

The development of a logic model for the Protection Against Family Violence Act

An incremental approach

family violence

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On 1 April 2005 the Northwest Territories (NWT) became the seventh jurisdiction in Canada to implement family violence legislation. The NWT *Protection Against Family Violence Act* (PAFVA) is civil legislation designed to protect victims of family violence, improve access to the justice system, and provide a wider range of remedies than were available under existing civil legislation. It also provides a proactive framework that can be used when the grounds to lay a criminal charge may not exist.

This article describes a process that was followed during the implementation period to clarify the intentions and delivery of the PAFVA program. This process involved the iterative development of a logic model. The process of development had two unique features; first it involved the clarification of a program from legislation, and second, it involved an incremental approach to logic development. Despite attention given to program clarification in the evaluation literature, there is little information on how to handle the translation of legislation through such processes. Thus, this paper is a contribution to this gap in evaluation knowledge by detailing the process followed and the lessons learned. The following section presents a contextual overview of the PAFVA.

Family violence legislation

Although the population of the NWT is small, with a little over 42,000 people in 2004 (NWT Bureau of Statistics 2005), the NWT crime rate is the highest in Canada. The crime rate is more than four times the national average, and the rate for violent crime is seven times the national average (Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics 2004). Accurate information on family violence is hard to access. However, if the use of shelters is any indication, rates of family violence including physical and sexual assault of women and children are also very high. The PAFVA is new civil legislation that attempts to address

the high rates of family violence by providing short- and longer term protection for victims while they remain in their homes and communities.

Under this legislation someone who is at immediate risk of family violence can apply *ex parte* for an Emergency Protection Order. In the NWT this protection is available to victims who may make an application 24 hours a day, seven days a week, without appearing in court or seeking the services of a lawyer. This service is framed by the legislation but is made possible by the activities and combined efforts of the NWT Department of Justice, NWT courts, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and staff at a local women's shelter, Alison McAteer House.

Applications are made in person or by phone to a specially trained and designated community Justice of the Peace (JP) with the assistance of the RCMP or workers at the women's shelter in Yellowknife, the NWT's capital city. If granted, these orders are in force once served on the respondent and can remain in force for a maximum of 90 days. These orders are reviewed within three days of receipt by the Supreme Court of the NWT and can be confirmed or a hearing ordered if the court has questions about the order. Both the applicant and the respondent are given notice of the hearing. The respondent or the applicant can also ask for a hearing to vary or revoke the order. The legislation also provides for a longer-term Protection Order that must be made through the court and a warrant that permits entry by the police if a person is believed to be held against their will.

The main benefits typically associated with the legislation, and specifically with Emergency Protection Orders, are that orders:

- are relatively quick and easy to obtain
- allow applicants and children to remain in their home and be protected
- provide for other practical provisions such as temporary possession of personal property
- send the message that the respondent's behaviour is not acceptable.

The PAFVA and other family violence legislation in Canada is a departure from existing civil and criminal remedies in that the Emergency Protection Order can be granted by a JP without a hearing in the courts. The PAFVA can thus be thought of as an innovative response to domestic violence. Several writers have advised that the theory of change which is inherent in new programs should be made explicit in order to ensure that those responsible for delivery are clear about their roles (Weiss 1996). Thus, there was a clear rationale to develop a logic model to frame this program.

Incremental process for logic model development

Prior to the implementation of the legislation in the NWT, the Government of the NWT's Department of Justice formed an Advisory Committee to

clarify program activities and provide advice to the Department of Justice on the design, implementation and evaluation of the new PAFVA. This committee included representatives from the Department of Justice, the Legal Services Board, the RCMP, the NWT Department of Health and Social Services, Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority, the Native Women's Association of the NWT, and the YWCA.

The logic model for PAVFA was developed by the Advisory Committee (the committee) over the period October 2004 to January 2005. Committee members agreed to meet regularly and to include logic development as a standing item on the agenda. Typically the committee had one hour out of a three-hour meeting for this agenda item, and we met during this period only every two to four weeks. Because of the limited time available, as the evaluator I refined the language and concepts outside meeting time and provided these to the committee for discussion. Even though limited time was available for these discussions, the committee considered that this approach would allow members of the committee to build the logic model as their understanding of the program evolved.

The approach followed for the development of the logic model did not rely on any one of the step-by-step 'workshop' approaches (WK Kellogg Foundation 2001; Plan.Net Limited 2002; and Leviton et al. 1998). Instead, the approach reflected the general advice in the literature—to be incremental while involving stakeholders, changing and expanding with the development of the program design as well as building meaning and support for the program (McLaughlin & Jordan 2004).

Based on the variety of logic models that were available, a decision was made to use a logic table to show relationships between the elements of the model. This table allowed the model to start small and grow as our understanding of the logic development and the PAFVA program grew: adding columns and meaning as our thinking progressed.

Step 1: Context and reach

Prior to beginning work on the logic model, the Advisory Committee met to discuss the need for the program, the reach or target group and implementation challenges. Much of this work had been covered in earlier research into family violence legislation in Canada; however, it was necessary to review this information and to make sure that the committee had a clear idea of the need for the PAFVA and the problem that it was trying to address.

The committee recognized the need for this legislation to help protect people from violence in their families. Other remedies existed such as restraining orders or peace bonds; however, unlike these approaches protection can be easily accessed without going to court or hiring a lawyer, and at any time of the day or night. The committee also considered that the legislation provided an opportunity to talk about family violence and to start to change attitudes in communities where

victim blaming and violence against women and children was common.

The legislation itself has a broad reach providing a remedy for men and women, old and young, as well as immediate or extended family members. In discussing implementation and reach, the committee tried to balance an interest in providing access to all victims of family violence with the primary problem of violence against women and their children.

Members agreed that the primary target group was women, although anyone experiencing family violence was eligible to apply and receive protection.

Many of the implementation challenges had been identified earlier, either in the research or in the stakeholder meetings leading up to the development of the legislation. The committee revisited these and looked more closely at them from a program design perspective. The following issues and their impact on the program were discussed:

- community attitudes that do not support victims of violence—need for information and training
- lack of understanding of the dynamics of family violence—need for training for police and other professionals as well as the public
- small isolated communities with limited police services (police not available in the community to serve and enforce orders 24 hours a day, seven days a week) and lack of shelter or other victim services to support victims of violence—the PAFVA may not be used by all residents but it should be available in all communities whether or not they have resident RCMP or other support services
- impact of child protection legislation on use of the PAFVA. Some mothers may not use the legislation because they are afraid that their children will be apprehended by Social Services—designates under the PAFVA have a responsibility to report children at risk; however, they can consider the EPO as a method to reduce risk.

There were many challenges to be faced in implementing this legislation; however, there were also a number of ‘strengths’ that the committee commented on:

- strong stakeholder support, particularly from the RCMP and the YWCA
- sufficient financial resources
- NWT focus on the issue of family violence—implementation of the PAFVA as part of a broader action plan
- broad political support for measures to reduce family violence.

Step 2: Goals and objectives

The discussion initiated in Step 1 was continued with the development of program goals and objectives. The committee was asked to share their views about the purpose of the legislation and what they hoped would result with the implementation of this

legislation. The committee was also provided with information on the goals and objectives that had been developed by other jurisdictions for their legislation. Only two other Canadian provinces, Prince Edward Island (PEI) and Saskatchewan (Sask.), had developed and published objectives.

The committee discussed their understanding of the purpose and objectives of the PAFVA and compared these with the objectives developed in these provinces. Committee members thought that many of the PEI and Sask. statements were too complicated and were not achievable. It was not clear how or if they could be accomplished or measured. Discussion focused on arriving at objectives that were straightforward and direct. The committee members agreed that they expected that the new legislation, when implemented, would result in increased awareness about family violence, improved access to protection for victims, improved protection, more options for victims to choose from and more remedies available in this legislation, and finally that the legislation could provide victims with a proactive remedy.

Based on this discussion and the emphasis on five ‘key objectives’: awareness, access, protection, options and a proactive response, the objective statements in Figure 1 were developed.

During this process committee members struggled with the objective statements, attempting to frame

FIGURE 1: OBJECTIVES—PROTECTION AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE ACT

The purpose of the *Protection Against Family Violence Act* is to provide protection for people who are threatened with, or are victims of, family violence.

The objectives of the Act are as follows:

- 1 **Promotion/public education**—to promote the message to all communities of the NWT that family violence is complex, unacceptable and a serious concern for all residents.
- 2 **Access**—to improve access to protection for victims of family violence by providing for civil Emergency Protection Orders that are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, without a lawyer and without first appearing in court.
- 3 **Protection**—to improve protection for victims of family violence and their children by providing for civil orders that reflect their specific circumstances and needs.
- 4 **More options**—to provide victims of family violence with more options that they can use to help protect themselves and their children.
- 5 **Proactive**—to provide victims of violence with an early opportunity to plan and prepare for the safety of themselves and their children.

FIGURE 2: DESIRED OUTCOMES OF THE PROTECTION AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE ACT

- Increased awareness that family violence is unacceptable.
- Family violence is recognized as everybody’s business.
- Less community tolerance for violence.
- Victims safely remain in their homes/communities now and in the longer term.
- Reduction in family violence; increase in protection of victims.
- Increase in responsiveness/reports; increase in victims seeking remedies and using remedies.
- Increased collaboration/integration between community agencies.
- Increased community support for victims of family violence.
- Courts are ordering counseling; increase in use of services.
- Positive change in respondent behaviour; decrease in recidivism of respondents.
- Victims safer; communities are safer.

statements that described what they thought the ‘program’ should do. Part of the struggle was coming up with objectives that reflected their hopes for the program but at the same time were practical and realistic. The committee also struggled with defining an objective. Reviewing objectives from other jurisdictions helped to focus this discussion. It was also helpful to identify key ideas central to the objectives collectively, develop a draft statement and then later present to the committee for comment.

Step 3: Desired outcomes

In this phase of the logic development, committee members were asked to move their focus from a discussion of ‘how’ to ‘what’ and to ask ‘What did they hope to achieve with this legislation?’ This approach was recommended as a preferred method for new programs (WK Kellogg Foundation 2001; Daynard 2004) and a way to ‘test’ stakeholders’ understanding of the program as currently framed by the objectives. This approach also challenged the committee to pursue the relationships between the objectives and the outcomes.

Some members felt uncomfortable with this approach as they wanted to use the objectives they had developed to guide the outcomes. Others thought that this approach provided a good opportunity to test the objectives and not be restrained by them. After some discussion the committee came up with the outcomes listed in Figure 2.

After this meeting the objectives and the outcomes were put together in a logic detailed in Table 1, which was presented to the committee for discussion.

TABLE 1: LOGIC MODEL—objectives, activities and outcomes

<i>Goal: To reduce the incidence of family violence in the NWT</i>		
OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES
1 Awareness of family violence		Awareness Increased awareness that family violence is unacceptable. Family violence is recognized as everybody’s business. Less community tolerance for violence. Increased collaboration/integration between community agencies. Increased community support for victims of family violence.
2 Improved access to protection		Access and options and planning Increase in responsiveness/reports; increase in victims seeking remedies and using remedies. Courts are ordering counseling; increase in use of services.
3 More options		
4 Early intervention and planning		
5 Improved protection		Protection Victims safely remain in their homes/communities now and in the longer term. Reduction in family violence; increase in protection of victims. Positive change in respondent behaviour; decrease in recidivism. Victims safer; communities are safer.

With the placement of the outcomes into like groups and then connecting them to existing objectives it became apparent that there was some overlap. What we had previously thought were five objectives could be condensed into three. Further discussion of the objectives resulted in some refinement. Once finalized the three main objectives were:

- 1 Increased awareness of family violence and the new help through the PAFVA.
- 2 Improved access to remedies.
- 3 Improved protection from family violence.

The process of discussing and developing objectives and outcomes separately was an effective way of testing our assumptions about the program. This strategy, with the use of a logic table to organize our work, helped the committee to see relationships, make the connections between objectives and results, and identify gaps or, in this case, overlaps. If we had developed outcomes based only on the objectives, we may not have been able to understand the program in the same way. This incremental approach and the use of a logic model also demonstrated graphically to the committee our growing and changing understanding of the program.

TABLE 2: DETAILED LOGIC MODEL—PAFVA; objectives, activities, outcomes—immediate, intermediate and long-term

<i>Goal: Reduction of family violence in the NWT</i>				
OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES		
		IMMEDIATE	INTERMEDIATE	LONG-TERM
1 Awareness of family violence and new remedies under PAFVA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Public education activities ■ Community presentations and meetings ■ Training on FV and legislation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increased awareness that family violence is unacceptable ■ Increased collaboration/integration between community agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Family violence is recognized as everybody's business ■ Increased community support for victims of family violence ■ Less community tolerance for violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Victims are safer ■ Communities are safer
2 Improved access to remedies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emergency Protection Order (EPO) process to allow applications 24 hours a day, seven days a week to JP without a lawyer ■ Training on EPO to designate to assist applicants ■ Public education about legislation ■ Counseling is available in all communities ■ Training on legislation and other options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increase in responsiveness/reports ■ Increase in victims seeking and using remedies ■ Courts are ordering counseling ■ Increase in use of services ■ Victims safely remain in their homes and communities now 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Victims safely remain in their homes and communities in the longer term 	
3 Improved protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ EPO process ■ Training of RCMP on family violence and legislation ■ RCMP commitment to offer and enforce legislation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Victims safely remain in their homes and communities now 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Positive change in respondent behaviour ■ Decrease in recidivism ■ Victims safely remain in their homes and communities in the longer term ■ Reduction in family violence, increase in protection of victims 	

Step 4: Refining the logic table

Before the next meeting of the Advisory Committee the objectives and the outcomes were organized into a more detailed logic table broken down into immediate, intermediate and long-term outcomes. Activities were also drafted that supported the objectives. The revised and enlarged table with the draft activities was provided to the committee for discussion at their next meeting (Table 2).

At this point the committee began a more detailed discussion of the connections between the objectives, activities and the outcomes. This version of the logic model also started a discussion about outputs and further refinement of the activities and outcomes. The committee's comments and discussion were noted and further versions of the table were developed and provided to the committee for review. Each version of the table increased the committee's understanding of the program.

The final version of the logic is presented as Table 3 (see overleaf).

During the final phase of the logic model development the committee was able to appreciate the growth of the model as their understanding of the program increased, changing and adapting as they worked with it. The final phase saw members grappling with the increasing complexity of the logic table, trying to find the connections and make sense of all of the elements as a picture of the whole program. Members struggled with the increasing number of terms, and with using categories to describe accurately where the program ended and others started. This was especially apparent in the attribution of program activities to the longer-term outcomes.

Reflections

The incremental process, which had worked well in the early stages of the logic development, posed problems as the model became more complicated. Committee members did not have enough time in the hour provided during regular meetings to engage fully in the process. The time-saving practice of noting changes and modifying the document after the meeting meant that the committee was even more removed from the process of developing the model.

Each time we returned to the logic model, the committee needed time to become familiar with the work completed in the previous meetings, understand any changes, and then begin to think about refinements. Members of the committee were inclined to express frustration with the process and were sometimes reluctant to return to the logic model.

At some point, perhaps after the discussion of objectives and when activities became clearer, it would have been useful to spend an entire morning working refining the logic model. This expenditure of time would have saved time in the long-run and allowed members to focus and feel more ownership of the model. This may have helped reduce committee frustration with the process.

During the development of the logic model opportunities to move from the theoretical to the practical helped alleviate some of the frustration members experienced with the process. This allowed committee members to see connections and appreciate the benefits of this approach to program design. One example of such an opportunity involved the use of a logic model to facilitate and focus discussion on a public education strategy for the legislation. The objectives and outcomes developed by the committee helped to guide that discussion and assisted in the identification of communications messages. Members recognized the practical utility of the theoretical discussions that had occurred earlier in the process.

Nevertheless, more could have been done to make those connections between the theoretical and the practical and between elements of the model. Rather than discussing the logic model as a totally separate item on the agenda, there should have been more effort to incorporate this discussion into the discussion on implementation planning. Also, applying some of the techniques for testing and making connections between elements could have been used, that is, asking questions such as 'How do we make this happen? Why do we do this? If this, then what? If that, then what?' (McLaughlin & Jordan 2004).

It is important to note, finally, that as the implementation date approached, the utility of the logic model became more apparent. The benefits were not only for the stakeholders on the committee, but also for those who had responsibility for training public officers to implement the program, and the logic model offered a clear framework that could be used in public education about the nature of the PAFVA initiative.

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TABLE 3: FINAL VERSION OF LOGIC MODEL—PAFVA; objectives, activities, outputs, outcomes—immediate, intermediate and long-term

<i>Goal: Reduction of family violence in the NWT</i>					
OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	IMMEDIATE (1–3 YEARS) KNOWLEDGE/SKILL	OUTCOMES INTERMEDIATE (4–6 YEARS) BEHAVIOUR	LONG-TERM (7–10 YEARS) VALUES, CONDITIONS, STATUS
1 Awareness of family violence and new help through PAFVA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public education activities 'Let's Talk' training and materials for community referrals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Posters, brochures, TV and community radio spots Number and location of community presentations/meetings Training and information packages for community referrals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public awareness that family violence is unacceptable and help is available Knowledge about PAFVA remedies and process by victims, public and community agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for victims of family violence. Less community tolerance for family violence General awareness and support for PAFVA remedies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family violence is recognized as everybody's business Victims are safer Communities are safer Reduction in family violence
2 Improved access to remedies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training on family violence, Act, and application process to designates and JPs Development of Emergency Protection Orders (EPO) application process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training for designates Forms and process for EPO in place 24 hours a day, seven days a week 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Courts, police and Shelter staff know EPO application process and provide consistent service Victims are able to easily and quickly access PAFVA remedies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public support for victims of family violence, and assistance to seek help Courts, police and shelter staff work together to improve access and support for victims of family violence 	
3 Improved protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of PAFVA remedies JPs are designated and trained on remedies Follow up and planning support by Shelter staff Courts provide protection orders, RCMP serve and enforce orders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applications for EPO Training session for JPs on EPO Follow up and safety planning Number of referrals to and by RCMP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Courts ordering counseling Victims and respondents understand responsibilities of PAFVA remedies Increased police understanding of FV and PAFVA remedies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victims are taking proactive steps to be safe and plan for the future Respondents understand and abide by orders Victims remain safely in their homes and communities in the short- and long-term Increased police support for victims of family violence 	