ensured the contribution and investment of critical resource from all LAC partner organizations, (2) reduced dysfunctional dependencies among LAC partners (e.g., share

leadership and roles among LAC partners to prevent that activities collapse if one organization leaves), and (3) maximized organizational autonomy from environmental constraints (e.g., preserve LAC partners' own organizational identity and resource flow outside of what is collective in the LAC/KIS). Moreover, as findings from Chapter 5 revealed, managing horizontal interdependence involved an additional set of strategies aimed at fostering collective action and change. In sum, strategies consisted in: (1) manipulating interdependence relations through activation/deactivation (i.e., engaging the right organizations with the right resources including tangible, intangible, and political resources) and synthesizing (i.e., encouraging the development of exchange relationships between LAC partner organizations); and (2) manipulating *perceptions* of interdependence through framing (i.e., establishing/influencing operational rules and norms and manipulating cognitions, motivations, and beliefs to convince organizations to commit resources) and mobilizing (i.e., building and sustaining local organizations' participation, support, and commitment of resources).

As Figure 2 depicts, enhanced resource investment and collective (notably political) capacity worked to increase the LAC partners' sense of ownership over the initiative and level of autonomy (i.e., towards increased independence). In fact, as the sustainability of KIS's financial support became increasingly uncertain, the development of community ownership and collective capacities (i.e., political power) at the community level allowed LAC partners to garner critical resources needed for the LAC's operation and reduce their financial and management dependency on KIS's resources. Strengthened collective capacities and ownership among LAC partners allowed KIS to reduce the LAC's vertical dependence on its core resources and leadership, and ensured that the LAC took on the responsibility for and implementation of KIS's vision of change by becoming the agent of

change in the community. However, by building its political capacity (i.e., by leveraging the sum of organizational resources and capacities from a diverse group of actors) and autonomy, the LAC could modify the power relations built around resource dependence relationships with KIS's research team. Enhanced LAC autonomy consequently puts at risk KIS's ability to control and negotiate the conditions delineating the use of KIS's financial and human resources and, as a result, the pursuit of KIS's vision of change (i.e., should LAC partners decide to change the LAC's orientations and pursue other community issues they consider more important). In other words, as the LAC built its capacity, its level of dependency on KIS became less important.

Maximizing Local Autonomy

Chapter 5 showed that reinforcing LAC partner organizations' interdependence and collective capacity, notably the LAC's political capacity, strengthened the LAC's ability to invest and sustain the resources necessary to engage in collective action and in the process of changing their community. The relationship between organizational capacities, autonomy, ownership, and resource investment in the context of vertical and horizontal relationships and interdependencies is depicted in Figure 2. For the LAC to be autonomous, it needed various types of capacities (i.e., member, intra-coalition/operational, organizational, relational, programmatic, and political), decision-making power over the process of change, orientations, and priorities, as well as access to more resources (financial, human, political, material). LAC-related operational decision-making power/control granted to LAC partners increased the LAC's operational capacity. Enhanced operational capacity increased the LAC's legitimacy and visibility, and mobilized political interest (from organizational decision-makers). The involvement of organizational decision-makers (i.e., political resources) increased local organizations' sense of ownership (appropriation) over the

initiative, as well as the LAC's political capacity. While political capacity (power/centrality) emerged as a consequence of the leveraging of the sum of resources and capacities from a diverse group of actors in the community, enhanced political capacity allowed the LAC to garner additional critical resources, which further increased (collective) capacity and autonomy. Here, community ownership over KIS's vision of change, as opposed to community ownership over KIS per se, constitutes a strategic compromise for KIS to sustain local organizations' investment of critical resources to enhance children's participation to sport and physical activities.

In light of the initially high level of vertical interdependence between KIS's research team and the LAC, maximizing horizontal interdependence between LAC partners and building their capacity and ownership over the change envisioned by KIS allowed the LAC to enhance its autonomy and reduce constraints imposed by the initially highly vertical interdependent relationship. This process allowed KIS to act, through its financial and human resource support, as a *lever* for community capacity building and community change (i.e., KIS's third objective). This suggests that, in local partnerships established as part of CII, financial independence/autonomy may be the last step of the capacity building and local ownership process, other aspects such as informational, programmatic, and human resource independence being developed first as they are vital for CII initiation and implementation. This may be especially true for CII providing financial support that extends beyond the typical one to two-year funding period. In KIS, maximizing the LAC's autonomy typically reflects a strategic compromise for KIS and the LAC, both recognizing their reduced level of interdependence as the financial sustainability and survival of KIS became increasingly uncertain. In essence, maximizing local autonomy involved: (1) reducing dysfunctional dependencies among the two entities (i.e., reduce the LAC's financial and operational

dependency on KIS's research team; reduce the funder's/research team's pressure on the LAC to produce results and stay within KIS's parameters, etc.) and (2) maximizing community autonomy in the community mobilization and change process (e.g., build the LAC's collective and political capacities to garner critical resources needed for realizing its own mission) (Johnson, 1995; Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003).

Thus, despite what initially appeared to be a high degree of functional (i.e., adherence to a common vision, objectives, and principles) and perhaps less functional (i.e., LAC's financial and operational dependence on KIS's resources) relationship of vertical interdependence between KIS and the LAC (i.e., Chapter 3), maximizing horizontal interdependence between LAC partner organizations (i.e., Chapter 4) through the development of collective capacities and ownership over the change envisioned by KIS (i.e., Chapter 5) allowed the LAC to become more autonomous in establishing the conditions necessary to promote children's sport and physical activity participation. Hence, in the context of KIS, managing vertical and horizontal interdependencies so as to minimize environmental uncertainties and maximize collaboration between KIS and LAC partners appears to be modulated by CII's expectations with regards to organizational autonomy and ownership. As such, the results from this study suggest that interdependence relationships among organizations involved in CII at least help to understand how organizational resources (i.e., financial, in-kind, political), capacity, autonomy, and ownership drive organizational and intermediary change agent behavior in the context of CII. This has important implications for RDT when used to further understand interdependence dynamics operating in CII like KIS.

It should be noted that the dynamics and strategies depicted in Figure 2 constitutes an early conceptual baseline articulating a number of key concepts underlying the relationships

of interdependence found among organizations involved in CII adopting community mobilization approaches. As such, it should not lead readers into thinking that interdependence dynamics among organizations involved in CII and intermediary change agents' role are solely defined by these dimensions or that their complexity is fully represented herein. This construct is meant to reveal, from the intermediary change agent's perspective, what emerged to be the major dynamics and processes underlying the mobilization of intersectoral local organizations (i.e., LAC partners) involved in the KIS project, as well as the role I played and strategies I used as KIS's intermediary change agent.

Although it is commonly agreed that community mobilization cannot fit into a rigidly structured model (Hastings & Jamieson, 2002; Leviten-Reid, 2006), articulating key dimensions and elements inherent to intermediary change agent practice in the context of community mobilization initiatives (i.e., CII) may allow individuals involved in such initiatives to identify some of the conditions which facilitate the community mobilization process, as well as pinpoint areas where it may suffer. Certainly, the nature of the problem addressed (e.g., enhanced physical activity participation vs. poverty reduction), the approach adopted (e.g., CII initiated by an institution vs. the community; values and action principles espoused), and the context within which the initiative operates (e.g., existing capacity, resources, and infrastructure of the community) will guide CII managers in identifying the set of processes and strategies (and the terminology) that best fit their mandates, objectives, and characteristics (Labonte & Laverack, 2001; Smith et al., 2003).

Keeping in mind that this theoretical construct is derived from a single case study examined from the perspective of one individual – the strengths and limitations of which are discussed later in this chapter – its contribution may be more in providing a perspective that has been given relatively little attention in the public health, population health, and

management literature, but one which is assumed by many individuals hired in the context of CII: that of intermediary change agents. Understanding that it will have to be refined and adapted as KIS expands and is implemented in other communities (Connell & Kubisch, 1998), it is hoped that this theoretical construct will serve to guide future KIS developments and intermediary change agency practice in this context, as well as assist in developing the CII community mobilization literature more broadly.

Fostering a Complex Process of Community Mobilization

As shown in Figure 2, the processes and dimensions underlying the construct of interdependence dynamics operating in KIS are not linear and static but rather interrelated and dynamic; they interact together to support, stimulate, or impede collective capacity, ownership, and autonomy. For instances, transformations in the attitude and leadership of organizational representatives with regards to how they can work with other organizations and leverage resources will enhance their individual appropriation of the project and efforts at influencing their organization's practices. Expansion and maturation of a coalition will require adjustments in the organization's structure to increase its efficiency. The development of concerted initiatives based on shared resource investment and which address local needs will mobilize the participation of other partners and enhance the capacity of the coalition to secure diverse sources of funding.

Furthermore, changes in one dimension may affect another dimension or several ones. For examples, erratic participation from one or many organizational representatives may reduce opportunities for interorganizational resource exchange relationships and social learning, impede their capacity to work and take action with other partners, and decrease potential for political capacity development. Frequent turnover rates among school principals

threaten the support needed for the physical education teacher's participation and the school's engagement and investment of resources to the initiative.

In contrast to some models of community mobilization or community-based projects where community mobilization only constitutes a first or early step to partnering and taking action collectively (e.g., Cargo & Mercer, 2008; Hastings & Jamieson, 2002; Smith et al., 2001), community mobilization in KIS emerged as a continuous process that demanded to be nurtured and sustained all through the initiative. Such conceptualization of community mobilization may more effectively ensure sustained partner engagement, and renewal of coalition leadership, capacities, and action strategies, particularly when collective dialogue and reflection are at the heart of this process. Despite its dynamic and ongoing nature, the results from this case study showed that the LAC partners evolved through different stages (from formalization and connection to cooperation, collaboration, concerted action, ownership, and transformation, with associated changes in their participation, collective capacity, and collective action) as the LAC matured and as the context changed.

The coalition development literature has tended to adopt a prescriptive tone, attempting to identify a road map of the "phases of development and milestones that coalitions *should* encounter during their developmental process...[including] the ideal sequence and timing to achieve [coalition] goals" (Downey, Ireson, Slavova, & McKee, 2008, p. 131, emphasis added). Previous research has described different stages of coalition development. Butterfoss, Goodman, and Wandersman (1993) and Downey et al. (2008) showed that coalitions move from the stage of formation, to the stages of implementation, maintenance, and outcomes. Florin, Mitchell, and Stevenson (1993) suggested seven stages of development for community coalition efforts: mobilization, formalization, capacity building, planning, implementation, refinement, and institutionalization. However, these

stages do not exactly reflect the developmental process that was experienced in the Rideau-Vanier LAC. In KIS, the development from a local intersectoral partnership aimed at delivering sport and physical activity programs to a collective of local organizations initiating actions to ensure the sustainability of intervention strategies and core operational funding, seems more to result from a change in LAC partners' vision of the LAC structure and function, which emerged during a collective reflection exercise, than from a planned sequence of stages. The realization that the LAC needed to build on existing resources and capacities and allow partners to develop their capacity to work together in a more integrated and sustained way led to significant adjustments in the role of the LAC, LAC partners, and myself, and in our ability to sustain partners' engagement in the LAC. This supports the establishment and use of governance structures such as LACs, whether as independent entities or integrated to existing community structures, which provide opportunities for local actors and organizations to engage over significant periods of time and develop their capacity to work and take action together. It also demonstrates the important role sustained collective reflection can play in collective capacity development.

Conceptually, transformation resulting from collective reflection and learning may be a defining characteristic of community mobilization when operationalized as an ongoing process. This suggests that coalition/partnership development and community mobilization may be related although not identical processes. It is also possible that incongruities in semantics/definitions of coalition, partnership, and community mobilization, and the context within which they occur (e.g., nature and objectives of the initiative and/or coalition), lead to different models and processes of coalition maturation. Another possible explanation resides in transformation being a result of intermediary change agents' influence on the community's developmental path, by orienting their intervention strategies toward the CII's

objectives. As a supporter and guardian of a CII's mission, the intermediary change agent carries a vision of the desired change and is likely to guide communities towards that change. In other words, it is possible that the transformation and evolution that was experienced in the LAC is partly a by-product of my understanding (although much influenced by QEF's learnings) that providing free sport and physical activity programs using external grant money was clearly not a sustainable strategy (i.e., beyond KIS's pilot period funding), which might have influenced both my attitude and strategy with LAC partners to move towards more structuring changes. By being part of the change process, facilitating it, and possibly leading it to some extent, my practice was potentially biased towards my research objectives, framework, and personal values, even though these changed throughout the research process to more adequately reflect my experience.

Implications for Research and Practice

The following section discusses research and practice implications deriving from the results of this study. Implications are considered with respect to key processes and dimensions of the theoretical construct of interdependence dynamics that were found to operate throughout the process of community mobilization in KIS.

Organizations' Participation and Resource Investment in CII

Research and practice have shown that CII which seek the active engagement of and contribution from all partners in the development, implementation, and evaluation process enhance the potential for local actors and organizations to become more self-governing activists and take action on their own (Grandchamp, 2003; Hastings & Jamieson, 2002; Howard-Grabman, 2007; Simard, 2005). Yet, the literature suggests that the extent and nature of community participation varies significantly across CII (Baker & Brownson, 1998), and can be portrayed as various degrees along a continuum (e.g., Baker et al., 1999; Israel,

Schulz, Parker, & Becker, 1998; Ktpatzer Consulting, 2006; Payne, 2001). For instance, Howard-Grabman (2007) represented community participation as ranging from limited contribution and power over decisions (i.e., in increasing level of participation: co-option, compliance, consultation), such as through community input or consultation, to more fully shared goal setting, decision-making, and operation (i.e., cooperation, co-learning, or collective action), facilitated through the establishment of local community governance structures and mechanisms. In KIS, local partner organizations' investment of material, human, financial, and political resources committed organizations to the initiative and, as a result, contributed to the emergence of a sense of community ownership over the LAC.

Howard-Grabman (2007) has illustrated the relationship between various levels of community participation, community ownership, and potential for sustainability. According to her, as participation increases, community ownership and capacity also increase (i.e., being at their maximum at the collective action level of community participation). In addition, she argued that enhanced community participation, community capacity, and community ownership are more likely to result in community action and transformations at the individual, organizational, and community levels. However, some have been critical of community participation levels currently used in health promotion practice, most of which “attempt[s] to get people in the community to take ownership of a professionally defined health agenda” (Robertson & Minkler, 1994, p. 305) or “uses community resources primarily as free or cheaper forms of service delivery in which community participation is tokenistic at best and co-opted at worst” (Labonte, 1990, p. 7). As the results from this thesis suggested, strengthening community engagement and ownership over the CII's vision of change, as opposed to community ownership over the initiative per se, may constitute a more strategic

compromise for CII to encourage and sustain local organizations' investment of critical political resources.

Research on RDT suggests that organizations' involvement in coalitions is either viewed as a strategic response to enhance their level of competitiveness (cf. Gulati & Gargiulo, 1999; Human & Provan, 2000), or as a rational response to funding incentives (Provan et al., 2004). However, neither view seems to completely explain LAC partner organizations' patterns of response as it emerged in the present study. Rather, results from Chapter 5 suggest that LAC partners' interest in working together have increased as a result of perceived mutuality and trust. This is consistent with Lundin (2007)'s finding that, in situations of mutual dependence, organizations are more likely to collaborate and exchange resources necessary to achieve organizational goals if their interests and goals converge and if they trust each other. However, balancing the achievement of organizational and collective goals needs to be factored in if organizations' contribution to the collective is to be sustained.

Collective Capacity Building in CII

Collective capacity has been conceptualized as the knowledge, skills, resources, and power a community (i.e., individuals, organizations, and institutions) possesses to affect larger systems issues (Chinman et al., 2005). However, the literature suggests that there is considerable overlap among many of the concepts, dimensions, and domains of community capacity building (Smith et al., 2003). Labonte and Laverack (2001, p. 117) have noted that "there is no definitive set of characteristics that describe a capable community; but neither do such capabilities vary infinitely by each community or situation." Indeed, the literature seems to go in all directions, showing a clear lack of consensus over what constitutes a capable community.

For instance, in the public and population health literatures, collective capacity has sometimes been used interchangeably with community capacity (Chaskin et al., 2001; Crilly et al., 2003; Labonte & Laverack, 2001) and collaborative capacity (Alexander et al., 2003; Foster-Fishman, Berkowitz, et al., 2001). Community capacity dimensions or capacity building domains identified in the literature (Bopp, GermAnn, Bopp, Baugh Littlejohns, & Smith, 2000; Chaskin et al., 2001; Crilly et al., 2003; Dressendorfer et al., 2005; Labonte & Laverack, 2001) involve the development of a shared vision, local leadership, communication, organizational structure/infrastructure, social networks and interorganizational relationships, ongoing learning, problem assessment and solving capabilities, and community resource mobilization, use and coordination. Similarly, collaborative capacity process elements identified in Alexander et al.'s (2003) model for community health partnership sustainability encompass a vision-focus balance, systems orientation, infrastructure development, and community linkages. As introduced earlier, Foster-Fishman, Berkowitz, et al.'s (2001) integrative framework of collaborative capacity involves collaborative capacity at the member, relational, organizational, and programmatic levels. While scholars agree that capacity building is important for effective policy making and successful community development (Chaskin et al., 2001; Crilly et al., 2003; Kretzman & McKnight, 1993; Norton et al., 2002; Smith et al., 2001), the literature suggests that capacity building has come to be used in rhetorical rather than scientific terms. As a result, the concept remains abstract and continues to mean different things to different individuals and organizations.

As Figure 2 shows, in the present study, the development of programmatic capacity among LAC partners was contingent on access to initial financial and human resource support from KIS, investment of in-kind resources from LAC partner organizations, and

LAC decision-making power over program implementation. This may be sufficient for public health programs based on community mobilization strategies for delivering programs. However, as this case study showed, CII with operational autonomy and sustainability objectives may move one step farther by encouraging the investment of political resources from local organizations and, as a result, promote the development of political capacity at the coalition level and a sense of ownership among participating organizations. Yet, enhanced collective political capacity places CII in a less powerful position. Indeed, building political capacities such as legitimacy, influence, and the ability to garner financial and other critical resources, especially as CII's funding come to an end, may allow local partners to reach a level of autonomy that work to reduce their dependence on the catalyst institution for financial resources. In the present case, political capacity (power) emerged as a consequence of the leveraging of the sum of resources and capacities from a diverse group of actors in the community. Thus, building political capacity may allow local organizations involved in CII to modify the power relations built around resource dependence relationships with CII's catalyst institutions and funders, although at the same time, enhance their ability to leverage additional resources needed to bring about the change(s) they envision for their community. This thesis contributes to the capacity building literature by emphasizing the importance of political resource investment from local organizations to the development of political capacity at the coalition level.

In light of the time-limited nature of CII and other externally funded initiatives and governmental/institutional priorities (i.e., the focus in Ottawa now appears to be crime/violence prevention), this case study suggests that the goal of developing collective capacity should be given more attention and resources than the goal of sustaining programs or initiatives per se. In fact, it is likely that the relationships that have formed between the

partners and the collective capacities and skills that have been developed in the context of KIS will stay with the community once KIS funding ends. As such, focusing on collective capacity and local organizations' commitment to goals and action strategies that extend beyond the implementation of a specific funded program is likely to allow community organizations and members to address other community issues in the future. This is in line with Foster-Fishman, Berkowitz, et al.'s (2001) argument that collaborative capacity developed within one initiative can be transferred over to other community efforts. Nevertheless, whether local organizations involved in coalitions supported by CII use resources wisely (i.e., efficiently/strategically) remains unclear.

The current emphasis on intersectoral community mobilization CII as involving participatory, horizontal mechanisms, structures, and processes guiding CII implementation (Kubisch et al., 2002) has resulted in increasing research attention to the governance of such initiatives and the capacity of local actors and organizations to work together and learn from each other (Lasker & Weiss, 2003; Burlone et al., 2008). The results from this case study suggest that merely establishing a structure for local governance does not mean that an initiative will automatically become locally owned and controlled, and that partners will work harmoniously together. While the infrastructure of a partnership will most likely evolve and mature as players and context change, processes and mechanisms which facilitate an ongoing dialogue and sharing of ideas across organization boundaries must be in place for collaborative and horizontal relationships to occur. Horizontal learning implies that local partners will be ready to engage in a real process of collaboration, and they will share power, leadership, and responsibility for decisions, actions and outcomes. However, this may be easier said than done. In KIS, efforts at engaging in more horizontal processes involved significant negotiation and compromises, both among partners within the LAC and between

the University and the LAC. The literature suggests that collective learning require that individuals and organizations expand and/or transform their attitudes and capacities in order to achieve actions that would not have been possible without the coalition, thereby demonstrating the added value of the collective work (Brunet, 2007; Buchy & Ahmed, 2007; Merzel, Burrus, Davies, Moses, Rumley, & Walters, 2007). Transformations of this nature may necessitate time and facilitation skills CII intermediary change agents may not have. Moreover, such perceptions in the literature may be over-idealized given the long established sectoral practices and work cultures, and the “ivory tower” of academia.

One important finding from this case study was the need for CII using community mobilization and capacity building approaches to develop their own internal capacity to work with and support community partners throughout the initiative. Collective capacity in KIS thus also includes the University’s and my own capacity to engage with LAC partners in a process of community mobilization, and involves granting core funding and operational resources on a sustained basis, providing training and professional development opportunities, and remaining open, flexible, attentive to, and supportive of evolving needs and goals. This implies that catalyst institutions and intermediary change agents are integral (rather than independent) actors of the community mobilization process. Although CII have emphasized the importance of technical assistance and external support (e.g., Butterfoss, 2004; Kubisch et al., 2002; Torjman, Leviten-Reid, & Cabaj, 2004), with a few exceptions (e.g., Cabaj et al., 2002; Howard-Grabman, 2007), the catalyst institution’s role and capacity to support a community mobilization approach is rarely given much attention in the CII literature, which appears to suggest that community mobilization and change happen “out there,” are primarily the community’s matter, can be supported (as a one-way process targeted at communities), and can be subjected to objective evaluation (Ford et al., 2008).

Clearly, community mobilization CII should critically examine and assess, by enquiring community partners, the catalyst institution's and intermediary change agents' role, support systems, and practices to ascertain that they are truly supportive of community mobilization.

In light of the time required for partners to get acquainted and develop trust among each other, future research should examine whether the assumption that “the most varied the better” often romanticized in the public health literature (e.g., Lasker et al., 2001; Mitchell & Shortell, 2000) is suitable to CII with short timelines (i.e., 1 to 3 years). It is more likely that the *relevance* of each partner's involvement prevails over the *diversity* of the partners. In fact, collective action in KIS was limited by the absence of partners holding important resources and levers of change not accessible to local partners involved. Although linkages were established with a few regional organizations and networks, formal and sustained partnerships with, and support from, central governments and other agencies and organizations would significantly enhance the capacity, credibility, and sustainability of community coalitions formed in the context of CII, and the ability of CII to have a lasting impact on the broader determinants of children's health. The limits of “localism” – the notion that many of the causes of community-level change lie in macro social processes and structures – have been discussed in the literature (e.g., Labonte, 2005; Poole, 1997; Torjman & Leviten-Reid, 2003; White et al., 2002), and should be considered in a time where community development and community capacity building are emerging as privileged strategies to achieve public health goals (e.g., Robinson & Elliott, 2000; Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux, 2008). Although it was beyond KIS's pilot project objectives, this case study suggests that CII may consider incorporating partners intervening at multiple levels of influence if they aim to affect larger system issues that shape the health of

individuals and communities (but which are beyond the control of local organizations and CII staff).

In a similar vein, the results from Chapter 4 suggest that collective action may be more effective if oriented towards the integration of existing programs, initiatives, efforts, and structures, and the enhancement of intervention complementarities. This may be especially true for initiatives whose goal is to enhance community capacity and ensure program sustainability (Alexander et al., 2003; Wharf Higgins, Naylor, & Day, 2008). In light of the 1- to 3-year horizon of most CII, integrating intervention strategies and programs within organizations' own services and structures, and prioritizing initiatives which draw upon and reinforce existing local resources, may enhance organizations' commitment and accountability to interventions implemented and their sustainability.

Community Ownership and Autonomy over CII

This case study suggested that the commitment, capacity, learning, and change that were observed at the individual level were not sufficient to stimulate necessary resource investments, learning, and changes at the organizational level. Rather, the recognition, support, and integration of the initiative's values, activities, and objectives within organizational practices, programs, structures, and/or policies in some of the LAC partner organizations appeared fundamental to the emergence of a sense of ownership over the initiative's activities. In fact, in those organizations, appropriation at the organizational level ensured consistent participation; investment of human, material, and/or financial resources; commitment to work across and learn from other organizations and sectors; and engagement and achievement of more sustainable collective action. This suggests that, unlike most community mobilization initiatives developed in the context of public health programs,

ownership in CII must be developed among organizations (i.e., through their decision-makers) and not only among organizational representatives sitting at the table.

This conceptualization of community ownership appears to differ from current conceptualizations in the health promotion, public health, and population health CII literature, which have most often been associated with communities' active participation in each stage (i.e., planning, implementation, evaluation) of an initiative (Howard-Grabman, 2007; Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux, 2008), and/or communities' identification with or perceived responsibility for an initiative's issue, solutions, and outcomes (Broner, Franczak, Dye, & McAllister, 2001; Figueroa et al., 2002; Ninacs, 2007). Community ownership at the organizational level more closely relates to the notions of incorporation (Bracht et al., 1994), integration (The Health Communication Unit, 2001), and institutionalization (Steckler & Goodman, 1989) used in the context of community-based programming. For instance, some organizational partners involved in KIS institutionalized the LAC's goals and strategies into the mission and structure of their own organization (Florin, Mitchell, Stevenson, & Klein, 2000; Steckler & Goodman, 1989). One organization actually demonstrated KIS integration (The Health Communication Unit, 2001) at the end of the pilot phase, by becoming the lead agency for operating KIS on behalf of the Rideau-Vanier LAC. Also called incorporation by Bracht et al. (1994) – but distinguished from institutionalization as defined by Steckler and Goodman (1989) – *integration* (The Health Communication Unit, 2001) is defined as the process through which a community organization, agency, or group assumes entire responsibility for a program or an initiative.

Consistent with Bracht et al. (1994), KIS's integration appeared as a gradual transfer process in which the University planned its withdrawal or disengagement as the main program operator for KIS. However, this process was not without tension. While KIS's

research team sought to build the community's capacity to sustain the project beyond the funded period, they also wanted to preserve a certain control over the project's goals, guiding principles, and research component. This illustrates well the tension that CII have faced when they seek community ownership and sustainability of the initiative but fail to consult or design the initiative with the community (Simpson et al., 2003; Stoecker, 1999; Kaplan, Calman, Golub, Ruddock, & Billings, 2006).

Others have discussed the problem of devising CII intended to outlive the initial grant incentive (e.g., Wharf Higgins et al., 2008). It is reasonable to think that program institutionalization or incorporation may be more complex when CII involve a collective of organizations engaged within an intersectoral community mobilization like KIS (as opposed to only one organization like a school or a community organization). However, when roles, responsibilities, and accountability are shared among several partners, it is unclear whether the incorporation of CII like KIS is the most favourable endpoint. Interestingly, in Bratch et al.'s definition, incorporation involves the replication, adaptation, and innovation of intervention programs by community organizations after external funding resources end, and may mean changes to the program itself to meet specific or changing community needs or contexts. Given that KIS's sustainability is unsure once base management and operating funding will end, one important question partners involved in KIS should ask themselves is whether the project (KIS), the partnership (LAC), or local partners' capacity to work and take action together should be sustained and resourced on a long-term basis (Alexander et al., 2003; Kaplan et al., 2006).

Many have criticized the "myth of community self-sufficiency" (Labonte, 2005; p. 91), which takes for granted that community groups will be able to mobilize the necessary skills, expertises, and resources to operate programs or initiatives independently once

external funding and agency come to an end (Labonte, 2005; Poole, 1997; Smith et al., 2001). In fact, community self-sufficiency often appears to be a key goal behind the establishment of CII, and an indicator of extensive community participation and ownership (Bjaras, Haglund, & Rifkin, 1991; Labonte, 2005). However, it is not clear how many CII are actually sustained beyond their externally funded and resourced period, and whether this is a realistic goal. Program institutionalization may represent, at one extreme, an indication of community ownership. However, in the context of intersectoral action, where many partners are involved and responsibilities and accountabilities are shared, it is not clear whether institutionalization by one organization involved as a partner in the coalition can work as well as when core operation comes from an external agency (i.e., University). While the results reported in the previous chapters suggest that an ongoing agency role to support intersectoral community mobilization CII is required, further research could examine the impact of having an organization involved as a LAC partner also assuming this agency role.

The conceptualization of community ownership at the organizational level has important implications for community partners, external organizations, and intermediary change agents involved in community mobilization CII. First, it demands the active participation of, and engagement from, organizational decision-makers in the initiative, whether as organizational representatives for LAC meetings or in more executive and political/influential capacities. However, as was the case in this study, ensuring the consistent participation of decision-makers from institutions such as schools and cities may be challenging, particularly when CII are deployed at a micro-level. Moreover, the nature of the changes envisioned by CII, which often involve changes in organizational practices, programs, and/or policies, needs to be explicitly stated and understood by community partners at the outset of the initiative. This would ensure that organizations involved are

committed to work toward such transformations and changes, and thus make decisions and take actions accordingly, for instance, by assigning appropriate organizational representatives and investing critical resources in the initiative. Catalyst institutions may benefit from openly discussing, negotiating, or co-constructing (Bourque, 2008) with local partner organizations, at the outset of the initiative, the expectations, conditions, and rules of the (negogenous) partnership on each part, and repeat this exercise as the initiative evolves. This may ensure that relationships of interdependence be determined jointly, and prevent one partner to lose from any asymmetry of dependence. This is in line with Labonte's (2005) argument that the goal of community development initiatives should not be to promote the autonomy of local communities, but their *self-reliance*, which he defined as "the ability of [communities] to negotiate [their] own terms of relationship with those institutions (agencies) that support [them]" (p. 91).

Negotiating Tensions, Conflicts, and Parameters

One ongoing aspect of intermediary change agent practice in KIS involved handling tensions, managing divergences, and negotiating parameters between the University and LAC partners. Several of the tensions and conflicts experienced in this case study, including balancing community aspirations, demands, needs, and expectations with those of external organizations and funders; balancing partnership processes with activities and outcomes; and integrating divergent perspectives, interests, values, objectives, and organizational cultures, have been reported by others in the community mobilization and partnership literature (Alexander et al., 2003; Brown & Stetzer, 1998; Burgess, 2006; Chaskin et al., 2001; Chavis, 2001; Frisby & Millar, 2002; Humphrey, 2006; Kubisch et al., 1997; Minkler & Pies, 2005; Pilisuk, McAllister, Rothman, & Larin, 2005; Williams et al., 2005), which suggests that they may be inherent to CII. Bourque et al. (2002) similarly described community

mobilization in public health as a process situated at the interface of top-down (i.e., governmental programs, professional expertise, technical and financial support) and bottom-up (community participation and appropriation) channels, with community organizers operating at this paradoxal junction. What seems less clear, however, is how tensions can be minimized for the intermediary change agent and for partners involved in CII. With reference to community development strategies espoused by the public health sector, Lachapelle (2003) emphasized the importance of putting the health network to the service of communities rather than using communities to serve public health goals. The same could be argued for CII: community mobilization in the context of CII necessitates support and resources that should above all be directed at community needs rather than the other way around. However, it is important that local partners understand CII's role and objectives. This is significant in a context where local partners' commitment to the initiative's goals and activities will be contingent on the alignment of these goals with those of their own organization (Alexander et al., 2003).

Catalyzing Transformation and Change

Like most community mobilization efforts, one key KIS objective was to bring about change. In my work with LAC partners, transformation or change was targeted at four levels, namely: (1) in organizational representatives' attitudes, perspectives, knowledge, and practices; (2) in organizations' leadership, practices, programs, structures, and policies; (3) within interorganizational relationships, or in the way organizations interacted and worked together (i.e., communication channels, coordination mechanisms, and collaborative experiences); and, to a lesser extent, (4) in the community's social norms, organization of programs, services, and efforts, and political support, priorities, and agendas. The nature of transformations and changes evolved over the initiative. At the beginning, energy was

focused around the development of sport and physical activity programs for children. However, as institutional partners established initiatives resting on KIS's financial support, the need to address more systemic changes became apparent to myself and was emphasized by community organizational representatives.

The failure to clearly communicate organizational and systemic changes sought by KIS to organizational representatives may have impeded the LAC's capacity to bring about change. At the same time, there may be issues with emphasizing structural change objectives at the beginning of CII when these changes are found, among others, within the local organizations mobilized by the initiative, including resistance and lack of participation. Interestingly, the changes that have been observed in LAC partner organizations' programs, practices, and structures appear to be more a by-product of their involvement in KIS/the LAC rather than a planned KIS/LAC strategy, which may be a sign of community learning resulting from a process of collective dialogue, action, and reflection rather than a top-down intervention. Nevertheless, to avoid that collaborative relationships and trust be eroded between catalyst institutions and local partners, CII designers should consider involving all CII partners to "negotiate" the vision of change.

Results from this case study showed that collective action within the LAC needed to target more structural determinants of children's active lifestyle rather than simply multiplying physical activity opportunities through external funds. The sense of urgency to address individual needs promptly at the expense of more sustainable strategies has been identified as an important obstacle to community mobilization (Grandchamp, 2003). Experience from Centraide du Grand Montréal showed that community coalitions like LACs are unlikely to achieve their objectives if they are managed like a community-based program (Brunet, 2006). Rather, coalitions in CII must position themselves as strategic players if they

are to have an influence and lasting impact in the community. Collective action may thus involve what could be called “higher-order” capacities, such as collective strategic planning, an ability to demonstrate the impact and added value of collective actions, and vertical influence and integration. The undertaking of more structural, systemic actions also justifies the need to involve individuals who are in a position to engage resources and make decisions on behalf of their organization, and the imperative to involve regional organizations and authorities (e.g., school boards, cities, regional health units). Moreover, the role of community mobilization CII as strategic levers for change, rather than program-oriented initiatives destined to die out once funds and resources are depleted, should be reinforced (Foster-Fishman, Fitzgerald, Brandell, Nowell, Chavis, & Van Egeren, 2006).

This development in the nature of the transformations sought in KIS largely resulted from a paradigm shift, from the establishment of local intersectoral partnerships aimed at developing sport and physical activity programs for children, to the implementation of more structuring actions catalyzed by a community mobilization approach to children’s active lifestyle experienced in QEF, and consequently, in KIS. This suggests that, as initiators of CII, external organizations not only decide that change is necessary; they also determine what needs to be changed. In KIS, the goal of transforming organizational practices, programs, and structures or policies was probably not emphasized enough by myself with LAC partners (or overlooked/ignored by LAC partners), especially in the first year of the initiative, which may have slowed down opportunities for change and created misunderstanding or resistance when I was alluding to it. Without this comprehension and/or commitment to change from community partners, any work by intermediary change agents that evokes transformation may appear to exceed its boundaries and create resistance (Ford et al., 2008). At the same time, this contrasts with the notion that communities have to be the

agent of their own change, which may be more challenging in intersectoral coalitions comprising institutions within which change is desired.

Intermediary Change Agents' Role and Core Functions

CII using community mobilization and capacity building approaches such as KIS are based on action strategies, principles, and processes rather than on pre-defined programs and interventions, and are characterized by a complex and dynamic set of relationships among the various organizations involved (Simard, 2005). This case study of KIS allowed for an examination and articulation of these dynamics, action strategies, and complex relationships underlying community mobilization and change.

The coalition literature has identified basic characteristics of the partnership manager's role and set of skills (e.g., Butterfoss et al., 1993; Child & Faulkner, 1998; Florin et al., 1993; Kegler, Steckler, McLeroy, & Malek, 1998). Seifer et al. (2003) have also synthesized the key responsibilities, characteristics, and set of knowledge and skills required for liaison officers to successfully support community-university partnerships. As Brunet (2007) underlined, the nature of the partnerships that exist in CII is complex, typically generating a wide range of vertical and horizontal participation, communication channels, and accountability mechanisms operating at the same time through the involvement of different organizations with different missions, values, cultures, and expectations.

The results from this case study suggest that intermediary change agents' role in intersectoral community mobilization CII is complex and multifaceted. Moreover, Chapter 4 revealed that the nature of their role and core functions are likely to change as a community coalition matures and gains capacity and autonomy. The capacity of intermediary change agents to perform their role effectively has been shown to have a significant impact on CII implementation and results (Foster-Fishman et al., 2006; Québec en Forme, 2008). When

examined as a whole, this case study suggests four broad roles or functions for the intermediary change agent in the context of KIS, which appear in Table 9: (1) a coordination role; (2) a mobilization role; (3) an influence role, and (4) a monitoring and strategic role. Each role is described next.

Table 9.

Roles and Associated Functions of the CII Intermediary Change Agent

Coordination	Mobilization	Influence	Monitoring/ Strategic
Asset identification/ assessment	Facilitating	Decision making	Analyzing
Convening	Supporting	Negotiating	(analytical reasoning)
Organizing	Liaising/networking	Advocating	Evaluating
Coordinating	Relationship building	Persuading	Communicating
Communicating	Accompanying	Manipulating	Strategic planning
Managing conflict	Managing conflict		
Handling media	Consensus building		
Grant application and report writing	Partnership building		
Managing budget	Coalition building		
	Proposing		

Coordination role. As Chapter 3 revealed, the coordination role was fundamentally linked to partnership management-related tasks. In essence, coordination functions involved tasks such as convening partners, organizing meetings and activities, facilitating participation and shared decision-making, communicating information, managing conflicts, handling media, managing budgets, and writing reports and grant applications. While operational tasks were carried out throughout the project, they were particularly prevailing during the early stages of KIS. However, as local partners became more knowledgeable of the initiative's

goals and the coalition's structure, and as participation increased, the demands for intermediary change agent skills in liaising and mobilizing increased.

As Chapter 2 underlined, however, alone, the LAC coordinator title may evoke a product-producing role rather than a process-facilitating role (Bourque et al., 2002; Lévesque et al., 2006), which may communicate to local organizations that the intermediary change agent is hired to coordinate and implement activities of the CII, notably the programming efforts. Failure to involve local partners in these tasks may lead to their disengagement, to community participation in advisory roles only, and/or to a lack of ownership towards the CII. Grandchamp (2003) warned that without clear mandates and role definitions, CII program implementation can quickly become the community coalition's focus (and the intermediary change agent's sole undertaking) at the cost of an ongoing process of community mobilization and collective reflection. This stresses the importance of clearly defining the various roles (i.e., in KIS: coordination, mobilization, influence, and monitoring/strategic) played by the intermediary change agent at the outset of the initiative. At the same time, this case study raises questions as to whether local partners' capacities are enhanced or conversely narrowed when partnership coordination tasks, such as convening meetings, managing budgets, and so on, are shared with (or devolved to) them.

Mobilization role. Aside from coordination activities, the intermediary change agent's role involved functions related to community mobilization. Functions underlying the mobilization role comprised a wide range of tasks and skills related to process facilitation, capacity building, and liaising/networking. The emphasis on process appears to be a defining characteristic of this role. Supporting process means that intermediary change agents share leadership with and among partners, invest time and energy in developing local partners' capacity to work harmoniously and effectively together, and work in a more invisible, covert

role. In other words, and consistent with the collective capacity development goal of KIS, the intermediary change agent is called upon to facilitate dialogue, get local partners to reflect, openly share ideas, articulate the collective vision of the group as it emerges, and work with partners in devising interventions and advising or suggesting changes that would help projects meet KIS's orientation and spirit.

Grandchamp (2003) discussed the common misunderstanding between the facilitative role ("faire-faire") that characterizes community mobilization approaches, and a more servicing role ("faire pour") that accompanies most collaborative endeavours. This case study suggests that the intermediary change agent may play a support or collaborative role ("faire avec"), as staying exclusively in a facilitation role could exhaust community partners on the one hand (although what is built would be more likely to stay once the initiative ends), and playing a servicing role to compensate their lack of time could potentially jeopardize community ownership and sustainability of actions, on the other hand. Brunet (2006) argued that a *rassembleur* type of leadership, characterized by the ability to link people and organizations, build collaborative relationships, coordinate action, make sense of and articulate issues and challenges, and guide action and change, may reconcile this role duality. The importance of clarifying roles, of community partners, intermediary change agents, and lead institutions' management staff, from the very beginning of CII becomes apparent. At the same time, the collaborative and evolutionary nature of most CII often makes it difficult to clearly define roles before or early on when CII are launched. It is possible that roles will more likely be defined and redefined through a negotiating and learning process, as was the case in KIS.

Influence role. This case study revealed that intermediary change agents in community mobilization CII may also be found to catalyze transformation and change.

However, catalyzing transformation and change called upon a different set of strategies and skills than that of the coordination and mobilization roles. The influence role involved negotiating, advocating, decision making, persuading, and manipulating. In a context where KIS's objectives and expectations were sometimes conflicting or inconsistent with LAC partner organizational objectives or demands, particularly with regards to efficiency, autonomy, and ownership, one role of the intermediary change agent was to negotiate demands and expectations between both partners. This was also true at the horizontal level, between LAC partner organizations. Furthermore, as Chapter 4 showed, manipulations of perceptions of interdependence among LAC partner organizations, through the use of framing (i.e., shaping values and criteria) and mobilizing tactics, facilitated community mobilization and collective capacity building which were necessary for KIS to bring the project into fruition. Compromise (i.e., negotiating) and manipulation tactics have been described by Oliver (1991) as strategic organizational responses to institutional processes. For instance, she defined manipulation as "the purposeful and opportunistic attempt to co-opt, influence, or control institutional pressures and evaluations" (p. 157). The results from this thesis showed how political support, legitimacy, and visibility were obtained by co-opting important partners to the initiative. This is consistent with tactics used in coalition building, where organizational links with external, powerful organizations are used opportunistically or strategically to show an organization's or a coalition's value to other external organizations it hopes to mobilize and/or obtain resources (Foster-Fishman, Berkowitz, et al., 2001).

It is reasonable to think that the intermediary change agent's influence role may be potentially debilitating in the context of community mobilization CII. However, rather than adopting a coercive or imposing approach (McCalman & Paton, 1992), this role could be

used in such a way as to increase the capacity of local partners to think strategically about how to use KIS's resources and opportunities to build community mobilization and capacity for larger scale support, mobilization efforts, and collective action towards the initiative's goal. Yet, this role necessitates skills and competencies that may not always be well mastered by intermediary change agents. Among others, commitment, integrity, and ability to listen, ask questions, and learn emerged as essential for catalyzing and supporting change. In addition, QEF (Québec en Forme, 2008) underlines the importance for development agents to be able to read the community context within which the CII operates, as well as issues and dynamics at play, if they are to play an appropriate influence role and support – rather than create resistance to – change.

Strategic monitoring role. Given that intermediary change agents are accountable to CII which hire them, supporting action and change cannot be at the expense of a loss of direction with regards to the initiative's core values and action principles. Their monitoring or oversight role involves ensuring that communities' action plan and program implementation concurred with the initiative's mission, vision, and objectives. Functions underlying the monitoring or oversight role thus included evaluating CII implementation needs and progress, communicating project developments between KIS's research team and LAC partners, analyzing community and coalition dynamics and developments, and strategic planning. While the management literature defines strategic planning and decision-making as typical management-related tasks (Child & Faulkner, 1998), these functions are framed as a separate role here given their potential incompatibility with the more neutral and facilitation features of the coordination and mobilization roles defined above. Moreover, in a context where targeted outcomes were sought, this monitoring function was ongoing, and had to be applied within a strategic perspective.

If role multiplicity emerged as a defining characteristic of intermediary change agent practice in KIS, role ambiguity and role conflict appeared as important concerns. Results from Chapter 4 suggest that each of the different stages of development may require attention to different aspects of the community mobilization process and call upon different functions of the intermediary change agent. For example, the formalization stage may require knowledge and skills in decision-making processes, while the ownership and transformation stages may necessitate a good understanding of local partners' organizational structures and policies. Moreover, a community characterized by significant conflict among its members and local organizations may call upon different functions than communities that enjoy more well-developed partnerships. While intermediary change agents are unlikely to possess all of the competencies underlying the four roles identified above, their most salient ability may be the capacity to identify when, in which context, and how to properly modulate their role according to coalition characteristics, contexts, developmental stage, and readiness for change (Ninacs, 2007; Québec en Forme, 2008; Kubisch et al., 1997).

Even though I played each of these four roles in the context of KIS, most often concurrently (and with varied degrees of ability), some of these roles emerged as conflicting. For instance, neutrality towards local partners, which was essential for the coordination and mobilization roles, came quite into discord with the influence and strategic functions I was undertaking when I was attempting to encourage institutional partners to re-consider their financial assistance or infrastructure accessibility policy. Similarly, it was difficult to critically analyze and evaluate problematic situations from a more distanced position when I was at the same time deeply immersed into daily management and organizing processes. Although Chapter 3 raised the advantages of having one person assuming the intermediary change agent's role, it is worth examining having the coordination role separated from the

influence and monitoring roles (i.e., assumed by two different persons), although teamwork would be fundamental. This is the case in QEF, which distinguishes LAC coordinators, hired by a local partner organization and assuming roles and core functions related to coordination and mobilization as defined herein, from development agents, hired by QEF to engage in mobilization, monitoring, and influence roles (Québec en Forme. 2008). However, having LAC coordinators hired by local organizations may generate other tensions and issues, including responsibility and accountability conflicts, role ambiguity, and catalyst institutions' awkward position for dictating and exercising control over LAC coordinators' work (Lévesque et al., 2006). Future research could examine the impact that different CII staff requirements and configuration models have on the process of community mobilization. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the more the mobilization, transformation/change, and certain aspects of the coordination roles were shared with and among local partners, the stronger community mobilization, capacity, and ownership were. Strategic monitoring of partners' capacity (time, resource, ability) to engage in these various roles was also essential to avoid overload on them and ensure their ability to sustain their participation and commitment to KIS.

Although role ambiguity and role conflict may moderate role efficacy (Pettigrew, 2003) and ultimately, community mobilization CII success, allowing sufficient time for intermediary change agents to develop their own understanding of their role may ultimately reinforce the initiative. One key lesson to be drawn from my experience in KIS is that CII intermediary change agents (as well as catalyst institutions and local organizations) should anticipate, recognize, and be comfortable with the fact that tension, conflict, and ambivalence will be inherent and inevitable characteristics of community mobilization CII. Establishing mechanisms for making sense of ambiguity, managing tension, and supporting

change processes will be essential to successfully advance the work of individuals and organizations in community mobilization CII. Certainly, intermediary change agents need guidance not only for management and mobilization processes but also for change processes, suggesting the need to provide them with structural and training/pedagogical support. My learning has been that it is in the process of observation, listening, action, and reflection that one can examine his or her own assumptions and values, critically reflect on appropriate roles, practices, and potential opportunities, and adopt a practice that balance the community needs and context on the one hand, and the CII's mission, vision and objectives on the other hand.

Community Mobilization CII: A Hybrid Model of Community Practice?

The intermediary change agent's work in KIS appears to include a variety of approaches that are common to several of the community practice models introduced in Chapter 1. For instances, community mobilization in KIS typically involved elements of social planning (Lamoureux et al., 2002), in that the goal of the LAC, at least initially, was to develop and coordinate sport and physical activity programs for children (i.e., utilitarian perspective). However, KIS also served as a platform for capacity building (Kretzman & McKnight, 1993), allowing local organizations to strengthen collaboration and exchange relationships, shared governance mechanisms, and external linkages. Although community empowerment was not an explicit objective of KIS, its local governance structure, the LAC, was designed to help relationships between local organizations be more fluid and power relationships more horizontal.

While KIS appeared to include what are commonly referred to as community development processes, including partnership building, leadership development, and collective action, in both the sport and physical activity (e.g., Frisby & Millar, 2002;

Hutchison & Nogradi, 1996; Vail, 2007) and public health domains (e.g., Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux, 2008), the influence and strategic monitoring roles of intermediary change agents suggest that community mobilization in this context distances itself from the community development approach as defined by Labonte (2005). In fact, despite conscious efforts at helping local partners identify and create their own mission, vision, objectives, and action plan, intermediary change agents in CII are confronted to a conflicting role, that of ensuring that local partners respect the initiative's mission, direction, and parameters, and with conflicting institutional/organizational demands and expectations. While the specifics of the health problem, issue, or need that is to be addressed in CII are defined locally by community partners, decisions with regards to the grand objectives, issues, and means for attaining goals nevertheless rest with the catalyst institution and/or funder. Obviously, this is to be expected from any catalyst institution investing resources into CII like KIS. However, the notion that local partners drive the process may become illusory, especially when numerous CII parameters further restrict community input. Community partners may then soon "realize the limits of their decision-making authority" despite being promised a responsive, bottom-up approach (Foster-Fishman et al., 2006, p. 152).

In such a context, intermediary change agents may have to develop strategies and skills needed for facilitating a process whereby local partners discover for themselves solutions to their own problems, although always keeping in mind the catalyst institution's desired direction (McCalman & Paton, 1992). While intermediary change agents may use their power base to elicit the conditions for desired change (Wolverton, 1998), in the current case for being the person who controlled access to potential money and resources, above all, listening and negotiation skills became important as I worked at this interface, as was flexibility on the part of the University whose capacity to reach KIS's objectives was

bounded to LAC partner organizations' commitment to implementing programs into the community setting.

Overall, community mobilization in the context of CII may emerge as a hybrid model, borrowing principles and combining characteristics of various approaches to community work and change. Nevertheless, it is believed that KIS's pilot phase followed a model of community practice that most closely subscribed to the values and principles of locality development (Lamoureux et al., 2002; Rothman & Tropman, 1987). In locality development, the intermediary change agent mobilizes and engages a diverse group of local organizations and residents in a sustained process of collective action on community-defined issues and solutions towards organizing and change efforts (Ninacs, 2007; Rothman & Tropman, 1987; Rothman, 2001). Although the goals of locality development are generally broader than the goals that were pursued by KIS, efforts at changing the structures and systems within which individuals and communities evolve were initiated during KIS's third year. Yet, their potential impact will be contingent on a sustained process whereby LAC partner organizations and larger institutions will develop an organizational/institutional commitment to KIS's goals that extend beyond the implementation of an externally-funded program. In light of the diversity of community mobilization CII aspirations and contexts, CII staff members are likely to choose different approaches and strategies based on the CII's core values and objectives. More research examining community practice models espoused by community mobilization CII could shed light on best practices within various contexts.

Contribution of this Doctoral Research

This thesis brings an important contribution to the (emerging) science and practice of community mobilization. First, this case analysis provides a unique perspective that has rarely been given research attention in the public health and population health literature: that

of the intermediary change agent engaged at the heart of a community mobilization CII and exploring this process inductively from her experience. In light of the recent trend towards community mobilization approaches to attain public health goals (Lachapelle, 2003; Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux, 2008; Robinson & Elliott, 2000), this case study provides groundwork for understanding some of the complex processes, mechanisms, and dynamics at play in community mobilization CII.

This doctoral research also provides CII intermediary change agents, including public health practitioners and coalition managers, with insights for critically examining and reflecting on whether their actions and strategies pursued are facilitative of or hindering for the community mobilization process in the context of CII. Moreover, it points to key support mechanisms and training themes that could potentially enhance the ability of intermediary change agents to perform their multifaceted role and ultimately, increase the potential for organizations involved in community mobilization CII to develop strong and lasting collective capacities needed to sustain varied community-based efforts and initiatives.

It is worth noting that much of organizational and network management RDT research has been conducted with for-profit organizations. As such, this thesis brings an important contribution to the RDT literature by broadening the field to the context of CII joining public/institutional and non-profit organizations. The results from this study suggest that the notions of capacity, autonomy, resources (i.e., in-kind, political, financial) and ownership need to be considered in an integrated model in order to understand the interdependence dynamics operating among organizations involved in CII. The notion of collective political capacity building as a form of countervailing power to manage or reduce relationships of interdependence between community coalitions and catalyst institutions is

particularly significant, and is an important contribution to network management RDT research.

The results from this study also contribute to Foster-Fishman, Berkowitz, et al.'s (2001) capacity framework in the community coalition literature by adding the dimensions of *organizational* and *political* capacities. Moreover, this thesis expands Rethemeyer and Hatmaker's (2007) resource dependence framework for network management by examining how the strategies used to manage interdependencies in CII map into RDT's theoretical perspective. Finally, the conceptualization of the intermediary change agent as a strategic catalyst and negotiator is a contribution to the community mobilization literature, where it has typically been represented as a bottom-up/process facilitator, on the one hand, or as a top-down/directive and result-oriented manager, on the other hand. The notion of ownership applied at the organizational level also brings another perspective to the existing literature on community mobilization, which has typically defined community ownership in terms of a community's active participation in program implementation.

Limitations of this Doctoral Research

Four research limitations stand out from this case analysis. First, this thesis explored the community mobilization process solely from the intermediary change agent's point of view. While this perspective provided both substantial insights into CII processes and dynamics and a rich and contextualized understanding of the community mobilization process from the posture of the intermediary change agent, there are limitations to examining a complex initiative like KIS from the perspective of one single individual. In fact, this thesis endorses the idea that the perspective of each individual involved in the KIS project, whether a LAC partner, a researcher, a parent, a child, or a funder, is unique and just as legitimate, and that gaining a multiplicity of perspectives allows to generate a more complete picture

and dynamic understanding of the community mobilization process that was experienced in KIS. It would have been valuable to engage in a process of co-constructing our understanding of interdependence dynamics operating in KIS with the various stakeholders and researchers involved in order to share a common comprehension and language of KIS's underlying processes and dynamics, maximize participation and ownership, and guide planning, implementation, and evaluation (Chen, 1990; Patton, 1997). However, it was not the objective of this doctoral thesis. As such, the decision of not engaging in this extensive co-construction process was deliberate given: (1) the goal of examining the perspective and experience from the intermediary change agent's perspective; (2) the limited resources available to engage in this extensive process, and; (3) the significant workload just assuming the role of the intermediary change agent (i.e., LAC coordinator) involved. The limitation thus lies in the fact that the construct of interdependence dynamics that were operating in KIS is likely to be different than the one proposed herein had it been constructed by LAC partners (individually or as a group), KIS's researchers, or all together as a collective exercise. Given that two sets of interviews with LAC partners have been conducted independently by KIS's research team, at the beginning of the initiative and more recently at the end of the pilot phase, it will be interesting to see whether the experiences of LAC partners fit the experiences reported in this case analysis, or whether they vary considerably.

A second limitation pertains to the limited implications and generalizations that can be drawn from this single case analysis, examined from the perspective of one individual. Given that community mobilization processes are contextualized and defined locally, the strength of this doctoral research lies in the richness of the insights gained from the intermediary change agent's perspective, which can offer valuable generic information that can inform and/or be reinterpreted in other CII contexts and settings. According to Levin and

Greenwood (2001, p. 105), “the credibility/validity of [the knowledge generated through insider action research] is measured according to whether actions that arise from it solve problems (workability).” While generalizability of the results is not the goal of constructivist, exploratory, and action-based inquiries (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Levin & Greenwood, 2001), it is believed that the recurring cycles of planning, action, observation, and reflection in which I was engaged (Torbert, 2001; Marshall, 2001) led to more ecologically valid and contextually sensitive decision-making, actions and strategies (Weissberg & Greenberg, 1998) intended to foster community mobilization, capacity, and ownership of the KIS project within its real-life context (Yin, 2003).

Third, despite my regular participation in QEF’s bimonthly meetings with the Outaouais team and QEF’s biannual provincial meetings, I could have requested more meetings with KIS’s research team to exchange about and challenge (i.e., in a safe environment) my experience, practice, and the strategies used with the Rideau-Vanier LAC in a critical and constructive way. For instance, journal entries, reflections, and interpretations could have been examined and discussed in group more systematically. This would have further stimulated my analytical reasoning capabilities. In fact, one considerable challenge throughout the data collection process was to delineate which aspects of my everyday work and personal reflections were an object of research and which aspects were not. Although my initial research questions allowed me to focus on certain aspects and dimensions of my experience, given the exploratory and inductive nature of the research approach used, it was easy to outstretch, lose focus, and get lost in what came to be an overwhelming amount of (not necessarily always relevant) reflections and data.

Another challenge during the data collection and analysis process was ensuring that reflections do not become excessively introspective and individualized, centered on personal

feelings rather than complemented by a critical analysis of these reflections, experiences, and the research context within which they occurred (Boutilier & Mason, 2006). Moreover, it took me a certain time to develop a good understanding of the context, dynamics, and issues which characterize the Rideau-Vanier community. Experiences from community mobilization CII suggest that being able to make an accurate reading of the community is a key ability for intermediary change agents or convenors to play their role adequately (e.g., Foster-Fishman et al., 2006; Québec en Forme, 2008). Hence, more frequent meetings with my thesis supervisors to discuss strategies pursued would have ensured that I was keeping on track with my roles and made appropriate interventions. In other words, my personal sense making throughout the generation/gathering, exploration/questioning, and interpretation of data and situations to which I was obviously very close, could have been subjected to more discussion and critical analysis with KIS's research team.

Lastly, doctoral research work is an exercise completed within a defined time period (4 years in this case). Given that the object of the present research was my role, experiences, and analysis of my personal reflections, my understanding of the community mobilization process and intermediary change agency work in the context of KIS has evolved throughout the past four years. This learning process and ensuing changes in conceptualization made the research analysis and writing particularly difficult as I constantly felt the need to reframe the process I was concurrently facilitating and analyzing. At the same time, the exploratory and constructive approach used ensured that I enter the research setting with no pre-conceived notions as to what the process should be, and throughout the analysis process, build my understanding towards a more comprehensive conceptualization of CII dynamics and processes.

Future Research Directions

In light of the exploratory, case study nature of this doctoral research, more research is needed to advance our understanding of the processes, mechanisms, and dynamics underlying community mobilization CII. Particularly, how interdependence dynamics and community mobilization processes are experienced by organizational representatives involved in CII needs to be examined and integrated to the perspective of the intermediary change agent in order to provide a more thorough understanding of CII dynamics and processes. One important area for further work would be an examination of how tensions and conflicts are negotiated among community mobilization CII partners (catalyst institutions, local organizations, and intermediary change agents), and the role of intermediary change agents in this process. Insights about specific strategies, mechanisms, and processes that can be used to address and alleviate tensions and conflicts within CII would help build the knowledge base and practice framework of community mobilization CII.

In addition, future research needs to examine how KIS will evolve past its third year of life, as well as the intermediary change agent's evolving role and core functions. For example, this case analysis revealed that time and resource investment, exchange relationships, collective capacity development, organizational ownership, and collective action needed to be nurtured, reinforced, sustained and renewed over the long haul. However, given that the impacts of community mobilization CII are usually only appreciable in the long-term (Kubisch et al., 2002), sustaining a community mobilization effort may constitute a much more difficult task than initiating it. In fact, the key dimensions and strategies that emerged as important during the first three years of the initiative could be found less appropriate during LACs' fourth and fifth years of existence. Moreover, the process through which community coalitions decide to put an end to their activities, whether

because the coalition is no longer productive, funding has ceased, or objectives have been attained, deserves more research attention. Along the same line, future research could examine changing governance mechanisms and support needs as a LAC's capacity and relationship with its broader environment increases.

Another important area for future research is the relative power influence of local partner organizations, the catalyst institution, and the intermediary change agent in CII. For instance, how do intermediary change agents exercise their power influence on CII's agendas? How are community vs. CII interests negotiated? RDT posits that the resources an organization controls contribute to its influence. As such, to what extent are intermediary change agents impartial in their interactions with community partners, considering that each organization contributes varied resources based on their capacities, will, and interest? Are decisions made in favour of some organizational actors in light of their ability to raise more political support than others?

Finally, although finding a balance between the achievement of collective vs. organizational goals is known as one necessary condition for organizations to invest time and resources in initiatives such as CII, further research needs to explore more thoroughly what local organizations specifically derive from their engagement and investment in CII, how the engagement of relevant community actors can be sustained, and how necessary organizational investments can be promoted given the objectives set by CII.

Conclusion

This case analysis of community mobilization in the context of the KIS project has allowed for an enhanced understanding of the complex dynamics, processes, and tensions underlying community mobilization, capacity building, and ownership of community-based initiatives catalyzed by external institutions like universities. While this thesis represents

only a beginning to what ought to be a much larger systematic effort to examine CII through a RDT lens, it has raised some of the theoretical and practical implications of intersectoral community mobilization CII as a strategy for the pursuit of health promotion, public health, and population health goals. Certainly, the information gleaned from this thesis will help shape questions to be explored in the next phase of this initiative.

This thesis has raised some of the concerns linked to the operation of complex and resource-intensive initiatives such as CII. On the one hand, community mobilization CII's management face the risk that local organizations strategically join such efforts to diversify their resource streams or gain access to valuable resources, but fail to genuinely engage and mobilize on the long-term for the change envisioned. On the other hand, local organizations must make strategic decisions regarding their involvement and investment of time and resources in CII, notably by assessing the added value of their participation.

Although more research is needed to expand our knowledge of community mobilization CII theory and practice, five conclusions can be drawn from this case study:

1. The notions of resources (i.e., financial, in-kind, political), autonomy, capacity, and ownership are useful to better understand the interdependence dynamics operating in CII, and the role played by the intermediary change agent in managing these relationships;
2. Relationships of vertical interdependence between the KIS's research team and local organizations, and relationships of horizontal interdependence between local organizations at the community level, can be strengthened through the use of various strategies, rules, and operating principles so as to encourage community mobilization, interorganizational collaboration, and collective action and change;

3. Resource (i.e., in-kind, material, financial, political) investment and exchange (pooling) among local organizations appears to be linked to the development of community (organizational) ownership and collective political capacity needed to produce desired changes on the one hand, and reach a level of autonomy that reduces dependency on CII's financial and operational resources on the other hand;
4. The process of community mobilization and intermediary change agents' role in managing this process in CII are inherently complex, strategically-driven, and fraught with tension;
5. Given that funding and institutional priorities are fleeting, community mobilization CII should consider investing in the development of collective capacity (as opposed to program sustainability) and use CII seed-funding to leverage larger-scale mobilization efforts and support as these capacities and resources are more likely to stay with the community once the initiative runs out of funds.

At the same time, despite this case study's emphasis on local organizations' commitment and resource investment towards KIS goals, it should be noted that community mobilization was, above all, a process contingent upon human relationships, trust, and individuals' real desire to make a difference in the lives of children targeted by the initiative. Keeping this in mind allowed me to stay away from what could be seen as an overly mechanical attention to structures and organizations, and reinforce sustained reciprocal relationships which underlie collective capacity development in community mobilization CII.

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STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION

For each research article that appears in Chapters 3-5, the first author (Christine Faubert) did all the data collection, as well as most of the data analysis, conceptualization, and writing of the paper. The other two authors (Jean Harvey and Milena Parent) were involved in reviewing earlier versions of the manuscripts, providing suggestions for data analysis, manuscript structure, content, and presentation of arguments, as well as approving the final versions.

APPENDIX A

Definitions of Community Mobilization

The Health Communication Partnership: “A capacity-building process through which community individuals, groups, or organizations plan, carry out, and evaluate activities on a participatory and sustained basis to improve their health and other needs, either on their own initiative or stimulated by others.” (Howard-Grabman, 2007, p. 5)

The Canadian National Crime Prevention Strategy: “The process of preparing a community for action and change.” (Hastings & Jamieson, 2002)

Youth Net/Réseau-Ado: “The use of capacity to bring about change by joining together the strengths of the community into an action plan.” (Austen, 2003, p. 2)

Coopérative de consultation en développement (La Clé): “A global process through which community strengths are assembled in order to take collective action on a common objective” (my translation, Ninacs, 2007, p. 2)

Centraide du Grand Montréal: “The art of uniting various actors of a community who are willing to take action together and engage in a social organizing effort toward the realization of a common goal” (my translation, Grandchamp, 2003, p. 7)

Lamoureux, Lavoie, Mayer, & Panet-Raymond: “The art of uniting various actors of a community who are willing to take action together and engage in a social organizing effort toward the realization of a common goal” (my translation, 2002, p. 210)

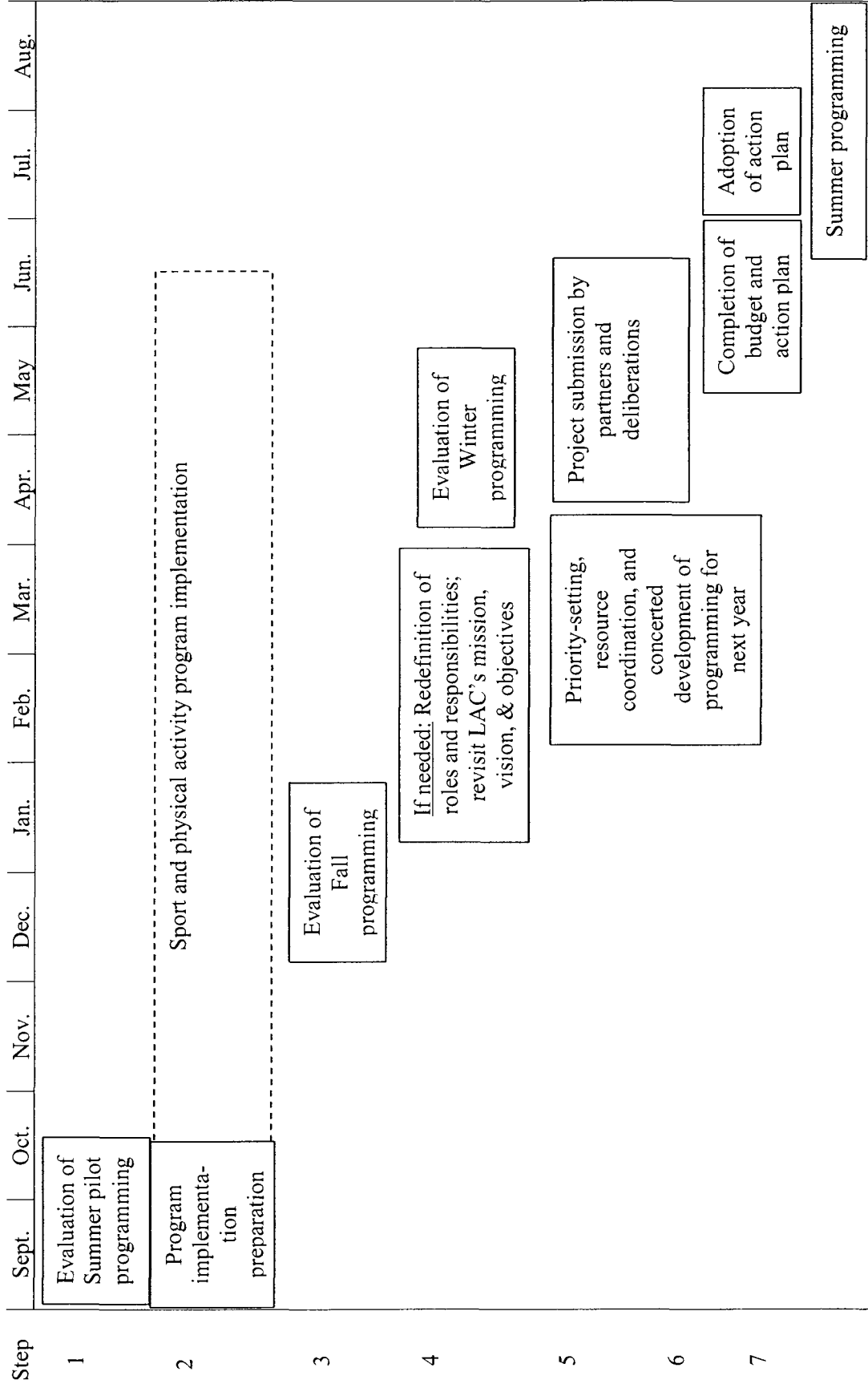
Québec en Forme: “A dynamic, integrated, and ongoing process which unites the strengths of a community and seeks to enhance their capacity to take action together towards the realization of a shared vision of development and change” (my translation, QEF, 2008, p. 14)

APPENDIX B

List of Rideau-Vanier LAC Partners as of April 30th, 2008

Setting	Sector	Organization	# of Representatives
School	Education	École élémentaire publique Le Trillium	2
School	Education	École élémentaire catholique Le Petit Prince	1
School	Education	École élémentaire catholique Vision Jeunesse	2
School	Education	École élémentaire catholique Sainte-Anne	2
School	Education	École élémentaire catholique Montfort	2
School	Education	Conseil des écoles catholiques de langue française du Centre-Est (CECLFCE)	1
School	Education	Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario (CEPEO)	1
Community	Social Services, Health	Centre des services communautaires Vanier	2
Community	Social Services, Health	Centre de ressources communautaires Overbrook-Forbes	2
Community	Health Promotion	Focus Vanier	2
Community	Recreations/ Leisure	Le Patro d'Ottawa	2
Community	Recreations	Ottawa Boys & Girls Club	2
Municipal	Public Health	Ottawa Public Health	1
Municipal	Sport & Recreation	Ottawa Parks & Recreations (including Richelieu Vanier Community Centre and Overbrook Community Centre)	4
Community	Sport & Physical Activity	Rideau-Vanier LAC, Kids in Shape	1

LAC Annual Calendar (Years 2 & 3)



APPENDIX D

Original Set of Research Questions

1. What mechanisms and processes are the LAC partners and I using to develop and foster:
(1) synergy within the group, and (2) local governance and ownership over the JEF project?
 - i. What mechanisms appear to facilitate horizontality and social learning within the group? [Paper 2 and Conclusion]
 - ii. How does the LAC (i.e., the partners and I) align itself with its surrounding environment (i.e., social, cultural, organisational, economic, and political factors) to make the most of the collaborative and appropriation process? [Papers 1 & 2]
 - iii. What strategies does the LAC implement to enhance local ownership of the JEF project? [Paper 2]
2. As the change agent (i.e., LAC coordinator), what are my roles, processes initiated, and learning experiences in nurturing the collaborative and appropriation process? [Paper 1-3]
3. From the perspective of the internal change agent,
 - i. Does the horizontal structure of the LAC facilitate social learning across organization boundaries? [Paper 3]
 - ii. What are the barriers and facilitators to horizontality and local ownership? [Paper 2]

APPENDIX E

Theoretical Orientations that Initially Guided this Research

The theoretical orientations that initially guided this thesis research appear in Figure 3. This model, developed before the conduct of this study, was based on the concept of partnership synergy (Lasker et al., 2001; Lasker & Weiss, 2003), which bears similarities with principles of community mobilization. Partnership synergy has been defined as the extent to which a group successfully combines the “perspectives, resources, and skills of its participating individuals and organizations [in a way that it] contributes to and strengthens the work of the group” (Lasker et al., 2001, p. 187). According to Lasker et al. (2001), partnership synergy is a multi-dimensional concept determined not only by each partner’s level of involvement, but also by their heterogeneity, power to combine and leverage material, human, and financial resources, ability to build strong working relationships, governance and management characteristics, and fit with the external environment.

Building on the partnership, community capacity, community ownership, and local governance literature, the initial model depicted the process through which control and ownership of the KIS project was to be conveyed over to Rideau-Vanier LAC partners. The circular and irregular developmental path that extends over the course of the collaboration and appropriation process reflected the notion that this process was not going to be straightforward but rather complex, dynamic, and reversible. Also consistent with the literature, the model suggested that an external catalyst or change agent (i.e., KIS/University) was to initiate community dialogue and collective action about a particular issue (i.e., enhanced children sport and physical activity participation). However, an intermediate change agent (i.e., myself) hired by the external agency (i.e., University) was to work in close collaboration with the community and engages local actors and organizations in an

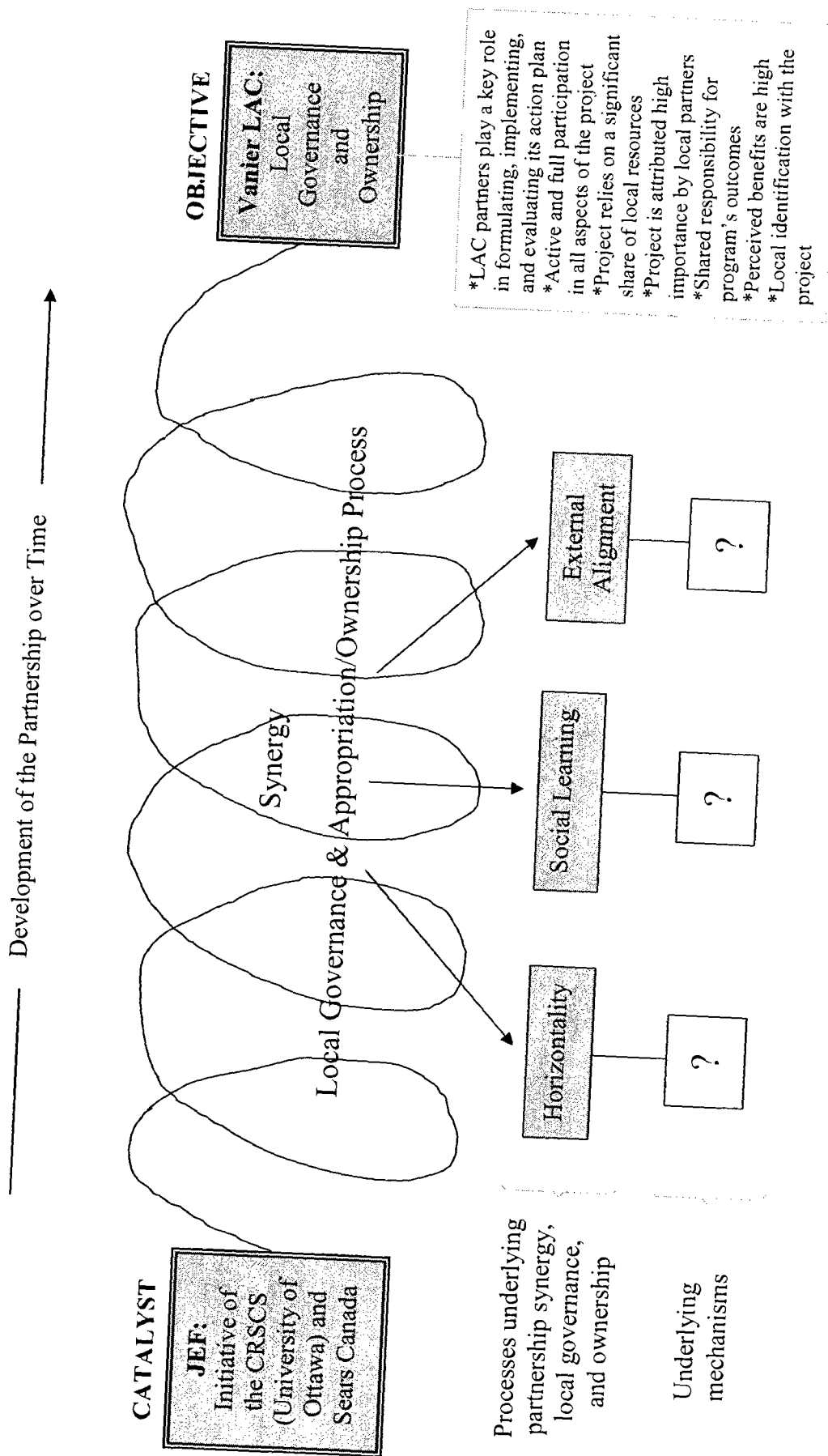


Figure 3. Schematic representation of the theoretical model for examining partnership synergy, local governance, and ownership.

iterative learning process in order to increase their capacity for autonomous and ongoing dialogue and collective action. As such, the Rideau-Vanier LAC constituted the infrastructure from which the development of community mobilization, capacity, and ownership was to be examined.

Considering that theoretical constructs are, by definition, emerging out of and constructed from the process of data collection, analysis, and interpretation, they are likely to change as a result of the participatory experience. Consequently, following my extensive participation in the KIS project/Rideau-Vanier LAC and the inductive nature of the research analysis, this initial construct and my own understanding of the KIS project were revised, reframed, and refined throughout the research process to account for my experience and learning. The foundation of KIS's approach to community-based activities was found to lie upon the development of community mobilization, ownership, and capacity for collective action. The theoretical construct emerging from my experience as KIS's intermediary change agent is described in the general discussion of this thesis (Chapter 6).

APPENDIX F

*Letter of Information and Consent Form*LETTRE D'INFORMATION ET FORMULAIRE DE CONSENTEMENT

Nom de la chercheure : Christine Faubert, étudiante au programme de doctorat en santé des populations, Faculté des études supérieures et postdoctorales

Sous la supervision de : Jean Harvey, PhD et Milena Parent, PhD, Centre de recherche sur le sport dans la société canadienne, École de l'activité physique, Université d'Ottawa.

I. Description du projet de recherche

Cher (Chère) membre du Comité d'action local (CAL) Vanier,

Vous êtes invité(e) à participer à la recherche de Christine Faubert, dans le cadre de son doctorat en santé des populations et sous la supervision de Jean Harvey, PhD et de Milena Parent, PhD, du Centre de recherche sur le sport dans la société canadienne à l'École des sciences de l'activité physique de l'Université d'Ottawa. L'objectif de la recherche est de documenter et d'examiner, du point de vue de la coordonnatrice du CAL, le processus de collaboration et de prise en charge du projet Jeunes en Forme (JEF) par les partenaires du CAL Vanier.

Participation: Votre participation consistera essentiellement à donner votre consentement afin que la chercheure enregistre, à l'aide d'un magnétocassette audio, les rencontres mensuelles du CAL de septembre 2006 à décembre 2007. Ces rencontres se dérouleront comme à l'habitude. Le but de l'enregistrement est d'offrir à la chercheure et coordonnatrice du CAL la flexibilité d'interagir avec le groupe en tant que participante plutôt qu'en tant qu'observatrice. Au cours du projet de recherche, la chercheure documentera également toute interaction, discussion formelle ou informelle, réflexion personnelle, et autre observation dans le cadre du projet Jeunes en Forme et jugée pertinente au processus de collaboration et de prise en charge du projet au sein du CAL et de la communauté de Vanier. Le but de cette étude n'est pas d'évaluer mes habiletés en tant qu'individu mais plutôt d'amasser de l'information sur la façon dont les organismes locaux se mobilisent et collaborent pour mettre sur pied un projet communautaire.

Les rencontres seront enregistrées sur cassette audio et leur contenu, transcrit au besoin. Les informations recueillies ne seront pas anonymes, dans la mesure où les types d'organisme, par exemple, scolaire, communautaire, ou municipal (plutôt que le nom de l'organisme ou mon nom personnel), participant à la recherche seront utilisés dans les rapports de recherche et les publications. Ainsi, aucun nom, ni information permettant de m'identifier à titre d'individu, n'apparaîtra dans les rapports de recherche ou publications. Seuls, Christine Faubert, Jean Harvey, Milena Parent et les membres de leur équipe de recherche auront accès aux enregistrements audio et aux transcriptions. Les données

serviront uniquement aux fins de l'évaluation du programme JEF. Les cassettes audio et les formulaires de consentement seront gardés sous clés dans les locaux du Centre de recherche sur le sport dans la société canadienne de l'Université d'Ottawa. Les cassettes audio et les transcriptions des rencontres du CAL seront détruites 10 ans après la publication du dernier rapport. Les résultats de l'étude seront présentés lors de séances publiques auxquelles seront conviés tous les organismes membres du CAL.

Risques: Les effets négatifs associés à cette étude sont minimes. Puisque ma participation à cette recherche implique que tout ce que je pourrais dire lors des rencontres du CAL et de mes entretiens formels et informels avec la chercheure/coordonnatrice du CAL pourrait être documenté, je comprends qu'il est possible que je sois cité(e). Ainsi, les informations recueillies ne seront pas anonymes, dans la mesure où les types d'organisme, par exemple, scolaire, communautaire, ou municipal, plutôt que le nom de l'organisme ou mon nom personnel, participant à la recherche seront utilisés dans les rapports de recherche et les publications. Ainsi, aucun nom, ni information permettant de m'identifier à titre d'individu, n'apparaîtra dans les rapports de recherche ou publications.

Bienfaits: Ma participation à cette recherche aura pour effet de contribuer à l'avancement du savoir sur le processus de collaboration et de prise en charge des projets communautaires par les organismes et institutions du milieu. Il permettra notamment à mieux comprendre le rôle du coordonnateur/trice de CAL dans le cadre du projet Jeunes en Forme.

2. Consentement

Je, _____, consens à participer à la recherche menée par Christine Faubert, sous la supervision de Jean Harvey et Milena Parent du Centre de recherche sur le sport dans la société canadienne à l'École des sciences de l'activité physique de l'Université d'Ottawa. Cette recherche s'effectue dans le cadre du projet de thèse de doctorat de Christine Faubert. L'objectif de la recherche est de documenter et d'examiner le processus de collaboration et de prise en charge du projet Jeunes en Forme (JEF) par les partenaires du CAL Vanier.

Je comprends que mon implication consistera à donner mon consentement afin que la chercheure enregistre, à l'aide d'un magnétocassette audio, les rencontres mensuelles du CAL de septembre 2006 à décembre 2007. Ces rencontres se dérouleront comme à l'habitude. Il est possible que mes interactions et discussions formelles et informelles avec les autres membres du CAL et la coordonnatrice soient documentées. J'ai été informé que le but de cette étude n'est pas d'évaluer mes habiletés en tant qu'individu mais plutôt d'amasser de l'information sur la façon dont les organismes locaux se mobilisent et collaborent pour mettre sur pied un projet communautaire. Je comprends aussi que ce projet vise à utiliser les informations obtenues dans le cadre du CAL Vanier dans le but éventuel d'élargir l'implantation du projet Jeunes en Forme dans d'autres communautés de la région d'Ottawa, de l'Ontario, et du Canada. Je suis aussi conscient(e) que les résultats de cette étude seront présentés à des conférences et/ou publiés dans des journaux scientifiques reliés au travail en partenariat mais que mon nom ni le nom de mon organisme/établissement ne seront mentionnés en aucun cas.

Je comprends que ma participation s'effectue sur une base volontaire et que je suis libre de me retirer de ce projet de recherche à tout moment, incluant avant ou pendant les rencontres du CAL. Parce que la chercheuse est en position d'autorité envers le participant en tant que coordonnatrice du CAL, il pourrait y avoir une perception de coercition. Toutefois, je suis assuré que je peux refuser de participer à certaines ou toutes rencontres du CAL, demander à ce que l'enregistrement soit arrêté à tout moment au courant des rencontres du CAL, retirer des confessions données lors de ces rencontres ou lors d'entretiens formels ou informels avec la chercheuse/coordonnatrice du CAL, et refuser de répondre à toute question verbale ou écrite sans subir de conséquences négatives. Si je choisis de me retirer de l'étude, les données recueillies jusqu'à ce moment seront conservées avec mon consentement ci-dessous.

Il existe deux copies de ce formulaire de consentement, l'une qui me sera remise et l'autre qui sera conservée par la chercheuse. Pour tout renseignement additionnel concernant cette étude, je peux communiquer avec Christine Faubert

ou avec ses superviseurs Jean Harvey
et Milena Parent

Toute question ou plainte au sujet de la déontologie et de la façon dont cette recherche a été menée, peuvent être adressée à la Responsable de l'éthique en recherche, Université d'Ottawa, 550 rue Cumberland, Pavillon Tabaret, salle 159, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 6N5; Tél. :613-562-5387, courrier électronique : ethics@uottawa.ca.

Si je décide de me retirer de l'étude, j'autorise l'équipe de recherche (Christine Faubert, Milena Parent, et Jean Harvey) à utiliser l'information que j'ai fournie jusqu'à mon retrait :

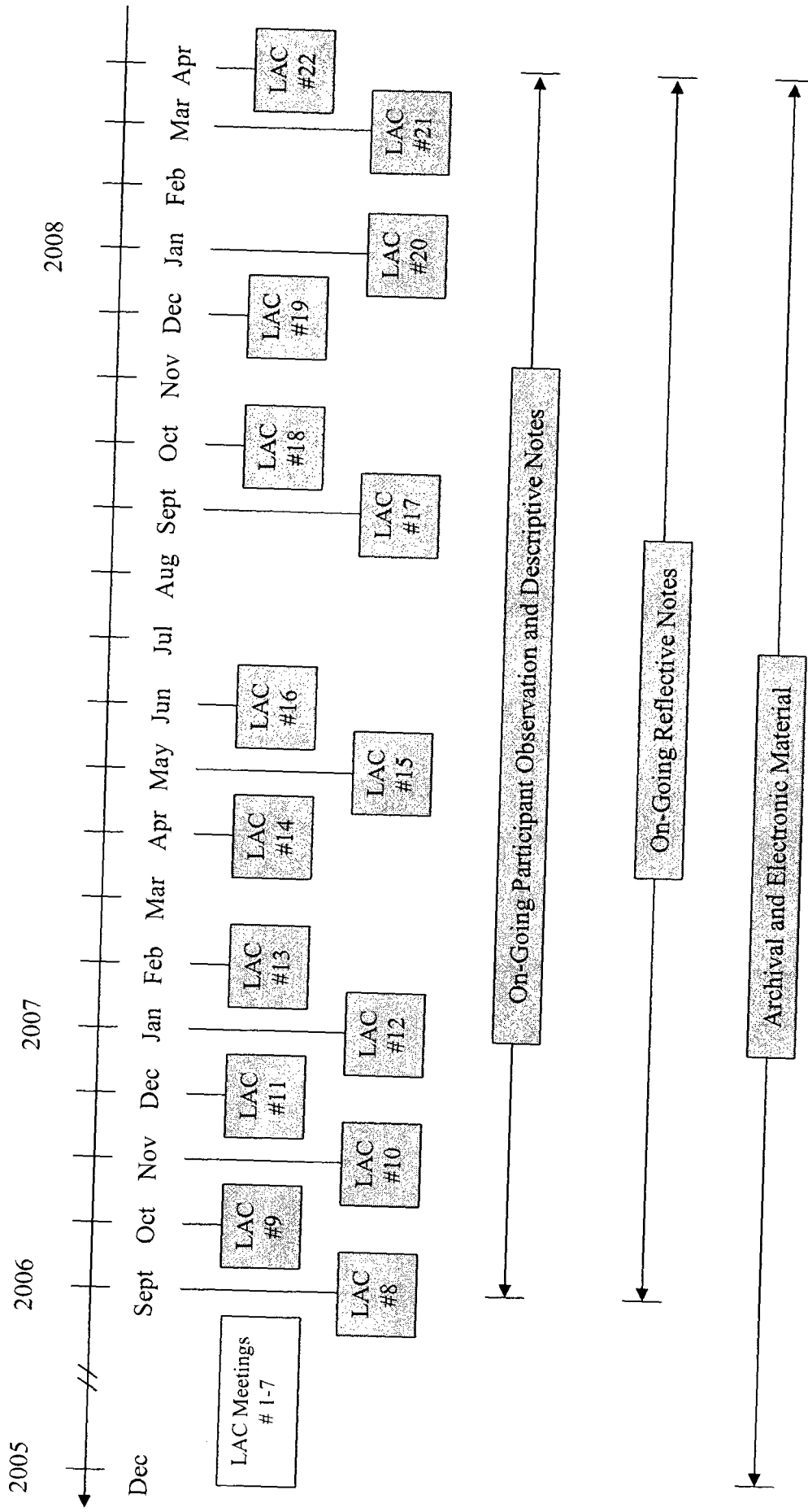
- Oui
 Non

Signature du (de la) participant(e) : _____ Date : _____

Signature du chercheur (CF) : _____ Date : _____

APPENDIX G

Timelines and Key Milestones of the Study



APPENDIX H

*KIS's Mission, Vision, Objectives, and Guiding Principles*⁸ (Parent et al., 2007)

KIS's Mission

- Support local communities in the development of a common vision and in the implementation of lasting actions favouring a healthy and active lifestyle in kids aged four to twelve from underprivileged areas through sport and physical activity.

KIS's Vision

- See that decision-makers⁹ adopt and implement practices, norms, and policies creating an environment favourable to the kids' health and overall autonomy today and in the future.

KIS's Objectives

- Evaluate the possibility of implementing and adapting the QEF formula in a community outside the province of Québec;
- Build intersectoral partnerships (i.e., the creation of a LAC) with different organizations within the community in order to consolidate and improve existing resources, as well as to increase kids' participation in physical activities and sports;
- Act as a catalyst for the community and ensure the existence of the project beyond the initial 3-year funding; and
- Promote physical activity so as to increase kids' autonomy and overall health, and prevent school drop out over time.

KIS's Intervention Approach

- Be a catalyst instead of an operator;
 - Follow a global, integrated, and adapted approach;
 - Facilitate individual and community ownership and involvement within a perspective of lasting change;
 - Work in a network with the main actors of the community;
 - Improve rather than substitute existing resources;
 - Be flexible and non-normative in our approach with the community;
 - Evaluate actions for continued improvement.
-

⁸ For its pilot phase (2005-2008), KIS' guiding principles were borrowed from QEF's first mandate (2002-2007).

⁹ Decision-makers include governments, ministries, public and community organizations, and individuals in positions of authority (school principals, teachers, parents, adults working with children, etc.).

KIS's Programming Principles

- *Nature of activities*
 - Provide accessibility to all, especially kids who do not typically participate;
 - Provide diversity in activities;
 - Stimulate kids' interest and perseverance with regard to school and physical activity;
 - Organize activities with short-term objectives (to promote kids' success);
 - Reinforce kids' sense of belonging to the groups, the school, and the community;
 - Avoid duplication of existing activities.

 - *Providers' characteristics and approach*
 - Encourage community involvement;
 - Ensure the presence of quality providers;
 - Devise strategies for integrating providers' practices.

 - *Where activities should be implemented*
 - Supply a variety of safe infrastructures and equipment;
 - Ensure a healthy environment.

 - *When activities should take place*
 - Ensure the activities are offered during kids' free time, outside school hours, on a regular basis, in a way that fits with children's development and progression.
-

APPENDIX I

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To: "Christine Faubert"

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15th October 2008

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Thank you for your help. Best regards,

Christine Faubert
PhD Candidate, Population Health
University of Ottawa