Developmental Evaluation:
An Overview

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o Board of the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation is supportive of experimentation

o Developmental Evaluation (DE) draws upon existing evaluative/feedback processes

o DE doesn't focus on outcomes, but on how to get there

Preamble

- Foundation shifted funding to complex, long-term initiatives

- Initiatives exploring uncertain territory, developing and testing strategies as they proceeded

- No blueprints for attacking poverty, promoting innovative approaches to solve social problems

- No need for ex post facto assessments, but real-time feedback on how to get where you want to go

- Needed a compass, because roadmaps didn't exist

Developmental Evaluation is...

An approach to evaluation grounded in systems thinking and that supports innovation by collecting and analyzing real time data in ways that lead to informed and ongoing decision making as part of the design, development and implementation process.

— Michael Quinn Patton

Developmental Evaluation...

- Overturns many assumptions of traditional evaluation approaches:
    - Embedded, not detached
    - Continuous, not episodic
    - Goal is learning, not judging

Wide Applicability

- DE used with programs related to:
    - Youth
    - Aboriginal peoples
    - Profoundly disabled
    - Poverty reduction
    - Environmental education

Developmental Evaluation Timeline

Getting to Maybe: How the World Is Changed, by Patton, Westley and Zimmerman

DE of **YouthScape** program

Developmental Evaluation: Applying Complexity Concepts to Enhance Innovation and Use, by Patton

Innoweave launches DE module
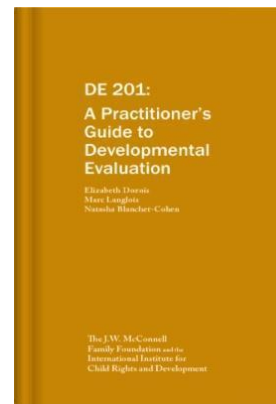
| 2005-2006 | 2008 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |

Led by **Michael Quinn Patton**, 11 organizations participated in the DE training workshops, sponsored by DuPont Canada and the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation

A Developmental Evaluation Primer

Jamie A.A. Gamble

DE 201:
A Practitioner's Guide to Developmental Evaluation

*Elizabeth Dozois
Marc Langlois
Natasha Blanchet-Cohen*

The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation and the International Institute for Child Rights and Development

Surfaces lessons and insights from the **YouthScape** program (2006-2010)

DE of the Ashoka Changemakers Competition:
Inspiring Approaches to First Nations, Métis and Inuit Learning

YouthScape:

A case study of evaluation embracing the emergent
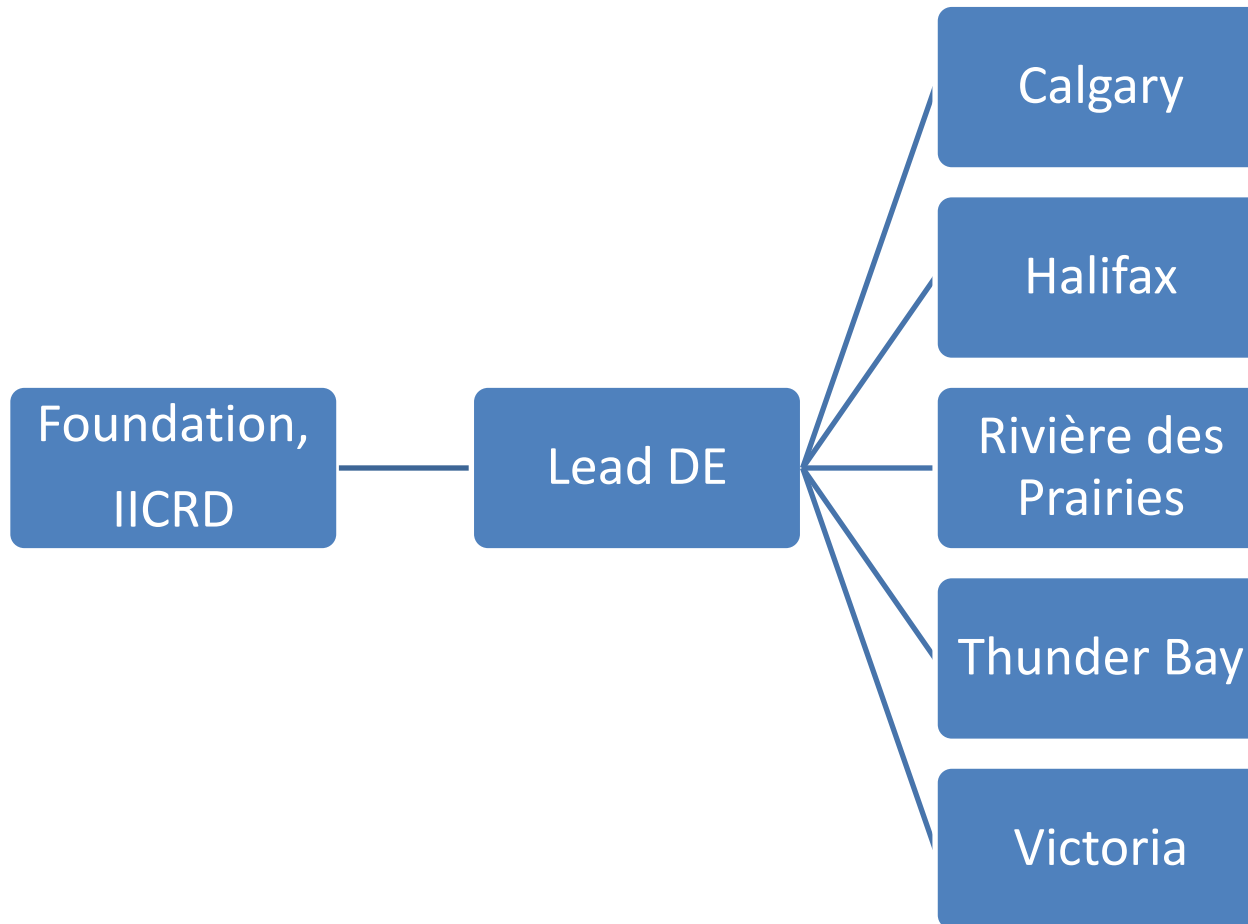
YouthScape: An Overview

- Trustees approved youth engagement strategy to foster innovative change at both the local and national level

- Five national partners, five communities

- From 2006-2010, $2.1M contributed, $1.2M used to match more than $1.5M in local contributions to support young people in planning and carrying out local projects

YouthScape: Objectives

- Create more opportunities for young people to participate in and shape the development of their communities

- Expand the number of Canadian communities actively pursuing comprehensive initiatives with a focus on youth engagement

- Link communities in a process of collaborative learning

- Test and assess the efficacy of a variety of approaches to comprehensive community initiatives and youth engagement

- Distil and document lessons learned from the initiative to share and positively influence attitudes and policies that affect young people

YouthScape: DE Model

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Foundation, IICRD ── Lead DE ──┬── Calgary
                               ├── Halifax
                               ├── Rivière des Prairies
                               ├── Thunder Bay
                               └── Victoria
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DE on the Ground: Practices

- o Orienting: Establish mutual understanding
- o Watching: Attend to key moments, group dynamics, structure, action, threats/opportunities
- o Sense-making: identify patterns, integrate new information
- o Intervening: Asking questions, facilitating discussion, sourcing/providing information, pausing action

YouthScape: Results of DE

Timeframe	Attending to	Hearing	Interventions
Pre-launch	Design team	Need more time for interaction and questions	Redesign on Day 2 of gathering
Project Launch (Y1)	Research and DE	Uncertainty about tools	Coaching sessions for DEs to use participatory tools
	Relationships between IICRD, Foundation, and organizations	Need more time to grant, delay was hindering community participation	Foundation extending granting deadline

YouthScape: Results of DE

Timeframe	Attending to	Hearing	Interventions
Thirst for action (Y1-Y2)	Youth involvement	Thirst for action, difficulty in linking youth to grants	DEs shared ideas with sites, encouraged reaching out to youth
	Relationships were strained	Misperceptions, discouragement, disengagement	DEs checked in to clarify, Foundation directly worked with sites to address issues

YouthScape: Results of DE

Timeframe	Attending to	Hearing	Interventions
Reinventing Structures (Y1-Y2)	Partner involvement	Thirst for action, Lack of direction for YS in some sites	DEs assisted in new decision-making processes, e.g., vision building, group planning
	Positioning of DEs	Lack of acceptance of two DEs	Lead DE conducted site visits to establish common ground
Clarifying relationships and support (Y2)	Partner involvement and youth involvement	Uncertainty with granting and support of grantees	DEs supported decision making and processes related to grant support

YouthScape: Present Day

- Inter/national-levels
  - Partner incorporated learning into youth-centered projects taking place in Southeast Asia.
  - FSG showcased use of DE as a model for evaluating social innovation
  - Academic articles published on youth empowerment
- Municipal-level
  - Catalyzed long-lasting networks
  - Fostered change of public opinion that helped build, not break down, community
- Individual-level
  - Provided positive experiences that helped improve and sustain motivation
  - Youth benefited from increased self-confidence

THE J.W. MCCONNELL FAMILY FOUNDATION

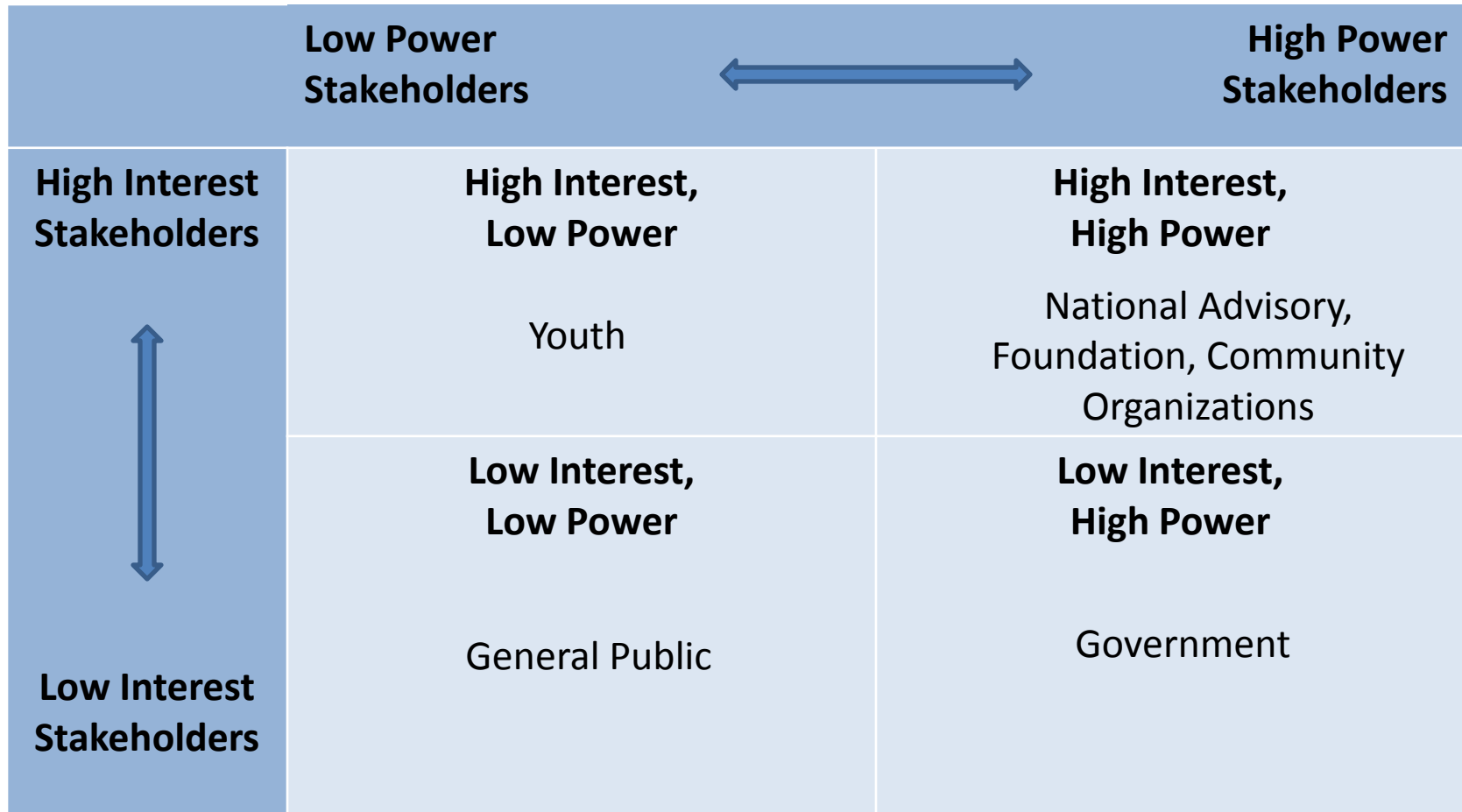# Developmental Evaluation:
Lessons Learned

DE Works When…

- Environment is complex and dynamic
- Feedback is needed from critical, supportive observer
- Host organization embraces a learning culture
- Stakeholders are committed to process
- Developmental evaluators are granted authority
- Developmental evaluators are embedded early

DE Doesn't Work When…

- Its purposes are misunderstood
- Evaluators lack key skills, e.g., facilitation, listening
- Stakeholder egos and power dynamics are overwhelming
- Time, people, and money are lacking
- Organizational readiness and buy-in are missing
- Information is not collected and shared quickly

Activity: Stakeholder Analysis

(15 minutes)

Stakeholder Analysis: Power Vs. Interest Matrix

	Low Power Stakeholders ⟷	**High Power Stakeholders**
High Interest Stakeholders	**High Interest, Low Power** Youth	**High Interest, High Power** National Advisory, Foundation, Community Organizations
Low Interest Stakeholders	**Low Interest, Low Power** General Public	**Low Interest, High Power** Government

o What kind of impact could identifying and addressing "power vs. interest" have had on projects?

Questions

(10 minutes)

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