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Evaluation Directorate

July 2009

Evaluation of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy

Final Report
July 2009

Strategic Policy and Research Branch

Canada

Evaluation of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy

Summary Report

Evaluation Directorate
Strategic Policy and Research Branch
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

July 2009

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Acronyms

CAB   Community Advisory Board

CMHC   Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

HAN   Homelessness Accountability Network

HERIN   Homelessness Electronic Reporting and Information Network

HIFIS   Homeless Individuals and Families Information System

HKDP   Homelessness Knowledge Development Program

HP Secretariat   Homelessness Partnering Secretariat

HPI   Homelessness Partnership Initiative

HPS   Homelessness Partnering Strategy

HRSDC   Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

IMIS   Integrated Management Information System

NHI   National Homelessness Initiative

P/T   Provinces and Territories

SFRPHI   Surplus Federal Real Property for Homelessness Initiative

Glossary of Terms

Absolute Homelessness

Describes those living on the street, in temporary shelters or in locations not meant for human habitation; may also include those who move continuously among temporary housing arrangements provided by strangers, friends or family.

Affordable Housing

Dwellings costing less than 30% of before-tax household income. Costs include:

- for renters: rent and any payments for electricity, fuel, water and other municipal services; and
- for owners: mortgage payments (principal and interest), property taxes, and any condominium fees, along with payments for electricity, fuel, water and other municipal services.

Capital Investments

Includes the constructing, renovating, or maintaining of sheltering facilities and any physical structure from which support services are delivered.

Community Entity Model

Under this delivery model, an incorporated organization enters into a Contribution Agreement with the federal government to manage and administer HPS funds on its behalf. The Community Entity ensures that community planning occurs, evaluates proposals and flows HPS funding to projects.

Continuum of Support and Services

Holistic approach to addressing the needs of the homeless and at-risk populations identified within a Community Plan. From prevention through to supportive housing, it includes all supports and services that would be needed to assist a homeless person or someone at risk of becoming homeless in achieving housing and income stability.

Coordination

Relationship within the community that shares resources to address common issues. Coordination involves a central group of individuals who act as decision-makers with defined roles and formalized linkages. Leadership is autonomous but is focused on shared issues with group decision-making in the central group and subgroups.

Emergency Shelter

Housing facilities providing temporary and short-term accommodation (from a few days up to six months) to homeless individuals and families who would otherwise sleep in the streets; it may include supports such as food, clothing and counselling. Typically these facilities provide single or shared bedrooms or dorm-type sleeping arrangements that can include seasonal beds/mats. Families with children may also be served through emergency housing facilities or motels.

Housing-First Approach

Housing-First is an approach to ending homelessness that centers on providing homeless people with housing quickly and then providing services as needed. What differentiates a Housing First approach from traditional emergency shelter or transitional housing approaches is that it is "housing-based," with an immediate and primary focus on helping individuals and families quickly access and sustain permanent housing.

Longer-Term Housing Solutions

Transitional, supportive and other forms of long-term housing facilities and services.

Prevention Services

Services targeting individuals and families most at risk of homelessness to prevent the circumstances likely to lead to homelessness (e.g. discharge planning for those in health or corrections facilities, eviction prevention and tenancy maintenance programs, etc.).

Shared Delivery Model

Under this delivery model, organizations apply directly to Service Canada for funding, through their local or regional office. Service Canada and the community work in partnership resulting in a joint project selection and decision-making process. Projects are subject to approval by the Minister of HRSDC, and Service Canada is responsible for the contribution agreement and monitoring.

Strategic Activity Area

HPS is designed to support activities in four different strategic areas to reach its outcomes:

- Strategic investments (longer-term housing solution, shelter, support and prevention services)
- Community Development
- Strategic Partnership Development (federal horizontal pilot project and bilateral federal and provincial/territorial agreements)
- Knowledge Development and Dissemination

Teleforum

An event that combines audio teleconference with web-based PowerPoint™ presentations developed by the HP Secretariat and opened to homelessness stakeholders at all levels.

Executive Summary

This report presents the findings from the evaluation of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS). The evaluation was conducted during the summer and fall of 2008. The main goal of this evaluation was to assess the relevance, design, success and cost-effectiveness of the HPS. At the time of the data collection, the HPS was in its second year of operation. Therefore, it was not expected that mid- and longer-term Strategy outcomes would have been achieved at that point. As such, the evaluation focused on achievement of outputs and immediate outcomes, and exploring progress towards the achievement of mid- and longer-term outcomes. The main client for this evaluation is the Deputy Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), and the intended audience for this report includes program representatives, partners, stakeholders, and the general public.

Overview of the HPS

The HPS was announced on December 19, 2006 as a two-year strategy funded at $134.8 million per year. The HPS has three main objectives: improve partnerships; enhance sustainability; and contribute to tangible results for the homeless population. To address these three objectives, the HPS has three components: the Homelessness Partnership Initiative, the Homelessness Accountability Network; and the Surplus Federal Real Property for Homelessness Initiative.

The Homelessness Partnering Initiative – the largest component of the HPS – is considered the cornerstone of the HPS and comprises four components:

- *Designated Communities* – This includes 61 communities that had been identified under the National Homelessness Initiative, the predecessor program to the HPS, as having significant problems with homelessness. Under this component, these communities are able to access multi-year funding that must be matched from other sources.

- *Aboriginal Communities* – Under this component, partnerships with Aboriginal and other organisations in communities with a substantial Aboriginal population (in either Designated or Outreach Communities) are developed to ensure that services meet the acute and unique needs of off-reserve homeless Aboriginal people.

- *Outreach Communities* – Smaller cities, rural and outlying areas, including the North, are eligible for funding to support single projects to fill specific gaps in addressing homelessness.

- *Federal Horizontal Pilot Projects* – Under this component, HRSDC takes the lead to mobilize collaboration among federal departments on specific pilot projects focused on corrections, mental health, family violence, and immigration issues that may lead to homelessness.

The three main goals of the Homelessness Accountability Network are to: play a more pro-active role in knowledge development; support the creation of sustainable national and regional networks and partnerships; and enhance the community planning process and improve the ability of the Homelessness Partnering Secretariat's ability to measure progress and to report on results at the community and national levels. The Homelessness Accountability Network has two parts: the Homelessness Knowledge Development Program; and the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System.

The Surplus Federal Real Property for Homelessness Initiative makes surplus federal real properties available to community organizations, the not-for-profit sector, and other levels of government for projects to help prevent and reduce homelessness.

Findings

Continued need for support to prevent and reduce homelessness

The evaluation found that there remains a strong need for continued support to prevent and reduce homelessness in Canada. While it is challenging to estimate the actual trends and rates of homelessness on a national level due to the lack of reliable data, according to data collected at local levels, homelessness in many communities is increasing. Many services and facilities are experiencing increased demand, and are operating at or above capacity. Most communities indicate that their supply of transitional and supportive housing is not meeting current demand. As homelessness increasingly affects diverse populations, qualitative data suggests that there is a need for a variety of services and supports to successfully address homelessness issues. The HPS is viewed as having an appropriate focus to address many of the most pressing needs in communities with respect to homelessness issues.

Success of the HPS partnerships enhancement component

Partnerships in communities – The HPS has contributed to enhancing partnerships within communities, as it continued to build on the work completed under the National Homelessness Initiative, and produced and disseminated useful tools for developing partnerships. For those communities that reported strong partnerships prior to implementation of the National Homelessness Initiative and the HPS, the impact of the HPS on enhancing partnerships has been smaller. Key factors identified in assisting with the development of partnerships included the Homelessness Partnering Initiative requirement for matching partner contributions, and the HPS community planning tools that emphasize partnerships. Planned financial contributions by partners to address homelessness issues exceed HPS' contributions at the project level or the community level.

Partnerships with Provinces and Territories – The HPS has made some progress in the development of bilateral agreements with Provinces and Territories, with two agreements signed and discussions started with all other Provinces and Territories. Discussions and efforts toward developing agreements have resulted in better mutual understanding of priorities and constraints of the Provinces and Territories and of the federal government and improvements in the alignment of investments to address homelessness issues in some jurisdictions. Both Provinces and Territories and the HPS have identified challenges in developing partnerships and, in particular, formal bilateral agreements.

Partnerships at the federal level – The horizontal pilot projects have made significant contributions to increasing the level of collaboration between federal departments and agencies in addressing homelessness issues. The process of designing and implementing the projects has contributed to better understanding of the priorities of various departments and agencies, as well as a greater awareness of how homelessness issues are related to different mandates. The Homelessness Partnering Secretariat staff were consistently identified as key to the success of the horizontal pilot projects.

Success of the HPS knowledge development component

The development of tools used by communities for planning and data collection has progressed considerably under the HPS as has knowledge and data development. The HPS is also contributing to the establishment of processes for using good practices and information at the community level specifically to increase the understanding of the importance of quality information and data in the community planning and project development processes. The main areas of challenge included the short time period that was provided for the community planning process, and the capacity of communities to meaningfully engage in data development activities.

Cost-effectiveness and efficiency

The largest impediment to both the effectiveness and efficiency of the HPS identified by respondents has been the two-year timeframe associated with the Strategy.

Implementation of the Management Response for the National Homelessness Initiative evaluation

The main conclusions outlined in the National Homelessness Initiative summative evaluation were addressed in the design of the HPS, including the following issues: development of ongoing partnerships; increased coordination and engagement of partners; and ongoing performance measurement.

Appropriateness of the HPS approach

The HPS focus on strategic investments, community development, partnerships and knowledge development is appropriate to address many of the most pressing needs in communities with respect to homelessness issues. Specifically, the HPS focus on prevention measures and transitional/supportive housing is appropriate, and is a clear continuation of the evolution that had occurred under the previous two phases of the National Homelessness Initiative. The HPS focus: has allowed the HPS to move closer to identifying and addressing root causes of homelessness when compared to a focus only on emergency services; is more compatible with a "housing-first" model which has demonstrated success in other jurisdictions; and builds on the community capacity developed under the National Homelessness Initiative. Given the multifaceted and complex nature of many homelessness issues, the specific emphasis on partnerships, while at times challenging, is viewed as the most appropriate approach.

However, the short two-year timeframe for the Strategy and the available amount of funding for community projects are less conducive to its ultimate success. The negative impacts associated with these characteristics of the Strategy have been identified in areas such as the extent to which partnerships can be developed, and the implementation of projects with significant capital investments.

Likelihood of the HPS reaching expected impact on longer-term housing solutions and services

The HPS is contributing to the development of longer-term housing solutions, supports and prevention services through investments in projects and the encouragement of partnering at the community level. Considering the levels of need and the timeframe required to make significant impacts in this area, the HPS' contributions will likely be small to moderate in size. An examination of past National Homelessness Initiative projects that had a longer-term housing focus revealed that the National Homelessness Initiative impacts have included tangible achievements in the development of housing units for individuals and families that had experienced homelessness. In addition, there were important demonstrated results such as achievement of housing stability, improved health outcomes for residents, and improved income stability among residents. National Homelessness Initiative projects examined, that were similar to those funded under the HPS, achieved positive outcomes; thus there is a high likelihood that HPS projects will have a comparable level of success.

Recommendations and future considerations

#1: Seek stable, longer-term programming to allow for the development of more cost-effective strategic investment projects that target longer-term housing solutions and prevention. The main impediment to success identified across many areas was the short timeframe for the HPS. This has had an impact on the types of projects selected and the development of partnerships with Provinces and Territories, and will have an effect on the extent to which HPS results will be achieved. Many interviewees suggested a

minimum timeframe of five years be considered to ensure that the most appropriate projects are developed in the most cost-effective manner to meet the needs of communities.

#2: Further expand and develop the partnership component with provinces and territories. The efforts made by the HPS to enter into discussions with Provinces and Territories to address homelessness issues led to some progress towards formalizing partnerships. Building on the progress made in the development of partnerships and increases in levels of mutual understanding of various jurisdictions' priorities and constraints, it will be important for the HPS to continue to further expand its efforts in this area. This recommendation is made in light of the importance of these partnerships to achieve the objectives of the Strategy, and the potential for these partnerships to improve the alignment of investments and coordination of services.

#3: Simplify the tools/templates used for community planning in smaller communities, and make them consistent with the timeframe of the Strategy. Although positive feedback was received overall for community planning tools and templates, the "one-size-fits-all" approach may not be appropriate for some communities or for a very short planning timeline (e.g., two years or less). The templates are creating significant administrative burdens for some smaller communities. The type and amount of data and planning might not be the same for a smaller community when compared with that required for large urban communities. In addition, given the short timeframe of the Strategy, the HPS should consider implementing an abbreviated assessment and planning process or an update of the previously completed process for possible future phases of the Strategy. The HPS should consider adapting its requirements for information collected through the community planning tools and templates as a function of the size of the community and funding timelines.

#4: Continue to build upon and expand communities' awareness of the importance of data, information and good practices on homelessness. There has been considerable progress made in developing communities' awareness of the importance of data, information and good practices on homelessness. It will be important to continue to capitalize on this increased awareness by ensuring sufficient resources are available to continue to provide tools, events and means to assist in the collection, analysis and dissemination of this information. Improved data and information will result in improved accountability, better estimates of need and identification of trends, and improved efficiency and effectiveness of interventions.

Management Response

Introduction

In 2008, an evaluation of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) was undertaken to fulfill Government of Canada accountability requirements, and to address requirements of the Treasury Board Policy on Transfer Payments for the continuation of the program terms and conditions after March 31, 2009.

The HPS evaluation assessed the relevance, design, success and cost-effectiveness of the HPS. At the time of the data collection, the HPS was in its second year of operation. Therefore, it was not expected that mid- and long-term Strategy outcomes would have been achieved at that point. As such, the evaluation focused on achievement of outputs and immediate outcomes, and exploring progress towards the achievement of mid- and long-term outcomes.

The early findings of this evaluation were considered in the decision to extend the program Terms and Conditions until March 31, 2011.

This management response provides Human Resources and Skills Development's (HRSD) response to the key evaluation findings, to indicate where policies have been modified, and to outline plans for further change.

The Homelessness Partnering Secretariat would like to thank those who participated in the evaluation of the HPS.

Key Findings

Overall, the findings of the evaluation support the continued need for, and relevance of, the HPS. Although the evaluation identified areas for improvement, the main findings were positive, including: the success of the HPS partnerships enhancement component at the community level; implementation of the management response to the National Homelessness Initiative summative evaluation; the appropriateness of the HPS approach; considerable progress on the development of tools for community planning and data development; and the likelihood of the HPS reaching expected impact on longer-term housing solutions and services.

Some specific areas identified for further improvement were: strengthening partnership with provinces and territories; addressing stringency of timeline allowed for community planning; and deepening community capacity in data development activities.

The evaluation made four recommendations for the HPS that require action on the part of program management, which are outlined below with the corresponding response.

Recommendations and Proposed Actions

#1: Seek stable, longer-term programming to allow for the development of more cost-effective strategic investment projects that target longer-term housing solutions and prevention.

Program management acknowledges this recommendation:

- In September 2008, the Federal Government announced five-year funding for housing and homelessness including the extension of the HPS until March 31, 2011.

- Of note, as the Federal Government first launched programs to support housing and homelessness in 1999, the 2008 decision will result in more than 10 years of federal funding for communities.

#2: Further expand and develop the partnership component with provinces and territories.

Program management agrees with this recommendation:

- The Department will explore the possibility of further bilateral arrangements. To this end, a provincial / territorial engagement framework was developed in December 2008. In light of the varying degrees of interest and capacity of the provinces and territories, this framework considers a continuum of options for collaboration ranging from formal bilateral agreements through Memoranda of Understanding, to enhanced dialogue.

- So far, the Homelessness Partnering Secretariat has signed agreements with Quebec and Ontario for the duration of the program.

- The Homelessness Partnering Strategy continues to maintain dialogue with those provinces and territories that do not yet have formal agreements on homelessness. Most recently, based on their renewed interest, the Homelessness Partnering Secretariat has re-engaged with several provinces with a view to developing an appropriate collaborative arrangement consistent with the particular circumstances and challenges of the individual jurisdictions.

- The engagement framework also recognizes the need for better alignment between the HPS and provincial and territorial programming with respect to data collection and sharing as a means to enhance collaboration through the identification of cross-cutting issues.

#3: Simplify the tools/templates used for community planning for smaller communities, and make them consistent with the timeframe of the Strategy.

Program management agrees with this recommendation:

- To reduce the administrative burden on smaller and mid-size communities, the Homelessness Partnering Secretariat has taken a number of actions to simplify the community planning process for the HPS in 2009-2011:

   o   Existing approved community plans have been extended to four years;

o A streamlined process has been put in place to update community priorities, if needed; and

o The Homelessness Partnering Secretariat will conduct an internal assessment of the effectiveness of community plans and progress against community priorities as opposed to having the communities conduct the assessments themselves. The planned completion date for the internal assessment is March 2010.

- The Homelessness Partnering Secretariat is preparing a toolkit on governance for the Community Advisory Boards (CABs), which will include advice and guidance on such issues as roles and responsibilities and conflict of interest. The outline of the toolkit will be completed in the summer of 2009. The toolkit itself is expected to be completed in 2010.

#4: Continue to build upon and expand communities' awareness of the importance of data, information and good practices on homelessness.

Program management agrees with this recommendation:

- Priorities for the research agenda in 2009-2011 will be data development, the reinforcement of information networks, and the sharing of good practices to expand community awareness and implementation of these practices.

- A key component of the research agenda will be to develop research partnerships with other levels of government, and to explore international good practices for their use in communities across Canada.

- A Call for Proposals to solicit applications for research on data development and good practices is planned for launch in summer 2009.

- The Homelessness Partnering Strategy will continue to assist communities in the development of up-to-date tools and practices to obtain better baseline data on the homeless population.

- Improvements to the Results Reporting data collection tool for regionally-delivered projects were completed and rolled out to Regional staff at a training session in March 2009. Further training for Regional staff and project sponsors will be provided in 2009-2010 using virtual training tools.

- The use of the Results Reporting data will be re-assessed in late 2009-2010, with the aim of further improving the quality of data and lessening the burden on service providers.

- In addition, the Homelessness Partnering Secretariat will continue to host teleforums for stakeholders to share good practices and disseminate knowledge which will enable the effective implementation of programs and services benefiting the homeless population.

Future Application of HPS Evaluation Recommendations

The conclusions of the evaluation provide positive findings on the HPS, as well as areas for improvement. The recommendations that have emerged from this evaluation report provide senior management with advice that will result in change and will continue to inform funding priorities, program development, implementation and management for the program.

1. Introduction

This report presents the findings from the evaluation of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS). The evaluation was conducted during the summer and fall of 2008.

1.1 Background to the evaluation

The main goal of this evaluation was to assess the relevance, design, success and cost-effectiveness of the HPS. At the time of the data collection, the HPS was in its second year of operation. Therefore, it was not expected that mid- and longer-term Strategy outcomes would have been achieved at that point. As such, the evaluation focused on achievement of outputs and immediate outcomes, and exploring progress towards the achievement of mid- and longer-term outcomes. Given the anticipated timing for availability of results information from the HPS projects not coinciding with the timing of the evaluation, results information from some of the NHI Phase 2 projects was collected as a proxy for likely achievements of HPS projects with similar objectives and characteristics.

1.2 Overview of the HPS

The HPS was announced on December 19, 2006.[1] Announced as a two-year strategy funded at $134.8 million per year, the HPS has three main objectives: improve partnerships; enhance sustainability; and contribute to tangible results for the homeless population. The HPS addressed these three objectives through three components: Homelessness Partnership Initiative (HPI); Homelessness Accountability Network (HAN); and Surplus Federal Real Property for Homelessness Initiative (SFRPHI). Specific activities, outputs and outcomes are presented in the HPS Logic Model contained in Appendix A.

Homelessness Partnership Initiative (HPI): The largest component of the HPS, the HPI, is considered the cornerstone of the HPS. It has adopted the "housing-first" approach which recognizes that the first step to address homelessness issues is to provide individuals with transitional and supportive housing. Afterwards, other supports can be implemented as required. The HPI has four components:

- **HPI – Designated Communities:** This includes 61 communities that had been identified under the NHI as having significant problems with homelessness. Under this component, these communities are able to access multi-year funding that must be matched from other sources. Each Designated Community, which operates through a Community Advisory Board (CAB) composed of homelessness stakeholders in the community, produces a Community Plan in order to access funding, and assesses its progress at the end of the funding period through a Community Plan Assessment.

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[1] The HPS Website: http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/homelessness/index.shtml

- **HPI – Aboriginal Communities:** Under this component, partnerships with Aboriginal communities and their organizations in communities with a substantial Aboriginal population (in either Designated or Outreach Communities) are developed to ensure that services meet the acute and unique needs of off-reserve homeless Aboriginal people. Since the inception of the NHI and through the HPS, some Aboriginal Communities have voluntarily adopted the usage of an Aboriginal Community or Multi-Community Advisory Board composed of Aboriginal homelessness stakeholders in the community. Some have also voluntarily produced a Community Plan as a means to assess community needs and plan investments strategically.

- **HPI – Outreach Communities:** Smaller cities, rural and outlying areas, including the North, are eligible for funding to support single projects to fill specific gaps in addressing homelessness.

- **HPI – Federal Horizontal Pilot Projects:** Under this component, HRSDC takes the lead to mobilize collaboration among federal departments and agencies on specific pilot projects focused on a number of issues including corrections, mental health, family violence, and immigration issues that may lead to homelessness.

Homelessness Accountability Network (HAN): HAN has two parts: the Homelessness Knowledge Development Program (HKDP); and the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS). The three main goals of HAN are to:

- Play a more pro-active role in knowledge development;

- Support the creation of sustainable national and regional networks and partnerships; and

- Enhance the community planning process and improve the ability of the Homelessness Partnering Secretariat to measure progress and to report on results at the community and national levels.

Surplus Federal Real Property for Homelessness Initiative (SFRPHI): SFRPHI makes surplus federal real properties available to community organizations, the not-for-profit sector, and other levels of government for projects to help prevent and reduce homelessness. Under the HPS, the flexibility of SFRPHI is enhanced by allowing for "land or property exchanges". Under certain conditions, community groups can exchange a federal property received under SFRPHI for another similar, or more suitable, property belonging to another level of government or public agency. The property must be used for the purpose for which it was transferred for a period of at least 15 years after transfer.

HPS Stakeholders and Beneficiaries

The key beneficiaries of projects under the HPS are homeless individuals and families and those at risk of homelessness. Stakeholders involved in the delivery of the HPS include: provincial and territorial governments; municipalities; other federal government departments and agencies; community service providers; and private and not-for-profit organizations. Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) and Canada

Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) are involved in the management and delivery of SFRPHI under the HPS.

HPS Resources

The allocated resources for the HPS across the two-year timeframe of the Strategy are presented in the table below:

Table 1.1 HPS Resources			
Type of Funding	**FY 2007-2008 $(000's)**	**FY 2008-2009 $(000's)**	**Total $(000's)**
Operations and Salary	25,500	25,500	51,000
Grants and Contributions	109,300	109,300	218,600
Total Funds	134,800	134,800	269,600

1.3   Evaluation Objectives, Issues and Questions

The HPS evaluation had three specific objectives:

- Assess the appropriateness of the approach taken by the HPS to contribute to the prevention and reduction of homelessness in Canada;

- Assess the likelihood of the HPS reaching its expected impact based on the results of NHI projects that had a focus on transitional, supportive and longer-term housing solutions and services; and

- Assess the success of the partnerships enhancement component of the HPS.

Based on the evaluation objectives and broad issue areas (relevance, design, success, and cost effectiveness), 12 specific evaluation questions were developed, as illustrated in Table 1.2 below. A matrix of evaluation issues by methods is presented in Appendix B.

Table 1.2
Evaluation Questions

Issues and Questions	
Issue:	**Relevance**
1.1	Is there still a demonstrated need for support to prevent and reduce homelessness?
Issue:	**Design and Delivery**
2.1	To what extent is the HPS focus an effective way to meet needs?
2.2	To what extent are planned outputs produced by the HPS?
Issue:	**Success**
3.1	*Strategic Investments*
3.1.1	Has the HPS contributed to the development of longer-term housing solutions, supports and prevention services?
3.1.2	To what extent has the HPS contributed to homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless being provided longer-term housing solutions, shelter and support and prevention services?
3.2	*Community Development and Partnerships*
3.2.1	Has the HPS contributed to enhancing partnerships within communities?
3.2.2	To what extent has the HPS contributed to improved alignment of investments with Provinces and Territories?
3.2.3	To what extent have the HPS, and the horizontal pilot projects in particular, contributed to increased federal, horizontal collaboration?
3.2.4	To what extent has the HPS contributed to enhancing strategic engagement and improving coordination and delivery of services among partners?
3.3	*Knowledge*
3.3.1	To what extent has access to and use of good practices and information improved as a result of the HPS?
Issue:	**Other issues**
4.1	Are there alternative ways to plan and allocate funding that would be more cost-effective approaches to achieve HPS outcomes?
4.2	What progress has been made on the implementation of the management response to the NHI summative evaluation?

2. Evaluation Methods

2.1 Overview of methods

The design of the evaluation was structured to collect information on each of the evaluation issues using multiple lines of evidence. Where possible, there was a balance between quantitative and qualitative methods, with qualitative methods providing further description and explanation for the quantitative information. Both primary and secondary data sources were used for the evaluation.

2.2 Document review

The evaluation team reviewed 35 documents that provided information for various evaluation questions. The relevant documents were within four broad categories:

- **Strategy and policy documents** – RMAF, summary reporting of performance, funding guidelines, etc.;

- **Documents from other federal departments and agencies** – documents that are related to homelessness issues being addressed by the HPS;

- **Bilateral agreements** – information about and examples of the agreements signed between P/Ts and federal government; and

- **Reports by national organizations** – reports produced by Statistics Canada or other national organizations on topics related to issues addressed by the HPS.

2.3 Administrative data and file review

There were three main sources of administrative data for review:

- **Homelessness Electronic Reporting and Information Network (HERIN)** – This database maintained by the HP Secretariat includes data related to the projects funded under all components of the HPI and the Homelessness Knowledge Development Program (HKDP), including project-specific output and results data. Common System for Grants and Contributions (CSGC) fields are also imported to HERIN. This database was used to build a profile of the Strategy through its funded projects and assess the HPS' progress in shifting its focus. In large part, the data available in this database are of a quantitative nature. HERIN was also used to develop the sample strategy for the survey of representatives of funded projects.

- **Community Planning Process (CPP)** – The CPP data are contained in multiple narrative-based files which conform to the templates used for the Community Plans (CPs) and Community Plan Assessments (CPAs). They provide information regarding

community needs, priorities, partnerships and estimated levels of homelessness. The evaluation team reviewed the planning and assessment documents as well as the CP overviews created by the HP Secretariat analysis team to assist in assembling evidence for each of the relevant evaluation indicators.

- **Integrated Management Information System (IMIS)** – This data source was developed to collect data related to projects funded under the NHI. This database was deemed obsolete for HPS purposes and replaced by HERIN. To the extent possible, IMIS was examined to: build a profile of NHI projects; assess the success of selected NHI projects; and develop a list from which projects/communities for the case studies were selected.

2.4 Key informant interviews

Key informant interviews were conducted with 70 representatives. The breakdown of interviews by category of interviewee was as follows:

- **Internal stakeholders (27 interviews)** – These interviews were primarily with HP Secretariat staff and regional staff located across the country.

- **Representatives from other federal departments and agencies (12 interviews)** – These included representatives from Justice Canada, Public Works and Government Services Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Public Health Agency of Canada, Canadian Heritage, and Correctional Services Canada.

- **Representatives of provinces and territories (15 interviews)** – The HPS partnering approach includes provinces and territories (P/Ts). As such, provincial and territorial ministry-level representatives (with the exception of Québec[2]) were interviewed.

- **Representatives of external stakeholder organizations (9 interviews)** – Representatives from national organizations that have a stake in issues related to homelessness were interviewed. These included national organizations involved with advocacy and/or public awareness, as well as national umbrella associations for community organizations.

- **Experts (7 interviews)** – Interviews with experts (some of whom had received HPS funding) were also conducted. These included researchers at Canadian universities and research institutes working on homelessness issues including health, social inclusion, interventions with youth, and community factors.

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[2] The HPS agreement signed between Canada and Québec in January 2008 stipulates that the Government of Québec is responsible for identifying what data will be made available for HPS evaluation purpose and as such as decided that representatives from the Government of Québec would not participate in this evaluation (key informant interviews, survey and case studies).

2.5 Case studies

Case studies were conducted with 15 communities that received HPI funding. The selection of case studies focused on those communities that had significant investments under the NHI in longer-term housing projects (transitional and supportive housing), as well as communities that had demonstrated unique approaches or experiences towards partnering under the HPS. Other criteria included community size, regional distribution and Aboriginal populations. The approach to implementing the case studies involved two main components: administrative data review; and key informant interviews. In total, 108 key informant interviews were conducted with community representatives, community partners, and project representatives across the 15 communities.

2.6 Survey of community and project representatives

A phone survey of representatives of Community Advisory Boards (CABs) and representatives of funded projects was conducted. The sampling strategy for the community representatives involved selecting CAB chairs and/or co-chairs from each Designated Community, and then randomly selecting up to four additional CAB representatives per community. A replacement strategy was implemented whereby randomly selected names were replaced with alternates if the originally selected individual was unavailable. In addition, individuals who could potentially be interviewed for the case studies were removed from the sample frame. The sample of project representatives was composed of all names available. Interviews were completed with 132 CAB members (response rate of 36%), and with 272 HPS project representatives (response rate of 48%). In 97% of the cases, information from the survey of project representatives was linked to the project information contained in the HERIN database with the permission of respondents.

2.7 Challenges and limitations

The main challenges and limitations that the evaluation encountered are related to the timing of the evaluation in relation to the implementation of the HPS. As per the accountability requirements attached with the Strategy's renewal process, the evaluation was implemented early in the second year of the HPS. However, limited time had elapsed to sufficiently allow the HPS to collect results data and demonstrate success. Most of the HPS activities were still undergoing implementation at the time of the evaluation. As a result, the evaluation focused on understanding the likelihood of success given the very early progress made with respect to key activities.

Challenges were experienced with the quality and availability of administrative data, which also had an impact on the survey. In some cases these challenges were due to the information being collected for administrative purposes, while the evaluation was attempting to make use of the data for methods (e.g., surveys) which were not the original intent of the administrative data collection. The main challenges encountered included:

- Only a proportion of the administrative data expected to be used for the HPS evaluation was available for analysis. Expected results project templates were to be provided to the HP Secretariat within a window of 30-45 days (depending on the type of delivery model) after the contribution agreement was signed. As projects were approved and contribution agreements signed, the expected results templates were being received and processed. At the time the data were extracted for analysis for the evaluation, approximately two-thirds of the projects had some expected results information available. As anticipated, given the timing of the evaluation, there were no actual project results administrative data available for the evaluation.

- The evaluation benefited from a list of CAB representatives derived from a listing of CAB members reported through the community plans. The challenges with the lists were that they had not been compiled specifically for evaluation or surveying purposes, and as a result, approximately 20% of the information provided in these lists was dated or not correct. As well, the lists for some communities were not complete; there were some missing names and/or missing contact information. This may have contributed to biases in the survey results, although the direction and extent of these biases are not known.

- Another challenge in using the administrative data for evaluation purposes was that the contact information for many representatives of funded organizations implementing the projects developed within the Community Entity (CE) delivery model was not collected. For these projects, the CE contact had been collected in the administrative data. As a result, the evaluation team was required to implement a directory search for the organization, and then, if a number could be found, attempt to find the person most familiar with the HPS project at the organization-level.

- The response rates for both the survey of CAB members and the survey of project representatives would be considered in the low-medium range for surveys of this type. For the survey of CAB members, the response rate may have resulted in biases in the survey data; however, it is not possible to determine the extent or direction of these biases. It is likely that a bias towards smaller communities' perspectives was introduced as a consequence of CAB members in larger communities being excluded from the survey frame as they were also being interviewed as key informants in the case studies. For the survey of project representatives, there was sufficient survey frame information available to weight the data on key variables (e.g., region, project size) which likely has reduced some of the potential biases due to non-response. No tests of statistical significance were performed for either survey.

One potential limitation with the evaluation is that most of the respondent groups consulted for the evaluation have some vested interest in the HPS at various levels. Some respondents are direct recipients of HPS funding (e.g., community organizations, municipalities), while others are key program stakeholders (e.g, community representatives, P/T representatives). This may introduce some level of bias into the information and perspectives provided to the evaluation team. The overall direction of this bias is likely towards a more positive reflection of results for the HPS.

2.8　Interpretation of qualitative findings

Throughout the text of this section, findings from qualitative methods (e.g., interviews, case studies) are presented using the following "scale" which corresponds to the proportion of respondents that held similar views:

- "All/almost all" – findings reflect the views and opinions of 90% or more of the group;

- "Large majority" – findings reflect the views and opinions of at least 75% but less than 90% of the group;

- "Majority/most" – findings reflect the views and opinions of at least 50% but less than 75% of the group;

- "Some" – findings reflect the views and opinions of at least 25% but less than 50% of the group; and

- "A few" – findings reflect the views and opinions of at least two respondents but less than 25% of the group.

As is noted throughout the report, in some cases there have been different perspectives noted from various groups as to the level of potential and/or achieved results for the HPS. In general, the evaluation found that those representatives of organizations and communities most directly involved with implementation of the HPS projects were more likely to identify larger, more positive results. In contrast, those who were more distant from the direct implementation of projects tended to report smaller, less positive results. In many cases, it appeared that those groups that were more positive tended to be focusing on outputs from the HPS, while those that were more critical tended to be focused on outcomes and/or overall impacts of the HPS. These differences have been noted throughout the report and interpreted, where possible, according to the specific issue area being addressed.

3. HPS Relevance: Need for support to prevent and reduce homelessness

Currently, there are no reliable national-level data available on the number of homeless individuals and families in Canada. As a result, it is challenging to estimate the actual trends and rates of homelessness on a national level. According to data collected at local levels, homelessness in many communities is increasing. Many services and facilities are experiencing increased demand, and are operating at or above capacity.

The document review illustrated that there are no reliable estimates of the actual number of individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness or are at-risk of homelessness. Development of accurate, reliable estimates of rates of homelessness continues to be extremely challenging methodologically. At the local level, efforts have been made at counting and estimating the prevalence and incidence of various types of homelessness. Through key informant interviews, document review, case studies, and a review of administrative data, the evaluation found that in many communities, the number of people homeless or at-risk of homelessness is increasing. This has been demonstrated through repeated annual counts in some communities, documented increased demands for services from community agencies, and emergency shelters that are filled to capacity many nights of the year. In cities where systematic counts have been implemented over the past few years, many are seeing increases of approximately 20% in the number of homeless individuals and families over the past two to three years. For example, counts conducted in 2008 of homeless individuals and families in Vancouver found an increase of 19% in absolute homeless people over counts conducted in 2005.[3] Calgary also experienced similar growth in absolute homeless people with an approximate 18% increase between the 2006 and 2008 counts.[4] During a similar period, Edmonton experienced an 18% overall increase in homeless people, with a 5% increase in absolute homeless individuals, and a 44% increase in sheltered homeless people.[5]

There are indications that, while the proportion of those in Canada who may be *at-risk* of homelessness has not changed substantially, a rise in total numbers has occurred. Statistics Canada defines those who are in *core housing need* according to three dimensions: *affordability* (the ability of households to spend less than 30% of before tax income on shelter); *adequacy* (dwellings reported by their occupants as not needing any major physical repairs); and *suitability* (level of overcrowding). Recent Statistics Canada reports concluded that the proportion of Canadians who had a shelter-cost-to-income ratio (STIR) of 30% or higher rose marginally to 24.9% in 2006 from 24.1% in 2001. Although the proportion has remained relatively constant, given the overall increase in population,

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[3] Metro Vancouver Homeless Count Figures 2008 - Preliminary Numbers April 8, 2008
    http://www.metrovancouver.org/planning/homelessness/ResourcesPage/2008HomelessCountPreliminaryFS-April.pdf
[4] *Biennial count of Homeless Persons in Calgary: 2008 May 14*
    http://www.calgaryvitalsigns.ca/documents/2008_count_full_report.pdf
[5] *Homeward Trust Edmonton***:** http://www.homewardtrust.ca/homeless-counts

the total number of individuals with STIR of 30% or higher has increased over the same time period.

The supply of transitional and supportive housing is not meeting the demand.

Many communities are struggling with their attempts to meet demands for transitional and supportive housing. Case studies, and the review of community plans, indicate that the supply of this type of housing is not meeting demands as demonstrated by waiting lists for longer-term housing facilities that are often more than two to three times the capacity of a facility. Findings from the document review and from most respondents in case studies and interviews noted that transitional and supportive housing is one of the fundamental pieces to have in place in order for a "housing-first" approach to be successful. As communities move towards and adopt housing-first approaches, it was reported that the demand and need for transitional and supportive housing will continue to increase.

As homelessness increasingly affects diverse populations, qualitative data suggests that there is a need for diverse services and supports to successfully address homelessness issues.

According to the various data sources for the evaluation (case studies, key informant interviews, survey), the trend towards increased levels of homelessness is reaching across different types of homelessness and various populations. Different types of homelessness include people who are living on the street, those requiring emergency shelter services, and those individuals and families who require supportive housing. These people come from diverse populations such as youth, new Canadians, people dealing with chronic mental health issues, and those dealing with addictions. The different types of homelessness and the diverse populations result in different requirements for services and supports such as intensive case management, addiction services, literacy training, interpretive services, parenting skills, health support, legal services, budgeting, or social skills.

Communities face diverse pressing needs when addressing homelessness.

Community representatives, project proponents, and key informants outlined numerous needs that are the current challenges communities are facing when addressing homelessness issues. Although most of these needs fall within the mandate of the HPS, one is clearly outside of the Strategy's mandate (i.e., the lack of affordable housing).

The mandate of the HPS is to meet the needs within each community along with other partners. As a partnering strategy, the HPS was designed to assist and contribute to meeting various needs through a partnership structure. The most frequently identified needs during the evaluation included the following:

Within HPS mandate

- *Prevention of homelessness* – Evaluation respondents[6] reported that there is a strong need for services and supports that prevent homelessness. This includes needs for direct programming (e.g., rent banks, employability skills), as well as an examination of larger, more systemic issues such as poverty, and structure of social services.

- *Transitional housing and services* – Transitional housing and services were viewed by respondents in the evaluation as an essential component in ensuring that people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness are connected to the services and supports required in order to stabilize housing.

- *Supportive housing and services* – Among respondents, there is the understanding that some people will require supports of various types for extended periods of time, if not their whole lives. Shortages of well-funded supportive housing were frequently identified during the evaluation.

- *Support systems* – Many key informants and case study respondents explained that in order to successfully address homelessness, a strong support system is needed to complement capital investments in buildings and structures. The support systems require sufficient levels of funding combined with adequate timelines, as many of the supports will be of a long-term nature.

- *Quality data on homelessness* – Evaluation respondents reported that improvement in the quality of data available on homelessness is needed. It was noted that many communities are finding it challenging to be able to report on overall or specific trends, with the exception of some communities that have invested in conducting counts or various types of data collection. In many cases, communities are experiencing increased demands for many services; however, the data are not being collected in systematic ways, so the reliance on anecdotal or partial information remains strong. In addition, some key informants reported that better information is needed on the impacts of various interventions to address homelessness among particular groups (e.g., youth, people with mental health issues).

Outside of HPS Mandate

- *Affordable housing* – Although they understand that this area is not within the mandate of the HPS, many evaluation respondents reported that the lack of affordable housing in many communities has a major impact on the effectiveness of homelessness programming.

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[6] The term "*respondents*" is used to represent evaluation respondents across various methods including case studies, surveys, and key informants.

The HPS is viewed as having an appropriate focus to address many of the most pressing needs in communities with respect to homelessness issues.

In comparison with the NHI (which initially tended to focus more on emergency services), the HPS was designed to place increased focus on prevention measures, transitional and supportive housing, enhanced partnering, and knowledge dissemination. Overall, the evaluation found that there was considerable agreement that the HPS has an appropriate focus to meet many of the needs identified by communities.

According to key informant interviews, the HPS focus on prevention measures and transitional/supportive housing is appropriate, and is a clear continuation of the evolution that had occurred under the previous two phases of the NHI. Support for the HPS focus is also found in the survey of CAB members where almost all (93%) of those surveyed reported that HPS strategic investments in transitional and supportive housing, shelters and services met some to all of community needs (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Extent to which the HPS strategic investments in transitional and supportive housing, shelters and services meet community needs	
Proportion of Needs Met	**Percent**
Does not meet any	3%
Small proportion	42%
Medium proportion	34%
Large proportion	17%
Essentially all	1%
Don't know	4%
Source: Survey of CAB members (n=132)	

Communities that developed Community Plans stated priorities within at least one of the main areas targeted by the HPS strategic investments (i.e., supportive and transitional housing, shelters, and services). The community planning process was viewed by various key informants as a significant factor in assuring that the HPS funding is used to address the areas of highest need within communities.

In key informant interviews, the most frequently cited benefits with the current HPS focus were that this focus/approach: has allowed HPS to move closer to identifying and addressing root causes of homelessness when compared to a focus only on emergency services; is more compatible with a "housing-first" model which has demonstrated success in other jurisdictions; and builds on the community capacity developed under the NHI.

Similarly, the increased focus in the HPS on partnerships was highlighted in both the case studies and key informant interviews as an important focus in addressing needs. The survey of CAB members found that almost all (94%) of those surveyed reported that the HPS focus on partnerships met some or all of their communities' needs (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2	
Extent to which the HPS focus on partnerships meet community needs	
Proportion of Needs Met	**Percent**
Does not meet any	4%
Small proportion	22%
Medium proportion	42%
Large proportion	27%
Essentially all	3%
Don't know	2%
Source: Survey of CAB members (n=132)	

With respect to knowledge dissemination, the HPS focus was viewed in key informant interviews and case studies as appropriate, particularly with respect to highlighting the importance of data and quality information in successfully addressing homelessness issues at local and broader levels. The challenges that communities face in addressing issues of knowledge development and dissemination were evident in the CAB members' survey responses. These highlighted that the HPS focus in this area was not meeting community needs to the same extent as the other areas of focus such as partnering or longer-term housing solutions. As illustrated in Table 3.3, approximately 14% of respondents reported that the HPS focus was not meeting any of the communities' needs in this area.

Table 3.3	
Extent to which the HPS focus on knowledge development and dissemination meet community needs	
Proportion of Needs Met	**Percent**
Does not meet any	14%
Small proportion	28%
Medium proportion	33%
Large proportion	17%
Essentially all	3%
Don't know	5%
Source: Survey of CAB members (n=132)	

The main challenges identified by respondents with respect to the HPS addressing needs are the short timeframe for the Strategy, and the levels of funding provided.

Although the focus of the HPS was generally supported, there are some areas of concern with respect to the perceived mismatch between the focus of the HPS and other design features such as the context within which the HPS is being implemented. Homelessness issues are identified by experts, Strategy representatives, P/T representatives and in community case studies as multifaceted and complex. The HPS is perceived by some as lacking sufficient funding and a suitable timeframe given the complexity of the issues to be addressed and the perceived levels of investments required to demonstrate impacts in this area. Some communities and P/T representatives expressed concern that the HPS is perceived as encouraging multi-year projects, while only offering relatively small, short-

term investments. There were some examples provided during the evaluation where communities and organizations reported that they had focused on those projects that could be completed within the timeframe, rather than on those projects that might have been more relevant and effective to address identified community priorities.

4. HPS Success: Enhancing partnerships and aligning investments

One main objective of the HPS is to improve partnerships. The evaluation examined the extent to which this objective has been addressed by examining anticipated related outputs and outcomes[7] at the community, P/T, and federal levels.

4.1   Within communities

4.1.1   Areas of achievement

The HPS is viewed as enhancing and strengthening partnerships within communities, often building on the progress that was previously achieved in this area under the NHI. Key factors identified in assisting with the development of partnerships included the HPI requirement for matching partner contributions, and the HPS community planning tools that emphasize partnerships.

From the case studies, most communities viewed the HPS as continuing to build on the work completed under the NHI in strengthening partnerships within communities. Those few communities that indicated that the HPS had not contributed significantly in enhancing partnerships also tended to report extensive partnerships and coordination prior to and during the implementation of the NHI. The HPS factors that were most frequently identified as contributing to the partnership development process included:

- From the case studies, it was noted that the HPS requirements for matched funding for HPI Designated Communities funding assisted in the search for and development of partnerships; and

- From the case studies and survey of community representatives, the various HPS community planning tools were viewed as beneficial in developing partnerships. For example, within the case studies it was noted that the broad consultations with community organizations for community plans were significant contributors to the partnership development process. This was confirmed in the survey of community representatives with nearly three-quarters of the respondents (73%) reporting that the community planning templates were *somewhat* or *very useful* in developing or enhancing partnerships in the community.

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[7]   Readers are asked to refer to the Program Logic Model presented in Appendix A for detailed description of specific outputs and outcomes associated with the HPS.

Available quantitative data indicate that partners' funding exceeded HPS investments for projects in communities that have adopted the Shared Delivery model.

When administrative data from individual agreements for shared delivery projects only were examined, the evaluation found that for every HPI dollar invested, there was a corresponding $1.70 of **planned investments** from partners (Table 4.1). The final amount of partner commitment may differ when projects report on their final results. It should be noted that for the HPI investments in projects under the Designated Communities component, there is the requirement of a minimum of matching investments from partners. This condition does not apply for the projects funded under the Aboriginal Communities and Outreach Communities funding components of HPI.

Table 4.1 Partner Planned Investments as Reported in Project Contribution Agreements for Shared Delivery Communities	
Total HPI funds	**$94,833,563**
Provincial and Territorial Governments	$75,002,365
Sponsor / Organization / Recipient	$22,410,659
Unions	$88,000
Other	$11,265,536
Private sector	$3,486,675
Other Federal Department or Agency	$3,825,601
Regional or Municipal Government	$9,356,674
Not-for-profit Organizations	$16,335,994
Crown Corporations	$23,092,666
Total Other Sources	**$164,864,170**
Source: HERIN Database (extracted October, 2008)	

Partner investments data collected for Shared Delivery communities projects only include such investments at the project level. Partner investments made in projects not funded by HPI in these communities is not reported.

At the community level within communities implementing HPI using the Community Entity delivery model, other partners' planned contributions exceed by far the investments made by the HPS.

The evaluation reviewed the administrative data associated with the Community Entity agreements. According to these agreements, these communities have secured planned investments/commitments from various partners to address homelessness issues in their communities. The data collected shows that planned investments of partners engaged in addressing homelessness issues channeled through the community exceed by far those engaged through the HPS. Provincial, territorial and municipal governments are clearly leading the group of other contributors (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Partner Planned Investments as Reported in 26 Community Entity Contribution Agreements	
Total HPI funds	**$97,654,876**
Provincial and Territorial Governments	$233,983,406
Sponsor / Organization / Recipient	$8,795,822
Unions	$0
Other	$11,291,975
Private sector	$0
Other Federal Department or Agency	$0
Regional or Municipal Government	$175,896,641
Not-for-profit Organizations	$849,280
Crown Corporations	$2,179,616
Total Other Sources	**$432,996,740**
Source: HERIN Database (extracted October, 2008)	

Community representatives perceive that the HPS is making some contribution to improving the coordination and delivery of services in communities.

Most communities during the case studies indicated that the HPS had contributed to some extent to improving the coordination of services and supports in their communities. For the survey of CAB representatives, over one-half (59%) reported that the HPS investments would make a *medium* to *very large* contribution to the coordination and alignment of the continuum of housing and supports in their communities (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 Contribution of the HPS to the coordination and alignment of the continuum of housing and supports	
Proportion of Needs Met	**Percent**
No contribution	3%
Very small	13%
Small	14%
Medium	36%
Large	17%
Very large	6%
Don't know	10%
Source: Survey of CAB members (n=132)	

Examples of where key informants and case studies assessed that coordination and alignment were improving included:

- The formation of partnerships between and among service providers to implement projects that provide "wrap-around services";
- Increased information exchange;
- Increased planning and strategizing on where to make investments; and

- Increased community-level involvement of representatives from P/T departments, and other federal government departments and agencies as they engage in community planning activities.

4.1.2 Areas of challenge

P/T representatives perceived that challenges still exist at the community level on the coordination of services with the P/Ts.

Interviews with P/T ministry-level representatives found that they tended to be neutral or view the involvement of the HPS as having negative impacts on coordination of services at the local level. Although there was increased involvement of some P/Ts at the local level attributed to the community planning activities under the NHI and the HPS, a few P/Ts reported that this brought challenges with their relations with local communities. They reported that, in some cases, the HPS-sponsored community-level planning had not necessarily taken into account the P/Ts' priorities and needs. This then contributed to conflicting situations between these communities, the P/Ts and the federal government. The conflicting priorities and needs were highlighted in a few of the case studies where communities reported challenges in attempting to address various partners' requirements when funding projects.

4.2 With provincial and territorial governments

4.2.1 Areas of achievement

The HPS has made progress in the development of bilateral agreements with P/Ts, with two agreements signed and discussions started with all other P/Ts.

One policy thrust of the HPS was to explore with P/Ts ways to formalize partnerships to address homelessness issues. With respect to the development of bilateral agreements with P/Ts, the majority of representatives from the P/Ts, the HP Secretariat, and regional representatives indicated that under the HPS, at least initially, there has been some progress; albeit this progress has recently slowed given that the two-year timeframe was coming to a close. Discussions have been started with all P/Ts. To date, two bilateral agreements have been established between P/Ts and the Government of Canada. One is with the Province of Québec and outlines an agreement on how the HPS will be implemented. The second is a data sharing agreement that has been signed with the Province of Ontario.

Discussions and efforts toward developing agreements have resulted in: better mutual understanding of priorities and constraints of the P/Ts and of the federal government; and improved alignment of investments to address homelessness issues.

Most federal and P/T key informants recognized that although the efforts toward developing agreements had not necessarily resulted in formal agreements between the federal government and P/Ts, the discussions had resulted in a better understanding of

each jurisdiction's priorities and areas of investment. Many representatives of P/Ts that had not signed formal agreements indicated that there were informal agreements and collaborative working relationships at the local and/or regional levels to coordinate investments, and increased involvement of the P/Ts at the local levels in community planning activities. According to the majority of federal key informants at the regional level and P/T representatives, these informal arrangements have contributed to improved alignment of investments at the local level.

4.2.2 Areas of challenge

P/T representatives dissatisfied with the HPS partnering discussions.

Many P/T representatives in key informant interviews reported that they are dissatisfied with the partnering discussions held under the HPS either because the discussions did not lead to an agreement despite a positive start, or because the P/T priorities, expectations and needs were not matched by the federal offer. In some cases, the P/T representatives' expectations were that the HPS discussions would include broader affordable housing issues and links with other programs and housing policy.

Both P/T and federal representatives outlined multiple challenges in partnering with the federal government to address homelessness issues.

Challenges identified by P/Ts in partnering with the federal government included:

- The perceived lack of sustainability or commitment to addressing homelessness issues in a meaningful way with a two-year timeframe for the Strategy;

- Differences in understanding and definitions of *partnership*;

- The lack of consultation with P/Ts prior to the announcement of the HPS;

- The perception that the federal government is addressing homelessness as a *stand-alone* issue rather than as part of a continuum of issues, plans and investments – some P/Ts expressed disappointment that the discussions did not include more general housing issues; however, it should be noted that these are not within the mandated area for discussions led by the HPS;

- Differences in priorities with respect to addressing homelessness issues; and

- The lack of financial incentives to sign agreements to share homelessness responsibilities.

Representatives from the federal government reported that the main challenge encountered with partnering with P/Ts was the limited timeframe for the Strategy, and the extent to which discussions could be arranged, priorities identified across jurisdictions, and agreements negotiated, signed and implemented within a two-year period. The second main challenge identified was that some of the issues of higher priority for the P/Ts were outside of the mandate of the HPS (e.g., affordable housing).

4.3   With other federal departments and agencies

4.3.1   Areas of achievement

The horizontal pilot projects are contributing to increased federal horizontal collaboration on addressing homelessness issues.

Overall, key informants were very positive with respect to the progress made under the HPS in developing and establishing the horizontal pilot projects through the engagement and partnering between and among departments and agencies. Given the nature of these projects, there was agreement that it was too early to comment on the actual project results at this early stage in their development, with most results expected towards the end of the Strategy.   Key informants generally agreed that the pilot projects have contributed significantly to an increase in federal horizontal collaboration on homelessness issues. The horizontal pilot projects were viewed as contributing to a better understanding of each other's departmental/agency priorities, as well as a greater awareness of homelessness issues and how they may be related to various departments/agencies' mandates.

The HP Secretariat staff were identified as key to the success of the horizontal pilot projects.

Key informants from the various federal departments and agencies consistently identified that the members of the HP Secretariat staff were the key success factor in ensuring that successful collaboration is occurring.   The HP Secretariat staff was highlighted as contributing to the success of the horizontal pilot projects through their commitment, professionalism and knowledge of homelessness issues.

4.3.2   Areas of challenge

There have been a few challenges in implementing the horizontal pilot projects, but these have been satisfactorily addressed.

Key informants identified a few challenges in designing and implementing the horizontal pilot projects, but generally noted that these have been addressed in a satisfactory manner at this point. The identified challenges to increased federal, horizontal collaboration included:

- The need to understand the different priorities among departments and agencies;

- The development of different types of collaboration across departments and agencies; and

- Meeting the administrative challenges that result from very different processes across departments and agencies.

5. HPS Success: Developing longer-term housing solutions, shelter, support and prevention services

5.1 Overview of investments

The administrative data review examined 826 HPI projects across three types of funding components (Designated, Aboriginal and Outreach Communities) for which strategic activity areas had been identified in their expected results information. It should be noted that an individual project could be coded as contributing to more than one strategic activity area, and proportions of project funding were allocated accordingly. As illustrated in Table 5.1, 40% of investments were coded in the area of capital investments. Of these, 85% of investments are in transitional and/or supportive housing or non-emergency, non-residential facilities. Nearly one-third (31%) of investments were in support services, with over two-thirds of these addressing areas other than "urgent need", implying a longer-term focus. Approximately one-fifth of investments (22%) were coded in activity areas of prevention services. A small proportion of investments (7%) were coded as contributing to the improvement of community services and service delivery networks with the majority of this funding going towards community development.

Table 5.1 Allocation of HPI Funding to Strategic Activity Areas				
Strategic Activity Areas	**Designated Communities**	**Aboriginal Communities**	**Outreach Communities**	**Total**
Number of Projects	652	106	68	826
Total Investments	*$100,613,794 (100%)*	*$13,037,667 (100%)*	*$3,868,778 (100%)*	*$117,520,239 (100%)*
Capital Investments	*$41,199,325 (41%)*	*$4,587,848 (35%)*	*$1,362,532 (35%)*	*$47,149,705 (40%)*
Emergency shelter facilities	$3,359,372	$983,913	$101,628	$4,444,913
Transitional housing facilities [LT]	$19,392,667	$1,791,403	$566,990	$21,751,060
Supportive housing facilities [LT]	$12,809,136	$879,911	$256,306	$13,945,353
Urgent need support service facilities (non-residential)	$2,377,860	$104,097	$345,094	$2,827,051
Other support service facilities (non-residential)[LT]	$3,260,290	$828,524	$92,514	$4,181,328
Prevention services [LT]	*$22,376,644 (22%)*	*$2,899,643 (22%)*	*$737,922 (19%)*	*$26,014,209 (22%)*
Support services	*$30,096,920 (30%)*	*$4,900,538 (38%)*	*$1,018,815 (26%)*	*$36,016,273 (31%)*
Urgent needs support services	$8,375,574	$2,412,428	$404,584	$11,192,586
Other support services [LT]	$21,721,346	$2,488,110	$614,231	$24,823,687
Improvement of community services and service delivery networks	*$6,940,905 (7%)*	*$649,638 (5%)*	*$749,509 (19%)*	*$8,340,052 (7%)*
Community development	$3,273,071	$360,341	$580,487	$4,213,899
Knowledge building and communications	$2,398,180	$189,921	$117,655	$2,705,756
Organizational development	$1,269,654	$99,376	$51,367	$1,420,397
Source: HERIN Database (extracted October, 2008)				
[LT:] Categorized as longer-term housing and related services				

Overall, based on the definitions and categorization used by the HPS, $90,715,637 (77%) of the HPI funding is for longer-term housing and related services, while $26,804,602 (23%) of the funding was for emergency shelter facilities/services and the improvement of community services and service delivery networks.

5.2 Areas of achievement

The HPS investments are expected to produce tangible housing, supports and services with a longer-term focus for individuals experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness.

According to the administrative data review, it is expected that projects will provide housing and assistance to individuals and families experiencing different types of homelessness (e.g., people living on the street, hidden homeless) or at risk of homelessness,

and provide services of both a preventive and supportive nature. The data received from project representatives at the time of the evaluation is as follows:[8]

- 21,000 people who are homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless are expected to receive support to access living conditions and social roles that will support their housing stability;

- 11,000 homeless individuals are expected to be provided with housing; and

- 19,000 people at-risk of homelessness will receive housing loss prevention services from HPS projects.

There were many examples provided by key informants and case studies of where the HPS contributed to results in the area of longer-term housing solutions, including: supportive housing projects in various communities; the shift in focus of some CABs to longer-term housing projects; SFRPHI projects in small communities; and better use of existing structures as a result of lessons already learned from horizontal pilot projects, despite the early stage of their implementation. In terms of prevention services, examples where contributions were being made were primarily in the area of youth homelessness.

The extent to which the HPS was viewed as likely to contribute to the development of longer-term housing solutions and supports, or prevention services, varied with the type of respondent. Those who were closest to individual projects (i.e., project representatives) tended to view the likely contributions as larger, while those representing broader perspectives (i.e., key informants) tended to view the contributions as smaller.

A large proportion of HPS project representatives surveyed reported that their projects are likely to make a *medium* to *very large* contribution to the development of prevention services (83%) and longer-term housing solutions and supports (76%) in their communities. At a slightly broader level, but still focused on the local level, the majority of surveyed CAB members indicated that the investments would make *medium* to *very large* contributions to the development of longer-term housing solutions and supports (59%) and homelessness prevention services (56%) in their communities.

Overall, key informants assessed the HPS as making a *small* to *moderate* contribution to the development of longer-term housing solutions, supports and prevention services. P/T representatives did not assess the contribution at the same level as the other respondents (external stakeholders, experts, federal government representatives), overall assessing the level of contribution as *none* to *small*. The trend across key informant groups was to identify relatively larger contributions in the area of longer-term housing solutions, with smaller contributions in the area of prevention services.

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[8] These data are presented with the caveat that not all data were available at the time of the evaluation with approximately 30% of project results templates not yet provided to the HP Secretariat. As a result, these numbers are likely an underestimate.

The HPS investments are perceived by smaller communities as making larger contributions to providing people with acceptable housing solutions when compared with larger communities.

Through the case studies, communities are indicating a strong likelihood that the HPS will contribute to people being provided with acceptable housing solutions. The extent to which this is likely to occur varies according to community size, with smaller communities indicating that the HPS will likely contribute to a larger extent when compared with larger communities. This was confirmed through the survey responses of CAB representatives with over three-quarters (76%) of respondents from the smaller communities indicating a *medium* to *very large* contribution, compared with under two-thirds (64%) of respondents from larger communities.

Despite early stages of implementation of their projects, community and project representatives are confident that expected results from investments in longer-term solutions will be achieved in program-defined result areas.

CAB members surveyed reported being relatively confident that strategic investments in supportive and transitional housing and related services would achieve the results that were originally predicted for these investments. According to the administrative data review, some of the expected results of investments in this area include placing homeless people in housing, providing housing loss prevention services, and providing services that assist people with housing stability. Over two-thirds (69%) of CAB members indicated that projects in the areas of transitional and supportive housing and services were likely to achieve originally predicted results. Slightly over one-half (52%) of CAB members indicated that projects in the areas of prevention measures were likely to achieve originally predicted results. Nearly three-quarters (74%) of CAB members indicated that projects in the areas of community services and service delivery networks were likely to achieve originally predicted results. Almost all HPS project representatives surveyed (96%) reported that their projects are likely to achieve anticipated results or outcomes. A small proportion of projects (16%) reported delays, with delays more likely to occur in smaller communities and with large projects (over $250K), most of which are renovation or building projects.

The examination of results from NHI projects with a longer-term housing focus demonstrates that positive outcomes can be expected with HPS investments in similar projects.

Using NHI longer-term housing results as a predictor of HPS results for similar projects, findings from the case studies indicate there is further support for the conclusion that the HPS will contribute to providing homeless individuals and families with acceptable housing solutions. The results obtained from the NHI projects reviewed during the case studies are very positive and indicate that the projects for the most part have met or exceeded original expectations, and are relevant given their continued high occupancy rates and extensive waiting lists. In addition to the achievement of tangible results such as development of housing units, the NHI projects reviewed in the case studies demonstrated results such as achievement of housing stability, improved health outcomes for residents, and improved income stability among residents.

HPS has contributed to providing a number of acceptable housing solutions in communities.

Key informants were asked to assess the extent to which the HPS has contributed to providing acceptable housing solutions. Among those who indicated that the contribution had been *moderate* to *large*, respondents tended to emphasize the **quality** of housing solutions provided. Those who tended to view the contributions as smaller, tended to emphasize the **quantity** of housing solutions in relation to the extent of need within communities.

As with other judgements of contributions, those with broader perspectives tended to view the contributions as smaller when compared with those more closely associated with specific projects. CAB members surveyed tended to be more cautious compared with HPS project representatives when assessing the extent to which HPS investments would contribute to the provision of acceptable housing solutions for homeless people and those at-risk of becoming homeless. The minority of CAB members (45%) reported that the HPS investments would make a *medium* to *very large* contribution, while over two-thirds of HPS project representatives (69%) indicated that their projects are likely to make these same sized contributions.

Key success factors in achieving results in longer-term housing solutions are aligned with the main program foci of the HPS.

The three main factors identified as contributing to success in this area under the HPS were: the increased emphasis on partnerships; the opportunities to build on community capacity developed under the NHI; and better knowledge of community needs and priorities. This last factor of success allowed communities in turn to identify gaps in the area of longer-term housing solutions, and thus to be more strategic in defining and allocating the types of investments required to meet these needs.

The shift in focus to longer-term housing solutions has slowed HPS investments in emergency shelters and services.

According to the key informants, there was agreement that investments in emergency shelters and services experienced significant progress under the NHI. When asked to rate the progress in this area under the HPS, there was less agreement among key informants. Approximately one-half of key informants reported that the rate of progress had decreased with less of a need for emergency shelters and services in some communities, and more of a concerted shift towards supportive and transitional housing projects. This finding is in keeping with the HPS focus of increased investments in longer-term housing solutions and prevention when compared with emergency shelters and services. However, it is a continued level of investment in this area when identified as a key priority of specific communities.

5.3 Areas of challenge

The Strategy's two-year timeframe is the main challenge encountered for achieving results in the area of supportive and transitional housing and related services.

The main challenge identified across all respondents for making progress in the area of supportive and transitional housing and related services was the two-year timeframe for the Strategy, particularly with respect to making investments in capital projects. Other challenges identified by various respondents included:

- Some communities are encountering challenges when the encouragement of a longer-term housing focus has resulted in less flexibility in how HPS funds can be invested at the local level;

- With capital investments, there is a need for housing and real property expertise in the communities, noting that many project proponents are from the social sectors and have limited housing expertise and understanding of real property issues;

- Finding an optimum balance between overly broad and overly restrictive definitions of prevention when defining priorities and projects; and

- Developing the necessary collaborations and partnerships within communities to adequately address prevention in an effective and meaningful manner encompassing many of the various societal issues such as poverty, literacy and various health determinants.

6. HPS Success: Enhancing access to and use of good practices, information, data and measures

6.1   Areas of achievement

The HPS has made considerable progress in the development of tools that communities can use for planning and data collection.

The case studies, key informant interviews and the survey have identified the tools developed by the HPS for use in planning and data collection – such as the *Community Plan Template* and the *Community Plan Assessment Template,* along with the accompanying data tools and project results templates – as significantly improved and useful. Areas of progress identified as resulting from these improved tools included:

• increased accountability and greater focus on results;

• improved planning (including increased use of data);

• enhanced partnerships;

• better understanding of project results; and

• greater community ownership of planning process.

The rate of progress in the area of knowledge and data development has increased under the HPS.

Most respondents from the HP Secretariat and the regions indicated that there had been little progress in the areas of knowledge and data development under the NHI. In contrast, the majority indicated that under the HPS, the rate of progress had increased. The main areas of progress identified at the community level are: the increased attention being paid to data and data collection for planning, reporting results, development of data systems; and the use of Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS). Also, progress in the funding of research projects relevant to specific issues at the local or regional level was noted. A few communities indicated their partnerships with academic institutions and the assistance from researchers helped them make progress in the area of knowledge and data development. A data sharing agreement was signed between the Government of Canada and Province of Ontario relating to homelessness issues.

The HPS is contributing to the establishment of processes to use good practices and information at the community level. The main emphasis to date has been on increasing the understanding of the importance of quality information and data in the community planning and project development processes.

Findings on the extent to which the HPS has contributed to the access and use of good practices and information were mixed during the community case studies. A few communities reported *large* contributions from the HPS, while most were in the *small* to *moderate* range when rating level of contribution. One area identified where the HPS has had an impact is with respect to increasing the understanding among communities as to the importance of quality information and data in determining priorities and implementing projects.

Most key informants indicated that the HPS has the potential to make *moderate* to *large* contributions to increasing the availability of information on homelessness issues. Many reported that it will take some time to see the actual results from the efforts and resources invested to date in this area, given the time required to produce findings and translate them into results. Actual use of good practices and information at this point was relatively low among those interviewed as they report using the data rarely or occasionally. This may be in part due to the early stage of many of the information/research projects.

Some areas identified by key informants and case studies as making contributions at this point have been the continued support of HIFIS, the implementation of teleforums, and various products resulting from the support of CABs (e.g., newsletters, plans, reports). One area highlighted by experts was the HPS' continued emphasis and work with communities to stress the importance of data and information for planning purposes.

Approximately one-half of CAB members reported that their community uses good practices and other types of knowledge disseminated by the HPS for various activities. The most frequently cited use of information is for producing community plans (57% *frequently* or *sometimes* use information).

The project representatives indicated that they were most likely to use good practices and other types of knowledge disseminated by the HPS for developing project proposals (59%), and less frequently for implementing the project (51%) or improving delivery of services (50%).

6.2   Areas of challenge

The main areas of challenge included the short time period that was provided for the community planning process, and the capacity of communities to meaningfully engage in data development activities.

The main area of challenge identified by key informants with the community planning tools was the very tight timeframe within which the community plan assessment and community planning process were rolled out. As a result, it created a burden for community members. In some instances, respondents felt that comprehensive consultations within communities did

not occur because of the many time pressures. Some comments indicated that work remains to be done to simplify the tools (particularly for smaller communities) and make them more useful as communication tools (e.g., reporting to municipal governments).

A frequently cited challenge was the capacity of communities to engage in data development activities. When this challenge was cited, it was often presented as lack of capacity in the form of both financial resources, and the capacity of front-line staff to have the time for and knowledge of data collection processes.

7. Other issues: Potential alternatives and implementing changes

7.1 Potential alternatives to increase effectiveness and efficiency

The largest impediment to both the effectiveness and efficiency of the HPS identified by respondents has been the timeframe associated with the Strategy. Various suggestions to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the HPS were provided and these included process issues, and the examination of other models being used and evaluated in other countries (e.g., US, Australia).

According to the case studies and key informants, the largest impediment to both the effectiveness and efficiency of the HPS was the short timeframe for projects to address issues that require a significantly longer timeframe to adequately plan and implement. There was general consensus among the various groups of respondents that the two-year timeframe is likely to have a detrimental impact on both the results that can be achieved under the HPS (effectiveness), and the efficiency with which they can be achieved. The timeframe was viewed as being challenging to the development of effective partnerships, community planning, projects with a longer-term housing solution focus, and capacity to achieve results from research and horizontal pilot projects. Many suggested a timeframe of a minimum of five years would be required to address the issues in a satisfactory manner that could be considered both effective and efficient.

Key areas identified by key informants and through case studies as potentially benefiting both the efficiency and effectiveness of the HPS were:

- Decreases in the administrative requirements for HPS funding;

- Increased effort in developing the capacity of community organizations in developing quality proposals and understanding project management concepts for HPS funding;

- Greater investments in supports and services for clients to sustain the capital investments made in development of longer-term housing;

- Greater flexibility to act quickly and make decisions given the nature of the real estate sector;

- Ensuring a longer timeframe (5-10 years) for the Strategy; and

- Examining various models used in other countries to determine their applicability and relevance to the Canadian situation (e.g., US, Australia).

7.2 Progress with implementing management response for the NHI evaluation

Interviews with HRSDC and Service Canada staff and a review of documents indicated that the design of the HPS took into consideration the findings from the summative evaluation of the NHI. The main conclusions outlined in the summative evaluation were addressed in the design of the HPS including issues of development of ongoing partnerships, increased coordination and engagement of partners, and ongoing performance measurement.

Interviews with the HP Secretariat and regional staff indicated that the findings from the NHI summative evaluation were heavily considered in the development of the HPS. The review of the management response to the NHI Summative Evaluation confirmed these findings.

Four main conclusions were presented in the NHI Summative Evaluation:

Conclusion presented in the NHI Summative Evaluation	Way in which the HP Secretariat addressed the conclusion
There is a continued need for federal government involvement in and support of homelessness issues in Canada.	This was addressed through the federal government's announcement of the HPS on December 19, 2006.
There is a need for further development of ongoing partnerships with multiple levels of government and sectors.	This was addressed through making the focus of partnerships as a main thrust of the Strategy.
The need for increased coordination at the federal and P/T levels.	This was addressed by the HP Secretariat in its attempts at engaging P/Ts in discussions, and encouragement of federal departments and agencies to work together on horizontal pilot projects.
The need to produce ongoing performance measurement.	This was considered in the development of the Integrated Results-based Management and Accountability Framework and Risk-Based Audit Framework. The integrated frameworks provide for both ongoing and periodic performance measurement activities linked to the HPS logic model. In addition, considerable work was completed in the redesign of the project results templates, community plans, community plan assessments, associated databases, and the entire process for collecting and processing project data.

HERIN, which is more user-friendly than the previous IMIS database, is used to record and report on project results for the new Strategy. Although the timing of the evaluation in relation to the implementation of the data collection tools, systems and reporting timelines did not allow for use of results data that are stored in HERIN, evidence demonstrates that the HP Secretariat has the capacity to track, report and disseminate information on results. |

8. Main Conclusions

8.1 Success of the HPS partnerships enhancement component

The HPS has contributed to enhancing partnerships within communities, as it continued to build on the work completed under the NHI, and produced and disseminated useful tools for developing partnerships. For those communities that reported strong partnerships prior to implementation of the NHI and the HPS, the impact of the HPS on enhancing partnerships has been smaller than for those communities that had less of a history of partnering at the community level on homelessness issues.

The HPS has contributed to the alignment of investments with P/Ts in some jurisdictions. Although efforts made to developing agreements have not resulted in many formal agreements as a result of discussions, there is a better mutual understanding of various priorities in some jurisdictions. There have been challenges in developing partnerships between P/Ts and the federal government on homelessness issues. P/Ts have identified lack of consultation with P/Ts prior to the announcement of the HPS, perceived differences in approach to addressing homelessness (stand-alone issue vs. a continuum with other plans and investments), and P/Ts' perceived lack of incentives to sign agreements. The federal government found it challenging to address partnering issues with P/Ts within the extremely short timeframe for the Strategy.

The horizontal pilot projects have made significant contributions to increasing the level of collaboration between federal departments and agencies in addressing homelessness issues. The process of designing and implementing the projects has contributed to better understanding of the priorities of various departments and agencies, as well as a greater awareness of how homelessness issues are related to different mandates.

8.2 Appropriateness of the HPS approach

The HPS has an appropriate focus to address many of the most pressing needs in communities with respect to homelessness issues. Communities are identifying needs and priorities that are in keeping with HPS objectives. The community planning process developed and supported by the HPS is a critical component in ensuring that priorities are identified in a manner such that partnerships are encouraged at both the community and project levels. Given the multifaceted and complex nature of many homelessness issues, the emphasis on partnerships, while at times challenging, is viewed as the most appropriate approach.

The HPS focus on prevention measures and transitional/supportive housing is appropriate, and is a clear continuation of the evolution that had occurred under the previous two phases of the NHI. As identified in the evaluation, the current HPS focus: has allowed HPS to

move closer to identifying and addressing root causes of homelessness when compared to a focus only on emergency services; is more compatible with a "housing-first" model which has demonstrated success in other jurisdictions; and builds on the community capacity developed under the NHI.

The HPS characteristics that are less conducive to making progress in addressing complex, multi-faceted homelessness issues are the short two-year timeframe for the Strategy and the level of funding provided under the HPS. The timeframe and funding levels have negatively impacted on the effectiveness of the Strategy. These negative impacts have been identified in areas such as the extent to which partnerships can be developed, and the implementation of projects with significant capital investments.

8.3 Likelihood of the HPS reaching expected impact on longer-term housing solutions and services

The HPS is contributing to the development of longer-term housing solutions, supports and prevention services through investments in projects and the encouragement of partnering at the community level. When considering the levels of need and the timeframe required to make significant contributions in this area, the HPS contributions will likely be small to moderate in size.

The extent to which the HPS is likely to contribute to homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless being provided longer-term housing solutions, shelter and support and prevention services varies according to which area is emphasized. The HPS is viewed as making larger contributions to the **quality** of housing solutions, and smaller contributions to the **quantity** of housing solutions being made available to those who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. Assuming that the HPS projects will experience comparable levels of success to similar projects under the previous NHI, there is a high likelihood that positive Strategy impacts will be achieved. NHI projects examined in the case studies that focused on longer-term housing solutions demonstrated that significant impacts have occurred for these projects with almost all projects exceeding original expectations. These impacts have included tangible achievements in the development of housing units for individuals and families that had experienced homelessness. In addition to the achievement of tangible results such as development of housing units, there were important demonstrated results such as achievement of housing stability, improved health outcomes for residents, and improved income stability among residents.

9. Recommendations and Future Considerations

#1: Seek stable, longer-term programming to allow for the development of more cost-effective strategic investment projects that target longer-term housing solutions and prevention. The main impediment to success identified across many areas was the short timeframe for the HPS. This has had an impact on the types of projects selected and the development of partnerships with P/Ts, and will have an effect on the extent to which HPS results will be achieved. Many interviewees suggested a minimum timeframe of five years be considered to ensure that the most appropriate projects are developed in the most cost-effective manner to meet the needs of communities.
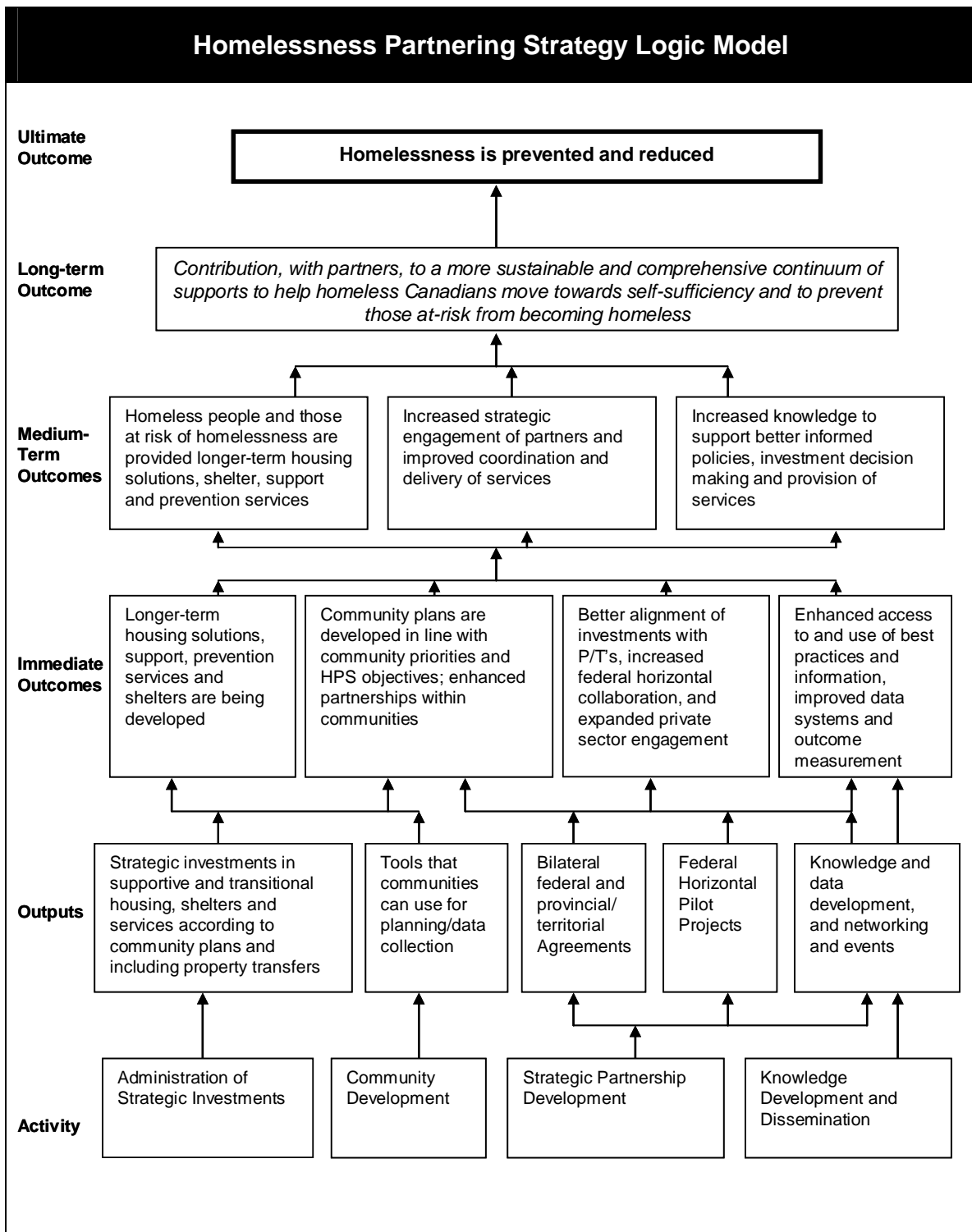
#2: Further expand and develop the partnership component with provinces and territories. The efforts made by the HPS to enter into discussions with P/Ts to address homelessness issues led to some progress towards formalizing partnerships. Building on the progress made in the development of partnerships and increases in levels of mutual understanding of various jurisdictions' priorities and constraints, it will be important for the HPS to continue to further expand its efforts in this area. This recommendation is made in light of the importance of these partnerships to achieve the objectives of the Strategy, and the potential for these partnerships to improve the alignment of investments and coordination of services.

#3: Simplify the tools/templates used for community planning in smaller communities, and make them consistent with the timeframe of the Strategy. Although positive feedback was received overall for community planning tools and templates, the "one-size-fits-all" approach may not be appropriate for some communities or for a very short planning timeline (e.g., two years or less). The templates are creating significant administrative burdens for some smaller communities. The type and amount of data and planning might not be the same for a smaller community when compared with that required for large urban communities. In addition, given the short timeframe of the Strategy, The HPS should consider implementing an abbreviated assessment and planning process or an update of the previously completed process for possible future phases of the Strategy. The HPS should consider adapting its requirements for information collected through the community planning tools and templates as a function of the size of the community and funding timelines.

#4: Continue to build upon and expand communities' awareness of the importance of data, information and good practices on homelessness. There has been considerable progress made in developing communities' awareness of the importance of data, information and good practices on homelessness. It will be important to continue to capitalize on this increased awareness by ensuring sufficient resources are available to continue to provide tools, events and means to assist in the collection, analysis and dissemination of this information. Improved data and information will result in improved accountability, better estimates of need and identification of trends, and improved efficiency and effectiveness of interventions.

Appendix A – HPS Logic Model

Homelessness Partnering Strategy Logic Model

Ultimate Outcome

> **Homelessness is prevented and reduced**

Long-term Outcome

> *Contribution, with partners, to a more sustainable and comprehensive continuum of supports to help homeless Canadians move towards self-sufficiency and to prevent those at-risk from becoming homeless*

Medium-Term Outcomes

Homeless people and those at risk of homelessness are provided longer-term housing solutions, shelter, support and prevention services	Increased strategic engagement of partners and improved coordination and delivery of services	Increased knowledge to support better informed policies, investment decision making and provision of services

Immediate Outcomes

Longer-term housing solutions, support, prevention services and shelters are being developed	Community plans are developed in line with community priorities and HPS objectives; enhanced partnerships within communities	Better alignment of investments with P/T's, increased federal horizontal collaboration, and expanded private sector engagement	Enhanced access to and use of best practices and information, improved data systems and outcome measurement

Outputs

Strategic investments in supportive and transitional housing, shelters and services according to community plans and including property transfers	Tools that communities can use for planning/data collection	Bilateral federal and provincial/ territorial Agreements	Federal Horizontal Pilot Projects	Knowledge and data development, and networking and events

Activity

Administration of Strategic Investments	Community Development	Strategic Partnership Development	Knowledge Development and Dissemination

Appendix B – HPS Evaluation Matrix

Issues and Questions	Methods				
	Document Review	Admin Data Review	KI Interviews	Surveys	Case Studies
Issue: Relevance					
1.1 Is there still a demonstrated need for support to prevent and reduce homelessness?	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Issue: Design and Delivery					
2.1 To what extent is the HPS focus an effective way to meet needs?	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2.2 To what extent are planned outputs produced by the HPS?	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Issue: Success					
3.1 Strategic Investments					
3.1.1 Has the HPS contributed to the development of longer-term housing solutions, supports and prevention services?		✓	✓	✓	✓
3.1.2 To what extent has the HPS contributed to homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless being provided longer-term housing solutions, shelter and support and prevention services?	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3.2 Community Development and Partnerships					
3.2.1 Has the HPS contributed to enhancing partnerships within communities?		✓	✓	✓	✓
3.2.2 To what extent has the HPS contributed to improved alignment of investments with Provinces and Territories?	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3.2.3 To what extent have the HPS, and the horizontal pilot projects in particular, contributed to increased federal, horizontal collaboration?	✓		✓		
3.2.4 To what extent has the HPS contributed to enhancing strategic engagement and improving coordination and delivery of services among partners?			✓	✓	✓
3.3 Knowledge					
3.3.1 To what extent has access to and use of good practices and information improved as a result of the HPS?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Issue: Other issues					
4.1 Are there alternative ways to plan and allocate funding that would be more cost-effective approaches to achieve HPS outcomes?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.2 What progress has been made on the implementation of the management response to the NHI summative evaluation?	✓		✓		