The Transition Movement in Putney, Vermont: Building Social and Economic Resilience, With a Focus on Putney Farmers’ Market

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The Transition Movement in Putney, Vermont: Building Social and Economic Resilience,

With a Focus on Putney Farmers’ Market

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PIM 70

A capstone paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for a Master of Science in Development Management at the SIT Graduate Institute in Brattleboro, VT, USA.

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Advisor: Marla Solomon
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Abstract

The Transition Movement is an internationally acclaimed and innovative movement which focuses on building community resilience to resolve the problems of climate change, natural resources depletion, and economic instability. Transition Town Putney (TTP) is an organization working on promoting Transition initiatives in a small town called Putney, Vermont, USA. This paper explores how TTP contributes to building community economic and social resilience in the town. This study employed conceptual frameworks of Avina’s (2004) NGO life cycle model and the Model of Effectiveness Value based on Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983). For data collection, several stakeholders who have been involved with TTP participated in a variety of ways to share information with the researcher, including focus group discussions, individual follow-up interviews, questionnaires and “on-street” talks.

Data reveals that TTP has capacities to both maintain its operational function and support its beneficiaries effectively which result in its target groups successfully achieving and building economic and social resilience. Data also indicates concerns for TTP if it is to continue working effectively which include limited inclusion and participation of wider stakeholders, unclear supporting roles for its beneficiaries, lack of responsive monitoring and evaluation program, and loose exit-strategy.
Acronyms and Vocabulary

PFM: Putney Farmers’ Market

TT: Transition Town (at local community level)

TTM: Transition Town Movement

TTP: Transition Town Putney, VT

Core group: The group formed after the “Unleashing” event and comprised of one representative chosen by/from each working group so as to remain within the Transition movement’s mandate.

Initiating/Steering group: An initiating group lays the foundations for the transition process within a community to address one/ all of the three mega-problems by networking, building partnerships and conducting practical day-to-day activities that include raising awareness, visioning, and reskilling. This group has a limited term. Once the group has established wider-reaching Transition initiatives, it is replaced by a new initiating group.

Working groups: Groups of like-minded individuals who adhere to the Transition philosophy and develop a particular project in the community. Representatives from such groups are encouraged to form a governing core group under the Transition Town movement.

Supported groups: Groups with projects unrelated to the Transition movement’s agenda which existed prior to the inception of a local Transition Town (TT) movement. Dependent on their needs, they might seek help from their local Transition Town.

Permaculture concept: This principle focuses on redesigning human communities, where each element supports and feeds other elements. This concept is based on the climax forests model in which a forest can function for thousands of years without requiring any fertilizer, watering and weeding. Within this concept minimal input or intervention is required from external sources since each community has its own coping strategies to address their problems.

Unleashing: The process of preparation leading up to the Official Unleashing day when TTP’s presiding initiating group officially changes its membership to usher in new leadership with new core members.
Introduction and Statement of Research Questions

The Transition Movement is an international movement that focuses on helping communities to build local resilience and a sense of connection in preparation for the challenges of climate change, natural resource depletion and economic instability. It first began in Kinsale, Ireland, by Rob Hopkins and was later expanded upon in Totnes, England, in September 2005. The background ideology of this contemporary movement is based on the belief that the modern industrial capitalist economic and social system, based upon cheap oil and resources, is unsustainable, making a major restructuring of economy and society imperative and inevitable. The Transition Movement contends that citizens and communities need to act proactively and positively at the local level. Its goal is a societal paradigm shift in which de-carbonized local communities are resilient in their capacity to “hold together and maintain their ability to function in the face of change and shock from outside” (Hopkins, 2008, p.12). The Transition Movement is considered a self-organizing community-led model.

According to the Transition Network website, there are 453 official initiatives in 34 countries, of which 96 initiatives are in the U.S. (http://www.transitionnetwork.org/initiatives, 2011). Most Transition movement initiatives in the U.S. are found along the west coast (48%) with California leading with 23 official sites, followed by Washington State with eight. The east coast is home to 42%, with the state of Massachusetts having the most official sites, 8 in total. The state of Vermont hosts 6 official sites, equal to Pennsylvania. It is noteworthy that the Midwest and southern-most eastern states, combined together, have only 4 official initiatives, equivalent to 10%.

The principle of Permaculture is the overarching working philosophy of the Transition movement worldwide. This principle focuses on redesigning human communities, where each element supports and feeds other elements. This concept is based on the climax forests model in which a forest can function for thousands of years without requiring any fertilizer, watering and weeding. Within this concept minimal input or intervention is required from external sources since each community has its own coping strategies to address their problems. Hopkins (2012) emphasizes an “ebb and flow” and a “let it go where
it wants to go” nature as a basic tenet for the global Transition movement (p.173). “It is the art of maximizing beneficial relationship,” said Hopkins (2012, p. 98).

Within the Permaculture principle, no one person manipulates or controls the dynamics of community building. This principle entrusts power and responsibility to the community, recognizing that people have the abilities to solve the problems they face. Every solution rests in the hands of the community, as opposed to one particular group or external expert. With this in mind, Hopkins has designed the global Transition movement’s model and prescribed the process of any town wishing to become a Transition Town (TT).

A Transition movement starts when a group of like-minded persons form a reading group to discuss their points of interest in the issues of climate change, natural resource depletion and economic instability. Then, the same group of people will form themselves into an initiating group and follow the six-ingredient community work model and twelve-working steps, designed by Hopkins. [See Appendix A.] This group is called the initial working group. According to Hopkins (2012), an initiating group “serves to kick the transition process off, its members acting as the early pioneers who network and lay good foundations and to build partnership, awareness raising, visioning, reskilling, practical activities and attending to the well-being of the group and the people in it, until another group takes over the reins of what has become an established and wider-reaching Transition initiative” (pp.102-103). Once the initiating group has achieved its objectives, Hopkins encourages it to “design its demise from the onset” (p.103). In other words, every Transition Town (e.g., TTP) needs a plan to be in place to gradually shift leadership responsibilities from the initiating group to whoever is within the applicable working group which has spearheaded a particular initiative. In order for this shift in leadership to occur, a true core group must be officially formed, comprised of one representative chosen by/from each working group so as to remain within the Transition movement’s mandate.

The official formation of the core group and the leadership hand-over takes place in a social gathering called an “Official Unleashing” event. This event is designed to celebrate the success of all achievements that the initiating group has facilitated within the community under the Transition
movement and to pass the torch to the new leaders’ group. Hopkins adds, “The aim of this event is to generate a momentum which will propel (Transition) initiatives forward for the next period of its work” (Hopkins, 2010, p. 153).

Accordingly, Hopkins (2010) explains indicators for successful transfer of leadership “based, entirely un-subjectively, on the fact that numbers attending events were steadily increasing, more people wanted to stop us on the street to talk about it, and also, by the fact that we were getting impatient to kick it all off” (p.153). Additionally, he suggests the best time to unleash leadership is when the initiative’s group members “feel some sense of ‘buzz’ coming back from the members” (Hopkins, 2012, p.184). Hopkins (2012) briefly explains the word ‘buzz’ as the time “(your) awareness-raising work seems to be starting to influence a significant number of people” (p.184). He also proposes that the timeline for conducting leadership transfer should be “six months to one year after your first film screening is about right” (Hopkins (2010), p.159). However, he keeps the door wide open for the initiating group as to when they should organize the event saying that it depends on the local situation. This evolutionary group process is central and strongly adhered by all Transition Towns worldwide. Transition Town Putney is no exception.

Transition Town Putney (TTP) was established in November 2009. It is the 62nd official Transition site in the U.S. Its mission statement is to engage the creativity, expertise and skill-sets of our friends and neighbors in the design of a sustainable, resilient, socially just and mutually supportive community (http://transition.putney.net/index.php?ID= 23,2012).

According to the Transition movement’s organizational evolution, TTP now has been functioning as the steering/initiating team. Its members consist of active representatives from some project groups, namely, the Community Garden project, the Farmer’s Market project, and the Time Share project. Interns are always included on the team as participants or as representatives of the project for which they are attached, for example, the Food Shelf project and Farm to School interns. In the first year, there were 10-12 people in the initiating group, but they are now 7 members.
The team meets every other Wednesday in the evening for two hours at one of the core members’ homes. Rotating the venues of the meetings to each other’s house provides opportunities for the team to meet each other’s family and to conveniently accommodate the available members.

Before the bi-monthly meeting, each core member, primarily the co-founder, sends out an email at least two to three days in advance to ask for the meeting’s agenda, venue and facilitator. The members take turns facilitating the meeting. The contents of the meeting range from regular daily issues at the project level, to seeking institutional solutions to problems that have occurred at the project level. Approximately, ninety percent of the time at these meetings relate to project reporting, leaving very little room for members to discuss organizational matters, e.g., fundraising, financial management and assurance that the organizations’ activities are in keeping with the organization’s mission (project monitoring). The group’s routine work, apart from raising community awareness of the three mega problems: climate, oil and economy, is to provide support and advice to two types of local working groups, namely, the working groups related to those projects that are run by the core organizing members under Transition Town Putney, and the supported groups with projects in town that have existed prior to the inception of the TTP.

In all likelihood, during the first two years of their operation, with more than 180 activities having been conducted annually, the TTP core has overwhelmingly spearheaded activity organizing. Although overloaded with their day jobs, busy lives and community projects, TTP core members have coordinated many Transition movement activities and played supporting roles with the working groups. In so doing, they have contributed to the success of many community initiatives.

During my internship with Transition Town Putney (TTP), I observed several instances of déjà vu of local grassroots organizations. What TTP is now striving for reminds me in many ways of my previous experiences as a community development practitioner working with several grassroots organizations. For example, I have seen poor management where leaders have neglected to study, organize, plan and control all of their organizational activities. This includes the ongoing studies of market research and client service data, areas which may be more prone to disregard once a nonprofit has been established.
I also have seen a lack of planning related to short, mid, and long term plans which must be realistic, based on accurate, current information and educated projections for future potential problems and solutions. In addition, I have observed inadequate analysis of competition, community needs, marketing, advertising and promotional activities. With a lack of adequate planning, TTP risks overexpansion. In other words, they may grow too fast without first preparing their organizational capacity. For example, inability to fulfill client needs on a timely basis, and employees’ chronic workload may reduce creativity and cause burn-out down the road. Further, a common fatal mistake for many failed nonprofits is having insufficient operating funds. Many nonprofit managers underestimate how much money is needed and they are forced to close before they have even had a fair chance to succeed. They also may have an unrealistic expectation of incoming revenues from contributions and contracts. Finally, along the same lines as insufficient funds, many nonprofits establish relationships with a limited number of funders, or funders in a particular sector. This non-diversification of funding can be disastrous, if a long-term major grantor decides that the grassroots NGOs (for example) are no longer a priority area.

Most importantly, most of the NGOs that I worked with lacked substantial program evaluation which would guide them to improve both their organizational and program performance and communication with their stakeholders about their mission’s achievement.

However, I have found that what set some successful NGOs apart from those mentioned earlier was their dedication to the cause, openness to new knowledge and their willingness to learn whatever it took to be successful. More importantly, their drive, determination and positive mindset to view any setback as only an opportunity to learn and grow were key attributes for most successful NGO leaders.

Inspired in part by my previous professional experience, the present conditions of TTP, and because TTP was the place for my practicum, I studied how to enhance the rate of success of program intervention and organizational resilience among the grassroots organizations of the Transition movement. This research will be beneficial not only for TTP, but for the other 453 official initiatives around the world and, indeed, for community development practitioners striving to ensure that grassroots
organizations succeed. My research focuses on the links between organizational capacity and successful program results.

Looking within the field of organizational effectiveness, I found no precedence for a model of local sustainability that involved a network of spatially dispersed local self-organizing groups within the framework of a single underpinning philosophical principle of permaculture that was comparable to the Transition movement model. A research paper on how the Transition model has become successful in the UK was conducted by Balls (2010). He concludes:

As a brand and umbrella organization, Transition is able to facilitate and foster networking potential and collective resources, which encourage participation in the model. Yet equally important, the self-organizing nature of the model is a key attraction to people and places joining Transition. This duel structure enables the establishment of a diverse discourse coalition, incorporated through a holistic approach to sustainability (pp.44-45).

However, Balls does not explicitly examine the capacity and the effectiveness of the initiating group.

Given that a working group must be integrated into the leadership circle through the formal creation of a core group, what capacities should the initiating group have in order to ensure the continued momentum of the Transition movement for which TTP’s initiating group has laid foundations? How has the Transition Model achieved its goal in building community resilience? These were questions that needed addressing. Very little research has focused specifically on the Transition Model, or Transition Town Putney, or investigated how an initiating group helps create community resilience, leaving ambiguous the applicability of this model for building societal sustainability.

Therefore, this research paper asks: How do the initiatives of Transition Town Putney (TTP) in the case of Putney Farmers’ Market (PFM) contribute to social and economic resilience in Putney Town? I was further guided by four sub-questions, which were helpful in identifying themes throughout the data. They were: What are the organizational structure and its functions in the TTP and the PFM? What are the strong and weak points in these organizations pertaining to effectiveness of program implementation? To what extent does PFM under the TTP initiative generate social and economic resilience in Putney Town?
What is the relationship between the organizational structure and capacity and program effectiveness in contributing to resilience?
Literature Review

This research involved a continual critical grounding of theoretical and empirical work within the relevant literature collections. In building the frameworks and foundations for conceptual analysis, I examined a wide range of ideas and theories linked to the concepts and practice of the Transition movement. For clarity, this paper classifies emerging themes from literature into the following key areas: organizational structure and evolution, organizational capacity and effectiveness, and community resilience.

In order to explore the relationship between an organization’s health and its effectiveness, the conceptual framework started from exploring how the TTP and PFM were formed and what organizational evolution stage they were at the time this report was written by using Avina’s NGO life-cycle model (2004). Quinn and Rohrbaugh’s (1983) model of Effectiveness shed light on the relationship between organizational health and its working outcomes.

Avina’s NGO life-cycle model

According to Avina (2008, as cited in Edwards and Fowler, 2008, pp.123-145) the NGO life-cycle can be loosely divided into four organizational stages: start-up, expansion, consolidation, and close-out. A Start-up grassroots organization is often “born from the initiatives of a catalytic agent, either a single leader or a small cadre” (Avina (2008), cited in Edwards and Fowler, 2008, p.126). The start-up motivation of the organization may relate to a catalytic event which inspires local actions. In the TTP case, its mission is to inspire community people to solve the mega-problems of climate change, natural resource depletion and economic instability which confront Putney and elsewhere. As new grassroots organizations are generally small in nature and breadth their impact tends to be more localized. The structure of these start-ups follows traditional institutionalized patterns characterized by a low level of administrative and managerial sophistication and formal accountability.

Organizational expansion can manifest in various forms. It may “result from an increase in beneficiary coverage within the established project area. Organizations also expand when they increase the number of services they provide to their existing beneficiary sets” (Avina, 2008, as cited in Edwards
and Fowler, 2008, p.132). TTP, in this organizational expansion stage, has been supporting other community groups which are referred to as either working groups or supported groups.

**Organizational Consolidation** is the period of time that an organization “analyzes its performance to better align its operative capacity to its external reality” (Avina, 2008, as cited in Edwards and Fowler, 2008, p.136). The desired end result is an institution with a clear set of program priorities and the means to achieve them. In the case of TTP, they decided to conduct an organizational and program assessment in order to analyze the effectiveness of their administrative, managerial and program performance.

**Organizational close-out** can be defined as “either a full-scale termination or a partial reduction of project activity” (Avina, 2008, cited in Edwards and Fowler, 2008, p.141). In TTP, the close-out does not mean a gross reduction in aggregate operation. Instead, it is the leadership change from one group to another group consistent with the founding principles of the Transition movement.

**Quinn and Rohrbaugh’s four models of Effectiveness Values Framework (EVF)**

The EVF model is regarded as the most concise, yet comprehensive concept that has been used among scholars around the globe to explore organizational effectiveness. What makes this model different from any other ones is that it possesses both humanized and goal oriented components, which are suitable for assessing organizational health in the field of social development. Furthermore, Quinn and Rohrbaugh’s model aims to capture organizational efforts that an organization uses in order to achieve its goal at each different life stage as it evolves from one stage to the next. As organizations evolve, assessment tools need to be adaptive to this dynamic. Quinn and Cameron (1983) summarized the concept of **Quinn and Rohrbaugh’s four models of Effectiveness Values Framework (EVF)** as having four stages: entrepreneurial, collective, formalizing and elaborating (pp.41-44). Each stage has a different hypothesized pattern of organizational effectiveness.

The **entrepreneurial stage** is typified by “innovation, creativity and the marshaling of resources –the strongest emphasis appears to be on open systems criteria of effectiveness” (Quinn and Rohrbaugh, 1983, as cited in Quinn and Cameron, 1983, p.43). That is, the success of an organization will tend to be
associated with its flexibility, growth, resource acquisition, and the development of external support. During this organizational stage, it is crucial to introduce the organization to the public. In the case of TTP, it gathered a group of like-minded individuals to help initiate activities. These individuals sought local resources and excelled in their creativity to build community excitement and awareness of issues that they wanted to address.

An organization in the collectivity stage is characterized by organizational effectiveness associated with the incubation and cultivation of human relations. This organizational stage is typified by “informal communication and structure, a sense of family and cooperativeness among members, high member commitment, and personalized leadership” (Quinn and Rohrbaugh, 1983, as cited in Quinn and Cameron, 1983, p.44). Emphasis on human relations criteria: human resource development, morale, cohesion, and human need satisfaction, are highest in this stage. During this period, TTP forged and responded to the community’s needs and expectations. TTP also functioned as a community facilitator to bridge people and projects derived from the community to address its problems.

In the formalizing stage, “organizational stability, efficiency of production, rules and procedures, and conservative trends typify organizations” (Quinn and Rohrbaugh, 1983, as cited in Quinn and Cameron, 1983, p.44). Effectiveness appears to be defined primarily on the basis of criteria in the internal process and rational goal models; that is, by goal setting and goal attainment, productivity, stability and control. In this stage, TTP emphasized goal achievement by measuring the success of their programs. The evaluation results were expected to be used by the organization as evidence to inform the community about their program’s success. Also in this stage, TTP wanted to identify the most suitable structure and functionality to maintain their most efficient and effective operation in the community.

The fourth and final elaboration of structure stage, appears to be one in which the organization has “the ability to monitor the external environment in order to renew itself or expand its domain” (Quinn and Rohrbaugh, 1983, in Quinn and Cameron, 1983, p.44). It is a balance between decentralization and centralization of structure with emphasis on flexibility. This stage requires open systems to gauge the community’s reaction or participation so that the organization may adjust its relationships. In this stage,
the local TTP seeks to renew itself by transferring leadership to another representative core group (decentralization) which will adhere to the global Transition principles and philosophy (centralization).

[See the model in Appendix B.]

Why are Avina’s and Quinn and Rohrbaugh’s models crucial for explaining the link of an organization’s health (capacity) to effectiveness? The two models seek to understand grassroots organizations’ evolution from each different life stage, where diverse emphasis is placed in order to be successful. By using these models, the users will have a holistic comprehension of how each organizational approach is used and what changes it creates within a life cycle of an organization.

Both Avina and Quinn and Rohrbaugh pay much attention to how a new grassroots organization could flourish throughout all organizational stages. Comparatively, paramount in the “start-up/entrepreneurial” stage are the abilities of an organization to forge shared interest and secure resources in order to initiate its work successfully.

In the stage of “expansion/collectivity”, the emphasis in these combined models is on an organization’s ability to create their own communication, structure and function to respond effectively to the growing diversity of needs among the beneficiaries and team members. Building cooperation among members and the community people signifies organizational effectiveness during this stage.

The idea manifested by the two merged models during the “organizational consolidation/formalization” stage stipulates the importance of organizational reviews and performance assessment. Although TTP has not been active in this arena, some theoretical frameworks from this phase would guide them to enhance this still missing component.

The theoretical framework in the fourth stage of both models entails practical “close-out/elaboration” steps which are useful for TTP’s recurring leadership transfer. At the time of the report, TTP and many other Transition movement initiatives around the globe are grappling to find the right exit strategy in order to propel their initiatives forward for the next period of work. In short, the two models are applicable to the case of TTP.
In addition to the overarching theoretical models described, I used Fox’s framework (1997) of organizational assessment and Lusthaus et al’s (1999) Tool for Self-Assessment to Enhance Organizational Performance as the main tools to facilitate data collection. The frameworks of organizational structures and function from Bolman and Deal (1997), Helgesen (1995) and Katzenbach and Smith (1997) helped explain how the Transition Town Putney (TTP) and the Putney Farmers’ Market (PFM) orchestrated themselves in day-to-day operation. Furthermore, the volunteer management framework of Vineyard (1989) helped deepen understanding about the capacities of TTP in managing their volunteers.

**Why Fox’s and Lusthaus et al’s model?**

I combined together the two models of organizational assessment of Fox (1997) and Lusthaus et al (1999) in order for me to capture enough crucial organizational information of Transition Town Putney (TTP) and Putney Farmers’ Market (PFM). Fox’s model encompasses all levels of capacity in civil society ranging from individual citizen, grassroots citizen organizations (CzOs), federations of grassroots associations, intermediary civil society organizations (CSOs)—development NGOs, and specialized support organizations. Fox’s model is relevant to TTP’s situation. On the one hand, this organization is comprised of local individuals who are interested in making social change (citizen level). On the other hand, those individuals with shared interest form a grassroots level organization (CzO) in order to kick start their social change actions under the Transition Movement.

What makes Fox’s framework different from any other civil society capacity building model is that its overall approach consists of democratic self-governance. Within this approach the model describes what *internal* skills and capacities are needed for social change, i.e. the knowledge and expertise required to undertake citizen functions. The *external* civic action model within Fox’s framework enlists capacities that are needed to influence external decision-making structures and holds decision makers accountable for their performance of governance.

Moreover, I used Lusthaus et al’s framework of Enhancing Organizational Performance to reinforce the applicability of Fox’s model. Lusthaus et al’s framework has a comprehensive and practical
list of competent organizational indicators which covers four main components necessary for enhancing organizational viability: organizational structure, functionality, organizational performance (ability), organizational motivation and external environment management. Within each area, there are detailed indicators pertaining to what is required for an organization to enhance its organizational performance. Among the four areas, I applied the first three component parts (structure, functionality and performance) extensively as they are substantially relevant to my paper’s main theme. The theme is central to aspects of capacity and effectiveness, for example, strategic leadership, human resources, financial management, organizational processes, program management, infrastructure and inter-institutional linkages.

**Conceptual framework**

A not-for-profit organization in general has to achieve its organizational milestone while evolving when necessary to follow the needs of the organization and its beneficiaries. In order to achieve organizational mandates, the organization has to have suitable structures and abilities to fulfill its daily functions in response to direct beneficiaries’/clients’ needs. In the case of TTP, its direct target groups are the general public and local working groups who have their own project target group with a specific goal to achieve. In the PFM project, its prime target groups are shoppers and local vendors, and its aims are to promote a strong local economy and build a stronger community.

The following diagram best describes my operationalized research framework, in other words, my research’s conceptual framework. This diagram was used to explore the complex relationships between the TTP and The PFM and their process for building resilience.

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I operationalized my inquiry by, first, exploring TTP’s own capacities at the individual and organizational levels. I wanted to understand the extent that TTP could maintain its day-to-day functions and work collaboratively with the working groups and the supported groups in facilitating them to achieve their own goals. I considered these features as internal effectiveness of the TTP. Second, I measured the success of TTP, using the PFM as a case study, to determine the extent that TTP has achieved its goal of building community resilience. I limited my research scope to the PFM project only because I had limited time, and I believed that the PFM had sufficient information for me to start my research. Finally, I looked at the patterns of relationships between TTP’s organizational abilities and its contribution to the success of the Transition movement.

From my perspective, if the working groups have achieved their goal through the support of TTP, e.g., the PFM attaining the goal of building community and a local support system, it exemplifies goal achievement of TTP as well. Although TTP did not work directly with any of the primary stakeholders of the working groups nor the supported groups, it achieved its goal of building a social support system necessary for attaining community resilience.
In the PFM case, I studied the PFM’s organizational abilities in maintaining its day-to-day functions and creating satisfaction amongst the shoppers and the local vendors. In addition, I explored the relationship between shoppers and local vendors. I believed that these indicators would disclose the levels of success that the market aims to achieve, namely, the sense of localization and community building.

**Organizational structure**

Successful organizations require suitable structural designs to function effectively. Once put in place, these structures will enhance organizational performance. Bolman and Deal (1997) posit that “one of the key ingredients of any top-performing team is an effective structure of roles and relationships focused on attaining common goals” (p.82). As a result, knowing which organizational structure pattern the Putney Farmers’ Market and the TTP are using is crucial to understand the flow of communication and the decision making processes.

To achieve this, I employed basic structural configurations from Helgesen’s “Web of Inclusion” (1995) as a lens to describe the structural framework of TTP. This model has potential to make an organization a more humanized workplace since it possesses the following goals: open communication, blurred distinction between conception and execution (thinking and doing are inseparable), lasting networks, constant reorganization, and expansion to the world outside (collaborating with other individual and groups or networks). Helgesen (1995) posits the web as “new ways of approaching problems, of thinking of connecting people, of giving them information and motivating them” (p.33).

Similar to Helgesen’s principle of inclusion is the “All-channel or Star Network” structural configuration. This structural mechanism is designed to “monitor how each member connects with each other, how information flows within the organization and how the decision process prevails in the organization” (Bolman and Deal, 1997, p.87). Using the two models of the Web of inclusion and the Star Network, I investigated what issues a leader should keep in mind while designing the organizational structure.

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Team Functionality

Team functionality ensures high team performance and effectiveness. Katzenbach and Smith’s (1993) work (as cited in Bolman and Deal, 1997, pp.93-94) emphasizes this importance by highlighting six distinguishing characteristics of high-performance teams. They summarize that an effective team should be able to “shape purpose in response to a demand or an opportunity placed in their path, usually by higher management, translate common purpose into specific, measurable performance goals, have manageable size, develop the right mix of expertise, develop a common commitment to working relationships, and hold themselves collectively accountable.”

These principles were fundamental for me to assess the functionality of the TTP’s core members and the PFM board members. The findings led to a deeper analysis of how the core team members functioned at both organizational and project implementation levels and highlighted what needed attention if the team was to improve their performance in the future.

Team functionality partially overlaps the essence of organizational structure. I captured team performance and their ability to translate mission into practice with high responsiveness to local needs, as ways to measure functionality of the organization and its initiative.

Organizational capacity and effectiveness

Apart from identifying what organizational evolutionary stage the Transition Town Putney was at, I needed to know the level of capacity this organization possessed in order to provide empirically derived advice for them to enhance their effectiveness and goal achievement. There is an extensive corpus of literature on organizational capacity and effectiveness. I chose some prominent frameworks and theories from Eisinger (2002) and Forbes (1998) which I believed most relevant for the Transition movement model.

Eisinger (2002) defines organizational capacity as “a set of attributes that help or enable an organization to fulfill its missions” (p.117). As a result, I defined organizational capacity as the internal ability of a nonprofit organization to fulfill its missions in an effective manner.
Forbes (1998) posits the definition of organizational effectiveness as, “the extent to which organizations succeeded in meeting their goal and the abilities of the organizations to exploit resources from their environments, using political, institutional, and economic means to sustain their own functioning” (p.186). From Forbes’s definition, I conceptualized the effectiveness of TTP as the abilities to support the working groups and the supported groups to achieve their mission.

Organizational capacity and its effectiveness are central to this paper. The attributes that any particular organization possesses constitute the organization’s capacity profile. Eisinger (2002) once said, “These attributes are latent until they are mobilized” (p.117). Thus, what is interesting about organizational capacity is whether it is exploited or not. Effective organizations tend both to have a broad array of capacity attributes and use or mobilize that capacity to fulfill their organizational mission. At a theoretical level, organizational capacities are believed to ensure program success. For TTP, the success is to create sustainable community development. And, in order for the TTP to become successful in building a resilient community, it needs to have a certain set of attributes (capacities) to make it happen.

Community resilience

Resilience comes in many forms and is the ultimate goal of the global Transition movement, including Transition Town Putney. While there have been several research papers on community resilience, most of them have focused on recovery and post-trauma situations, particularly, emergency relief from natural disasters. There are very few papers and documents describing the meaning of both pre- and post-trauma community resilience. Furthermore, many are confused between building long-term resilience and building emergency relief plans. As a result, the word resilience is defined so “broadly” (Kumpfer, L. K., 1999, p.11), that it becomes very difficult to evaluate the achievement of such a goal.

In this paper, I explored the building of community resilience prior to the disaster/trauma engulfing the community. A good definition of community resilience in Rob Hopkins’s publication (2008) describes it as the community’s capacity to “hold together and maintain their ability to function in the face of change and shock from outside” (p.8). Hopkins (2008) explains socio-economic resilience indicators as: “number of businesses owned by local people, portion of the community employed locally,
and percentage of essential goods manufactured within a given radius” (p.174-175). Wilding (2011) summarizes the characteristics of a community that is resilient as “having healthy and engaged people, an inclusive culture creating a positive sense of place, a localizing economy towards sustainable food, energy, housing, and strong links to other places and communities” (p.2). In a broader aspect of social resilience, Rauh (1989), (as cited in Glantz, 1999, p.21), characterizes resilience as: “the ability to draw on personal or social resources, the ability to detect contingencies and predictability in complex situations, and the ability to react flexibly. Resilience is enhanced, for example, by self-efficacy beliefs, a positive self-concept and self-esteem.” A more systematic resilience definition is posited by Walker et al (2006):

Studies of socio-ecological systems gave us a definition of system resilience that included the ability to adapt to change, the ability to learn from previous experiences, and the ability to recover from a shock and still retain the system’s basic form and function. These are key concepts of socio-ecological resilience. (p.13)

Cutter et al (2003) describe the resilience of exposed people, places and ecosystems as the “capacity to absorb shocks and perturbations while maintaining functions” (p.250). The definition of resilience by Adger, W. N. (2000) may best capture the essence of what the Transition Town Putney and the Farmers’ Market have been trying to achieve. Adger posits resilience as “the capacity of a community to cope with disturbances or changes and to maintain adaptive behavior. Social resilience has economic, political, spatial, institutional and social dimensions” (p.350).

In this paper, I defined the word resilience in the case of both the TTP and the Putney Farmers’ Market (PFM) as the degree to which the given system can build capacities of the community for learning and adapting to survive long runs of socio-economic instability. In other words, it is the extent that the system created by the PFM can contribute to community resilience. In aspects of social resilience, long-term commitment among local vendors and customers as well as occurrences of a sense of community and camaraderie are central to building a new supporting system in the community. As for economic resilience, numbers of new local entrepreneurs, their increased business skills, more local goods manufactured as well as increased local employment are paramount for generating local economic
stability. Finally, political buy-in necessitates the sustainability of this ideology to the next generations and beyond. These characteristics of socio-economic resilience formed my lens to pinpoint how well the Putney Farmers’ Market creates community resilience in Putney Town.

In this review I sought to contextualize the relevant theory body in relation to the structure, principles and practice of the Transition Town Putney organization. This went a long way to laying the foundations and groundwork for the conceptualization of Transition. Equally important in the foundation of this research is the methodology.
**Methodology**

The methodological approach in this paper that suggested itself immediately was that of qualitative research. Strauss and Corbin (1990) argue, “Qualitative methods can give the intricate details of phenomena that are difficult to convey with quantitative data” (p.19). I selected a case study for this inquiry because, according to Creswell (2007), the aim of this genre was to “understand a bounded phenomenon by examining one or more particular instances in an in-depth and holistic manner” (pp.120-121).

Most of my qualitative data were collected from both informal and formal interviews, with key informants by using guided interview questions that were designed from extensive literature reviews. Additional qualitative data collection included participant observations and focus group discussions. These methods were deemed appropriate given that I was looking at different individuals’ perceptions of an ill-defined construct of organizational ability and effectiveness. By collecting and analyzing data from the stakeholders under TTP, I intended to come to an “inductively derived grounded theory about [the] phenomenon’ in question” (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p.24). In other words, I explored the reasons why and how the Farmers’ Market has contributed to the community resilience in the Town of Putney in a qualitative manner. The intended result was to understand how TTP’s organizational system, functionality and ability have contributed to the building of successful development at the grassroots level.

Statistical calculation was used to describe data and characteristics about quantified socio-economic resiliency generated by the PFM project. This method was used in combination with the above qualitative approach to examine why the observed phenomena existed and explained the implications of the findings.

An overarching research approach that I used to ensure the research critically reflected and responded to the proposed conceptual framework was inspired by Patton’s user-focused approach (1997) to evaluation. Patton (1997) explicitly describes the use of this approach as “[it] challenges decision makers, program staff, funders, and other users to engage in reality testing, that is, to test whether what they believe to be true (their espoused theory of action) is what actually occurs (theory-in-use)” (p.222).
Patton (1997) emphasizes that the most effective way for any organization to benefit from doing evaluation is to work “with clients who are hungry for quality information to improve programs” (p.366).

Patton’s approach was congruent with my data gathering techniques used. As an example, the Organization Self-Assessment tool used with TTP was conducted using focus group discussion techniques with the TTP core members and the PFM board members. Although this self-assessment was considered subjective as the participants used their own judgment to determine the levels of their organizational effectiveness, I believed that continuous and extensive dialogue through discussions among the parties involved would help build a sense of shared subjectivity and learning. This would, in turn, make the process more constructive and beneficial for all parties involved. I also believed that organizational effectiveness has happened repeatedly and interactively between organizational actors (staff, core members) and the environment in which it has functioned.

**Data collection approach**

In answering my research questions regarding the structure, functionality, abilities and effectiveness, TTP has to ensure its function and maintain its goals. I started my data collection by conducting surveys among the vendors and local shoppers. These surveys looked at the impacts that the PFM project has generated in the town of Putney. In addition to this, I conducted both informal and formal interviews with several stakeholders to gain more qualitative data on environmental and political impacts, including interviews with local town officers and local business operators. Then, I collected data on organizational capacities of both TTP and PFM as well as their day-to-day structure and operational systems by using the Organization’s Self-Assessment tools as my instruments. Finally, in response to my fourth research question aiming to explore linkages between organizational capacity and effectiveness, I looked at the patterns of relationship between the PFM’s success and the capacities that TTP has had in contributing to such success.

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The key informants who provided various perspectives included:

**Two local government officers:** I interviewed the Town Manager and a Town Advisory Board member as they were responsible for monitoring the livelihood aspects in Putney Town. [See Appendix C for the interview questions.] I explored their overall perceptions of how PFM has impacted the Town of Putney in terms of economic improvement and the influence of the PFM to advocate policy in line with the PFM philosophy. Although it was too early to obtain exact indicators from the perspective of these local government officers of economic improvement generated by the PFM, this interview explored the implication of the local buy-in by policy makers.

**Six local business operators:** Six business owners were interviewed. The changed business strategies of the subjects were a key component to explain the extent to which the PFM influences the local economy. This impact determined the adaptability of local businesses to the presence of the PFM. The subjects were interviewed in person with structured interview questions. [See Appendix D for the interview questions.]

**Seven core members of TTP and three Putney Farmers Market’s Board Members:** These key informants were crucial for my paper as they shared their own judgment about the extent of organizational structure, its function and capacities by using Fox’s and Lusthaus at al’s combined organization assessment tools. See Appendix E for the TTP’s Organization Self-Assessment tools and Appendix F for the PFM’s. These tools had key questions and scales for the participants to make marks and fill in information where appropriate, with consensus sought among members. A sample of questions included: *In your opinion, what was PFM’s level of organizational capacities? Why? What was your plan to enhance them?* Then, the data was transferred into a graphic presentation.

The TTP core members and PFM Board members were convened and asked separately, to answer the structured questions together as a group opinion. They were also given opportunities to reflect on three prominent areas that have an effect on the internal effectiveness of their organization, structure, roles and project management, for instance, roles of the members and relevance of program design and
implementation that contributed to the project’s success. Furthermore, to acquire a greater understanding of the PFM, I conducted several individual interviews with the Putney Farmers’ Market manager.

In addition, the TTP founder was interviewed in person using the structured questions to ask for his insights on how the volunteers were managed. Managing volunteers has been a crucial component for any NGO like the TTP. [See Appendix G for the interview questions.] Then, I interviewed two former interns to ask them about their overall satisfaction with having worked with the TTP. See appendix H for the intern exit interview questions.

Four Working groups and supported groups representatives: In order to know how TTP functions as a supporter of its direct beneficiaries, three working group representatives and one supported group representative participated in the interviews. Through these interviews they provided detailed insights about how TTP helped them start their project and what expectations they had for the TTP for future collaboration.

Observations

At the time of collecting data and writing the report, I was working as an intern for Transition Town Putney. I, therefore, used the participant observation technique to collect qualitative data from my routine job via various types of in-house activities, for example, weekly, bi-monthly, and monthly meetings as well as at social gatherings and events. The value of this observational approach was that it tended to record personal behaviors and organizational culture directly.

I used field notes to record information observed during my work with the TTP and the PFM. Some opinions from me might have been shared during the meetings or events. Although this approach risks decreased objectivity of the researcher, I was very mindful in using it. While I admired the values and goals of the Transition movement, I felt that my commitment to this methodology, and to continued self-reflexivity in my work prevented me from becoming ideologically blinded. In this research, I adopted the view that there is ‘a world out there’ from which knowledge can be built for the betterment of grassroots organizations, like the TTP and the PFM.
Surveys

To address the third research question as to what extent the PFM has contributed toward community resilience in the town of Putney, the surveys explored the aspects of social resilience that the PFM project has generated. On-street interviews also helped add qualitative perspectives from local shoppers during the market’s operational hours. In addition, surveys conducted among 18 non-shoppers supplemented the main findings of the shoppers’ components. All participants were at least 18 years old, or older.

The customer surveys were conducted during the last four weekly markets of the Putney Farmers’ Market and for three weeks at the Food Co-op of Putney, as they were the local venues where the community people did their shopping. I also conducted the surveys at the Putney Public Library for three weeks and at one Mom and Pop store for one week, two hours per day. This ensured the data was truly derived from local people of diverse socio-economic backgrounds.

In addition to the customer surveys, I also conducted vendor surveys during three of the four weekly winter markets of the PFM. These surveys were used to explore the aspect of socio-economic contribution of the vendors to the local community.

The survey questions were designed to fit all ages of life. They were anonymous and not sensitive for the respondents. Almost all questions in these surveys were closed-ended deliberately to save the correspondents’ time as the level of commitment to answer the surveys was sometimes low. Still, a few survey questions were opened-ended to capture their personal ideas.

In terms of data sampling, I employed one of the non-probability sampling techniques: Accidental sampling method. By using this method, I was aware that generalizations cannot be made to claim them as a truth derived from the general population as this method is very self-selective. Using it required me to be mindful of personal biases.

In order to achieve a 10% sampling based on the local population, additional volunteers were assigned and trained to supervise other additional sites, including a Mom & Pop’s grocery, seasonal snack vendor and community social events. Since the customer survey was equivalent to public opinion polling,
the sample was self-selected rather than random. This technique was deemed appropriate both geographically and financially as I had limited time to collect data at the market and the PFM was closing for the season in only a few weeks’ time.

*The direct targeted groups of these surveys were:*

**Local customers:** 131 subjects were asked to fill out surveys about their opinion and spending behavior at the weekly Putney Farmers’ Market. Most of the questions were closed-ended with numeric scales and ranges through self-selected ratings. In addition, during the survey weeks at the market, I conducted 30 on-street interviews with local shoppers who were doing their shopping. The main question asked what they liked most at PFM. [See survey forms for shoppers and non-shoppers in Appendix I.]

**Non-customers:** 18 respondents were surveyed at both the library and Mom and Pops store. [See also Appendix I.]

**Local Vendors:** 18 individual vendors were asked to fill in the survey form during the market’s operation hours. Closed-ended questions were used to capture quantifiable data of the vendors, in terms of revenues and rates of satisfaction. Data triangulation was also used related to revenue generation through cross checking with seasonal earnings receipts maintained by the market’s manager. The survey explored the extent of local economy that PFM generates in reality. Opened-ended questions in relation to the vendors’ investment behavior, their experiences of sharing surplus with the community and new employment opportunities for local people generated by the vendors, all determined the level of economic resiliency. See Appendix J for the local vendor survey form.

**Data Analysis Procedure**

Quantitative data from the surveys was keyed-in to a spreadsheet using the Microsoft Excel program. Then, basic descriptive statistics were used to find the Mean and Mode numbers of time and cost that the customers spent both at the PFM and other stores.

Qualitative data gained from the interviews were categorized by the following keywords: organizational structure, functionality, level of capacity, relevance, effectiveness, efficacy, impact and sustainability. Common themes which emerged from the aforementioned keywords were developed and
related into a grounded theory later on. Information from these themes determined how Transition Town Putney’s initiatives contributed to resilience in the town of Putney.

Limitations

Time constraints for the core organizing members to meet in groups were the prime limitation during this research. This was because they were also busy with their personal lives. Hence, I had to shorten the group discussion time to make it fit their available time. This resulted in missing some opportunities to ask for clarifications on some topics. Furthermore, getting access to the revenue and income report of the market was limited because it was considered executive and accessible only by the market manager. At the time of this paper, Transition Town Putney and The Putney Farmers’ Market had not used any systematic database or an enhanced reporting system that would make baseline assessment and periodic reporting readily available. Therefore, I had to spend a great deal of time searching and creating a database to be used for collecting data. This consumed a large proportion of time and energy which in turn reduced the already limited time to complete other research processes.

The short harvest season during summers in New England territory affected the research process. I had to work against time to collect data from the consumers and the vendors within only a few weeks before the market finished up. This led me to employ the non-probability sampling technique, which, in theory, limited the ability to generalize the results. Another limitation relative to time constraint was that, while I was working on this paper, I also worked as a full-time intern with TTP. I had to meet the timeline of my scholarship program and the degree requirement. This workload compromised my health.

Building the theory to the necessary conceptual density was a long and slow process. However, emerging from my analysis was a series of core themes developed from keywords. Coded themes were apparent, firmly and extensively grounded in the data. These core areas formed the focus of my discussion that follows in the Presentation and Data Analysis section.
Data presentation and analysis

The following section makes clear the findings on the first three research sub-questions: What are the organizational structure and its functions in the TTP and the PFM? What are the strong and weak points in these organizations pertaining to effectiveness of program implementation? And to what extent does PFM as an initiative under the TTP generate social and economic resilience in the town of Putney?

I begin by describing what the TTP organizational structure and functionality look like as revealed by the data itself. Then, I present a comprehensive portrayal of TTP’s organizational capacity and its internal effectiveness in responding to direct beneficiaries, the working groups and the supported groups. Following this section, there is a detailed description of how the Farmers’ Market, one of TTP’s initiatives, has contributed to community socio-economic resilience.

Organizational Structure and its functions

In order to address the sub-question of the research paper on what the organizational structure and its functions in the TTP are, TTP core members were interviewed and participated in focus group discussions. They then reached group consensus on the levels of organizational competency that their organization possessed.

Note: Rating Scale starts from 0= NA, 1=Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Satisfactory, 4= Good and 5=Excellent.

Organizational structure

Figure 1 shows the results of a self-assessment focus group with TTP core members pertaining to organizational structure. According to the results, it was found that the team has a high ability to make timely decisions on administration, program/project and finance (Q.1) as well as the ability to identify performance gaps and opportunities quickly enough to resolve them to the benefits of the individuals involved and the productivity of the organization (Q.2), scoring 4 on the scale of 5. The highest score for this section was in the aspect of active listening (Q.5), receiving a score of 5. However, the aspects of
transparent communication with other community people (Q.3), and the method to correct rumors (Q.4) are relatively weak, scoring only 1 and 2 respectively on a 5-level scale.

From this data, TTP has a strong horizontal decision making process. Everyone can share their opinions and concerns freely with other members. This leads them to have an active performance assessment and up-to-date responses to current situations at both the project and at the organizational levels. The high score in the active listening component also depicts how well each group member connects with each other.

However, the challenge for the organization is related to communication with people in the community. All the core members admitted they had had too few working members to work at an organizational level. During the focus group discussion one member said, “Core members are ‘not very active’ in our communication and lack having feedback in reports from the community groups and other community people.” This indicates a weak flow of information within and outside the organization of TTP.

In summing up, TTP’s structure is horizontal and democratic as everyone’s opinion in the organization is counted. Although fluid, this loose organizational structure cannot ensure effective communication with other related sectors such as some non-participating working groups and the general public.

**Organizational functionality**

Degrees of functionality competence at both individual and organizational levels of the TTP can be seen from Figure 2. At the individual level, presented in red bars, the core members found themselves comparatively moderate in their leadership role in administrative and finance aspects.
(Q.7.1 and Q.7.3), scoring 2 on a 5-level scale on both. However, they felt comfortable working tirelessly on program implementation (Q.7.2), which was given a score of 4, similar to the level of their motivation to help each other to work for the organization (Q.8), which received a score of 4 out of 5.

As for functionality at the organizational level, the distribution of scores fluctuates. TTP functions well (4 out of 5) in responding to community needs (Q.9). This is followed by a mutual agreement among the core members on the aspects of the ongoing review process (Q.10) and the understanding of organizational strength (Q.13) as moderate, with scores of 3 each. TTP members admitted that they had low pedagogical skill (Q.12) as they scored it 1 out of 5. The reason why they did not intend to devote their energy to training people was because they believe in grassroots participation and sustainability. One core member explains:

"We start our forum by showing the film, let people talk about how they feel about the content in the film. Then we divide people into groups of interest. They, then, further discuss on the topic of interest in detail. Then, we ask them if they want to form a working group and draw up their action plan. We would normally say ‘what can we help you with?’ This is the way we normally do. (An interview with a core member)"

These findings addressed the question of how the TTP functions in its day-to-day work. With a strong belief in the organization’s mission and a personal commitment in making social change, the core members were responsive and motivated to achieve their personal and organizational goals. Although realizing they could further improve, TTP core members remain open to learning from their experience in order to fully function as an effective grassroots organization.

Organizational capacity and effectiveness

This section describes findings pertaining to the inquiry of the sub-question: What capacity and effectiveness does the TTP presently have in achieving its working goals? Since this section is a central theme of this paper, the findings are divided into two main sub-sections. The first one describes the level of the TTP’s internal abilities in the area of project cycle management, followed by a thorough portrayal of their capacities in managing volunteers and financial issues. This first section ends with a final finding presentation of TTP’s community skills.
As for the second section, it explains effectiveness of the TTP in utilizing their external political, institutional, and economic resources to work directly with other working groups and the general public. After reading these two sections, readers can determine how internally resilient the TTP is in running their organization and how effective it is in supporting its target groups.

**Project cycle management**

Figure 3 shows TTP’s capacity levels in terms of project cycle management. The findings from this component are important to explore. Clearly, all of TTP’s projects are relevant to the organization’s mission, receiving 4 out of 5.

Similar high scores of 4 apply to the commitment of TTP to secure resources to achieve their goal (Q.15); their emphasis on research-based project design (Q.16); and their willingness to learn from their experience (Q.22).

Conversely, dramatically low scores of 1 out of 5 apply to TTP’s internal capacities in role assignment (Q.17), in-house reporting system (Q.18), program planning and evaluation skills (Q.19), getting timely feedback from other working groups (Q.20) and making periodic program reviews (Q.21). Moreover, the ability of the TTP to follow-up with their target groups (Q.24) is low to moderate, with a score of 2.

From this data it is apparent that TTP roots itself firmly in ideology, belief and commitment. As a result, they devote their energy to securing resources and making their project as effective and practical as possible while aligning themselves to the organization’s missions. Every core member has a clear picture in their mind as to how to link to what they are doing for the organization’s mission.

In terms of project cycle management capacities, particularly the program planning, reporting system, project evaluation and regular project reviews, TTP’s capacities remain relatively low due to core
members not having been specifically assigned such responsibilities. It was found that the first formal program evaluation was done by an SIT graduate student. In this regard, a core member said, “We do not have specific roles...we just take on whatever happens to show up; and generally, I don’t think we have plotted out ahead of time. We don’t necessarily as a Core for that project designate that ‘you’re looking after this grant for this project’ ” (A focus group discussion on organization self-assessment).

An additional point found within project cycle management revealed unclear follow-up directions and roles of the TTP core members to the working groups. The co-founder once said:

Take the Health & Wellness Group, for example. If we were really on top of it....we would be working with them to help them improve....As everybody knows that group hasn’t functioned real well together. They have had some breakdowns in communication and things kind of fell apart. I don’t know if that’s feedback or is that just going in supporting them to meet their own goals better? And we’ve had groups that have stagnated or stalled and things aren’t moving and we have to go in to investigate and maybe that’s not the right time for this, but when that happens we show concern and look into it. (A group discussion)

Although the core members observe and feel concerned for the survival of the working groups within this Transition movement, they still do not have any systematic approach to support the groups. This raises the question of what has prevented them from doing so.

**Human resource management**

Figure 4 below depicts the overall picture of TTP’s capacity in human resource management. Within this component only the indicator of sharing and fulfilling of expectations (Q.27) received the highest score of 3 out of 5 scales. The other abilities, namely, orientation process (Q.25), feedback (Q.28), well–being assurance (Q.29) and succession (Q.26), were rated as poor, with all being rated only 1 in 5.

Data from field observation reveals organizational culture on strictly giving only positive feedback has become the organization’s norm. An
intern recalled during the group discussion, “I would have enjoyed more critical feedback. Give me something I can work on. [Positive feedback] is always great…good for my ego; I just didn’t have much to work with.” This is relatively similar to a comment from an exit-interview with a former intern:

We need more constructive feedback. Yes. I don’t feel that critical feedback happened. I’m not sure why that happened….whether it be that this is a new thing to the program with interns and they don’t have feedback built in at this moment in time. Maybe the last core meeting when there is some feedback; but again, it’s all rosy. You know that expression: It is all roses. (A former female intern)

When asked about why critical and constructive feedback rarely happened in the organization, the same intern recalled:

I wonder if it’s part of this Transition Movement... In that we look to the positive. We keep it positive. That’s part of Transition…keeping it positive. I wonder if that’s why this critical eye isn’t looked at as much. Even when we’re evaluating projects…Are we looking at all aspects of the projects? Or, are we just looking at the successes? That might be why. I’m really not sure. I think it’s hard to give feedback, especially anything that could be deemed critical. (An intern exit-interview)

According to Holmgren’s Permaculture Principles (2004) in Hopkins’s (2008, p.138) publication, he emphasized the application of self-regulation. He argues that, “the permaculture principles should be able to self-regulate, and require the minimum of intervention and maintenance.” The incidents of the TTP giving only positive feedback without proposing what should be improved seemed to resonate well with the underlying Permaculture principle of the Transition movement.

As far as volunteer management is concerned, TTP has unique ways of managing volunteers. When it comes to the word volunteers in this paper, it includes both general volunteers at the project level, core members and student interns. It was found that most of the administrative office work, publicity and fundraising responsibilities, as well as the training and supervision of office volunteers rest in the hand of interns. Interns, after being trained in basic office functions, will do their project of interest. The co-founder stated vividly, “I’ve encouraged people to come up with their projects—a project or projects.”

In terms of the recognition process for the volunteers, the co-founder has several strategies from internal appreciation (verbal recognition, decision-making involvement and free-will project execution) to
public awareness promotion of the interns’ contribution to the organization. The co-founder reemphasized, “We want everyone to know and acknowledge [the interns’ contributions].” When asked about the method of dealing with failure caused by interns, the co-founder said:

I don’t see it as a blaming thing; I would see it as how do we learn from what happened? This is what we expected in terms of outcomes; we didn’t get that outcome. Why is that? What do we need to do next time in order to get the outcome we want? TTP has various ways to keep volunteers motivated to work for the organization indeed. (An interview with the co-founder)

Although TTP is new to human resource management, it does well in volunteer management overall. Knowing how to maintain motivation among volunteers keeps the organization running at low cost. TTP still has various internal challenges which include difficulty securing quality interns. The co-founder’s resignation from an academic institute may reduce the chance of receiving interns. Or, the lack of connection between new core group members and potential institutes may further reduce the chance for obtaining quality interns. Also, little or no constructive feedback for existing interns may decrease their enthusiasm and desire to serve the organization.

Financial management

Figure 5 demonstrates TTP’s financial capacities. It is clearly seen that both financial planning and monitoring (Q.30) and reviews (Q.31) hardly take place within TTP. This is because the core members understand that TTP does not require a budget to run their activities. They mainly understand that financial planning is necessary when spending money. Therefore, during the discussion with the core members, one said, “we occasionally invite the accountant who does bookkeeping to talk about the organizational expenditure and balance.”

In addition, it was found that the idea of financial planning is, or seems to be, of no great concern for the organization partly because the organization has been using a minimal budget to run their projects. The most important thing is that they have only one main donor who gives grant money to the same grant
recipients every other year and the student intern who was responsible for fundraising has left after completing her internship.

In addition, the most recurring expenditure has been office rent at $100 U.S. per month, paid from money the organization received from individual donors solicited by the co-founder. Additional administrative support costs were gained from some of the working groups’ projects and “open hat” donations at various events. During the course of my observations, this topic has not really been discussed seriously, though frequently mentioned among the core members, especially the co-founder, who has been taking care of all administrative work.

In conclusion, TTP’s capacities in financial management, especially in aspects of planning, acquiring and managing, are at a rudimentary level. In order to secure finance for their operations, TTP has a long way to go to equip itself with these necessary skills.

Community skills

Figure 6 presents the Community skills capacity level of the TTP. From this bar graph, TTP has sufficient community abilities, receiving a good (a score of 4) rating in making strong linkages (Q.32) while being responsive to the community’s needs. TTP is also doing well in resolving and managing conflicts in the community (Q.33), with a moderate score of 3 on a 5-level scale.

To better illustrate TTP’s community skills, the co-founder shared his insight on this matter:

This whole project of TP is really about two things: It’s about a conversation. This is a big community conversation in which we are trying to engage as many people as we possibly can on what their interests are and how they can fit into this, to make their interests real. And the other [thing] is about a relationship with everybody in the town, a very positive, strong, connected, supportive, affirming relationship. If there is anything I am trying to do, it is to keep the relationships very strong. In that new era we can grow anything we want, to make it the community we want to live in. (An interview with the co-founder)
Another TTP core member also proudly shared his perception on community’s working skills:

TTP contributes to building the community through the core members listening to the community’s need, excelling on community forums, networking with community people, and functioning as social igniters. On the mega problems, we are valuing the interests and decisions of the community people, providing social space for community people to meet and share their concern about the present situation. (An interview with a key core member)

The data from field observations also reveals that TTP has informal channels to obtain community feedback from open space meetings, former core members’ updates, and friends. Most critical feedback has tended to come from former core members, as is the case in community people criticizing TTP core members having monopolized leadership roles. In response to the criticism, TTP organized open space meetings in order to promote leadership transparency and community participation, though only limited demographic groups (middle to retiring age and highly educated individuals) have participated.

From the data above, it is obvious that TTP excels in engaging the community people’s interest, building and cultivating relationships among them, valuing everyone’s ideas and providing a social platform for them to be heard. Their expertise in community skills is an asset that ensures TTP’s successful work in the community.

In reference to conflict resolution, TTP possesses a sound organizational approach. For example, there was a dispute case between the project coordinator and a community garden member which had not been resolved at the project level. The disputed member sent a petition letter (email) to the co-founder since she believed that TTP was the supervisory body for the Community Garden project. This issue was included in the meeting’s agenda to seek a solution. By the meeting’s end, a process for dispute resolution was designed. All the members agreed to appoint two core members who were not related to the project to be liaisons with disputing individuals. It is evident that, TTP has sound problem resolution practices within the projects under its initiative.
External Civic action capacity level

According to Fox’s definition of Civic action, a grassroots organization needs skills to influence external decision making and to hold decision makers accountable for their performance of governance. An interview with the TTP co-founder reveals that the local government has been excluded from the organization’s target group. The co-founder said, “We want to be politically neutral and free from political influence.”

In contrast to TTP’s limited effort to advocate political alliance as a way to support its mandates, Figure 7 describes TTP’s strong capacity on inter-institutional linkages, reflected by consistent scores of 4 in all aspects. TTP rated itself as Good in researching project outcomes to improve organizational strength (Q.34) and forging intra- and inter-sectorial alliances and coalitions (Q.36 and Q.37). As an example, an intern in charge of the Farm to School project stated, “I just partnered with the law school to bring the bike generators.” Furthermore, TTP has become affiliated with several networks which match its interests, for example, the 350.org (an organization working on climate change) and the local Greenhouse project.

Another strong capacity area is having an adequate number of resource persons who can represent the organization and communicate consistently both locally and nationally (Q.35). It seems that everyone in the TTP can raise public awareness on the organization’s work and success in the community. Although active in communicating with their networks and community people, many core members feel that they need to improve their communication skills. A female core member said, “We need to practice the ‘elevator speech’ in order to tell the public what our organization is doing precisely and concisely.”
The need to practice an *elevator speech* indicates communication gaps between TTP and the community that require bridging.

In conclusion, Transition Town Putney possesses several crucial internal abilities to maintain its function, for example, program management, human resource management, community and networking skills. Furthermore, TTP has a flexible and horizontal organizational structure and its team is highly functional to fulfill both personal and organizational mandates of making social change. However, there are still many critical issues for the organization to address. These include: constructive feedback practices, well-designed follow-up plans with roles clarification between TTP core members and existing working groups and supported groups as well as securing funds for administrative costs. Another issue is how to get local political buy-in to assist their work in the future.

**Organizational capacity and effectiveness to work with direct target groups**

The above sections have described the internal capacities that the TTP has in its day-to-day operations. These capacities have contributed to TTP’s abilities to run their initiatives productively in the community. The findings led to another inquiry as to how well TTP serves their direct beneficiaries in the real working situation. The following paragraphs shed light on this inquiry.

I have divided this section into two parts. The first part describes the findings of how TTP has been supporting the Putney Farmers’ Market (PFM) since PFM is the case study in this paper. The second part portrays how TTP works with other working groups and supported groups.

Before describing how TTP works with the groups, it may be useful to understand the evolution patterns of both the working groups and the supported groups. Within the Transition movement there are two options for the formation of working groups. (See Appendix K) In the first option, an individual or interested party expresses their desire to start an initiative pertinent to the Transition movement’s mission. A TTP initiating member may be approached by individual parties asking for advice on starting a new working group. TTP facilitates in forming a feasible idea for the potential project by introducing like-minded community people to more deeply explore the possibilities of their idea. Then the taskforce conducts a forum in the community to promote larger participation and discussion among community
people as a way to increase the level of interest. At this point, a project working group is formed to plan and implement the group’s activity.

In the second option, the working group may evolve from one of TTP’s broad awareness raising activities to address the mega-problems (natural resource deletion, instable economic and climate change). Once the participants become interested in such a topic, the working groups are formed to carry on their project.

As for the supported groups, they are the groups with projects unrelated to the Transition movement’s agenda which existed prior to the inception of a local Transition Town (TT) movement. Dependent on their needs, they might seek help from their local Transition Town.

It is noticeable that the formation of the working groups under TTP initiatives is on an individual basis. There has not been any step taken by TTP to pull together individual initiatives into an overall community action plan to ensure their coherence. The following section explains the relationships between TTP and its groups.

*Relationship between TTP Core and working groups and supported groups*

The figure above conceptualizes relationships among the TTP, the working groups, and the supported groups. As shown, the core group exists at the center of TTP’s organizational structure. The
group is comprised of representatives of interested individuals who may or may not have their own project. The representatives meet every other week and are the main body that determines direction, priorities, and day-to-day issues and plans events. This group is responsible for the support services of the organization for fundraising, financial management, recruiting and supervising volunteers, while ensuring that the organization’s activities are in line with the mission. During the bi-monthly meetings, all representatives orally report their project’s progress.

Under TTP’s organizational structure, the project coordinators have autonomous decision making power. For example, if an issue is occurring at the project level, the project coordinator tries to solve it first. In the case of the Community Garden project having an issue of product loss from children playing and naively harvesting the crops, was rapidly addressed by core members. However, if problems still persist, the coordinator would report the situation at the core’s bi-monthly meetings in order to seek organizational input or intervention.

**TTP’s contribution to the Putney Farmers’ Market project**

During the first year, TTP contributed tremendously to the PFM project. The core members said during a bi-weekly meeting, “The PFM [was] our first project and every core member had helped each other the best they could to make this project happen…During the start-up, the PFM needed a lot of supporting hands.” TTP’s contributions to the PFM project can be summarized in eight ways: coordinating with key stakeholders, raising community awareness on localization, fundraising to purchase equipment, allocating volunteers for the market, doing publicity, enhancing the market’s viability through research work, as well as building the sense of festivity and liveliness at the market.

To elaborate, TTP, through its co-founder, negotiated with a landowner to receive a cheap Land Lease Agreement—one dollar rental fee per annum. It also conducted a series of community awareness building conversations through local resilience-based activities, e.g., local awareness forums, films and discussions. TTP fundraised at the market and received donations for a tent that has been used for the manager’s booth. It also assigned the core members, interns and volunteers to set-up and break-down the booth and to help the market manager on other general issues at the market weekly. All kinds of publicity
were on the TTP’s shoulders such as advertising on I-Putney and the transition listserv, in local newspapers, and on sandwich boards. A core member, who is also a board member of the PFM, recalled, “The first year we used the TTP sandwich boards every week to announce the PFM event, until the PFM made its own sandwich boards this year” (An interview with a core member).

TTP also functions as an inter-institutional liaison. The same core member added,

Once we got the tent or when we wanted to put up the signs, we had to ask for approval from the land owners. The landowners are not directly in communication with the PFM; they are directly in communication with TP. So, when the PFM has some requests from/to the landowners then I had to represent the PFM and the TTP core had to say, ‘The PFM would like to put up a sign…and the market would like to have picnic tables and a tent.’ We had somebody…in this case; it is the co-founder who is the designated liaison with the landowners. (An interview with a TTP core member who is also a PFM board member)

The PFM manager also admired the TTP’s involvement during the first operational year of the market, especially, TTP’s social connection to potential community supporters, in this case, the landowner. She said, “It is helpful to have the co-founder act as liaison between the market and the landowner. It also has been helpful to receive advertising support through the Transition listserv emails and the newsletter.” Apart from that, TTP has assigned and supervised a graduate student to do project evaluation for the PFM Market to enhance its viability. TTP also helped build the sense of excitement. The same core member recollected, “Then, we made a big sign that had an archway with some flags. We made it festive. Those are things that contributed to a sense of excitement around the PFM during the first year.” These are all the roles of the TTP to the PFM, which had helped make the first market season successful and memorable.

**TTP’s contribution to other community working groups and supported groups**

Apart from the PFM project, TTP has significant and various roles in supporting other community groups. Its roles can be summarized in six areas based on each community group’s need: generation of goodwill, publicity, forum facilitation, community connection, conflict resolution, and community liaison or matchmaker.
To begin with, a Community Garden coordinator stated the contribution of TTP as building “community goodwill of farmers who donated time and plants for a successful first year.” He further mentioned:

The goodwill was generated because in part, people involved in TTP already had generated much goodwill prior to the formation of the TTP and the Community Garden was part of the community; these people have been very active. So naturally this endeavor was met with additional goodwill on the part of the farmers and Putney school garden managers who plowed the field. (An excerpt from an email from the coordinator)

This clearly demonstrates the ability of the TTP in building the sense of community among the general public to support the Community Garden Project.

Publicity is also one of the TTP’s core strengths. A quote from the Putney into Aging group’s president amplifies it. She admiringly recalled:

It was only because TTP had helped with all that publicity and getting the word out that people knew it was happening. If we had just put out a few fliers saying we were going to do it, I don’t think the numbers [of people attending] would have been the same at all. But, [it was] because TTP got behind it. (An interview with the group leader)

The same person also reconfirmed the ability of TTP to do a good job in facilitating a community forum for her organization. She recalled:

The TTP co-founder was fabulous in juggling the difference [in attendance] because we had made a plan for how the meeting was going to work—the live groups of 5 and so on. But, we had so many more people than we expected, so he had to make some adjustments in our plan. He did a beautiful job. (An interview with the Putney into Aging group leader)

It is clearly seen that TTP’s role in supporting the working groups during their initial stage is vital. Moreover, TTP can function as a conflict resolution resource for the supported groups. The coordinator of the Food Shelf Project stated:

TTP’s volunteer coordinator put together the group norms. I used those norms and adjusted it to be Food Shelf-related and I introduced those working group norms to the FS group…respecting and listening to one another…Things that any group should know. It’s (a) nice reminder for practice. I’ve used things like that…tools that TTP has used with other groups…It was nice just to put something on the table that everyone could read and agree upon. ‘Yes, we’ll call if we’re going to be late. Or, yes, we’ll find a substitute if we can’t do it’…taking responsibility. It was really well received…So, it’s stirred more conversation within the group. So, it’s been a benefit. (An interview with the group coordinator)
This is an indication that TTP not only provides start-up supports to its supported groups, but also helps hold the groups when in conflict crisis.

Furthermore, TTP positions itself as a matchmaker to bridge like-minded people to form a working group. According to the co-founder, he described:

What I’m able to do is really a kind of a matchmaker, and ‘Here are three or four resources but also here are three or four people interested in the very same project you are. You can get together with them and carry the conversation further.’ TTP gives some kind of additional resources that might be useful for that kind of project or initiative. (An interview with the co-founder)

This clearly indicates that TTP responds to the needs of community people effectively so as to support them in successfully starting their own initiatives.

*Expectations of the working groups and the supported groups for TTP*

The duration of an initiating group normally lasts between six months to two years before they hand over their leadership roles to the new working groups’ representatives. In the case of TTP, it was found that there are still some unfulfilled expectations of TTP by the working groups’ coordinators. For example, when asked about their expectations of TTP, each project coordinator/manager identified different areas of expectation which included: stakeholder maintenance, clearer follow-up and support for the working group, success-story’s ownership, financial support, community networking and publicity.

Firstly, the Community Garden manager wished TTP to negotiate with the landowner to have a long-term land lease to create “greater security.” He said, “I would like TTP core to work toward land security for that parcel, which would allow us to pursue the dream of fully engaging in permaculture, renewable energy and greater community involvement on that parcel.”

The second key issue of clear follow-up and support strategies of the TTP surfaced during an interview with the PFM manager who stated:

I want the board members from the two entities (of PFM and TTP) to discuss what support each organization can provide to address the market’s needs. I have seen some core members being around the market talking with customers, some came to the manager tent, just to say hello. I want a more tangible support or collaboration between the two organizations. And this should be done at the organizational level and in a shared need manner. What is PFM’s need? How might TTP help?
In other words, if TTP would like to still be involved with the PFM, they should have a clear objective and seek prior agreement as to what each seeks from the other.

The same PFM manager further stated, “I will admit though, that since I left the core group, I have felt there is not as much support for the market coming directly from Transition Putney…There has not been publicity from TTP anymore…less excitement building from TTP.” She felt a “distant” relationship from the TTP after she had resigned from the core group membership. This is another example that reemphasizes gaps in communication between TTP and its working groups.

In contrast to the PFM manager’s expectation, a TTP core member who also serves as the PFM board member explicitly explained to me, not in front of the market manager that:

The PFM and its board gained some autonomy. It was basically in the hands of the manager, with the support of the PFM board. I don’t think that every week, that FM was announced on I-Putney. Or, that every week there was a message sent through the list-serv. Its 23 weeks so we can’t really send a message to do that every time. The first year was 16 weeks; the second (was) 23 weeks. So, the communication had to be different. (A TTP core member who is also board member of the PFM)

This raised the issue of effective communication between TTP and the autonomous working group and the supporting roles to their working groups.

Another communication gap is related to success-story ownership. The PFM manager also mentioned, “Despite [TTP’s] reduced role with the market, they have been claiming the credit for the market’s success.” This prompted a question as to how TTP can maintain their “Transition Brand” among the successful projects that have become autonomous as in the case of the PFM. Because the Transition movement is recognized and highly regarded by people in the community, associating the brand name with successful projects will also generate more buy-in from the community. In so doing, the Transition’s brand name is perpetuated.

In addition to the unfulfilled expectations of stakeholder maintenance, follow-up and support and success-story ownership, the Putney into Aging coordinator emphasized that financial support from TTP might be necessary, saying, “We might need some financing because we do have some expenses, not
huge expenses, but some that are going to relate to the telephone that we are going to get.” The same person also wished to continue using TTP’s wide community connections, recognizing them being “a great help to let people in town know what is happening to my [her] group.” Indeed, members of the working groups hold expectations of the TTP.

Even though expectations exist, TTP remains firm that “it is time” for them dissolve their leadership. It is the TTP’s choice to either continue supporting the groups until the groups become autonomous or turn their back on the groups. This raises the question, to what extent is TTP capable of fulfilling the needs of the community groups in terms of follow-up and support of the working groups?

In summary, the above sections have described the abilities and effectiveness of TTP in responding to the working groups and the community needs. During the past two years, TTP has been acting as both the community awareness raiser and community development organizer. Their community skills in coordinating with key stakeholders, conducting publicity, providing academic resources, creating community excitement, facilitating forums and indirectly resolving conflict resolution are prerequisites for the initiating group before it begins any Transition initiatives. Although TTP’s initiating group members have clearly expressed that they are only a steering team who facilitate the community people to form working groups, unfulfilled expectations remain within the target groups, namely, stakeholder maintenance, follow-up and support strategies, success-story ownership, financial assistance and continued publicity effort.

Community Resiliency

The following section describes findings on how the Putney Farmers’ Market contributes to community resilience. This section answers the third research question as to what extent PFM, as a TTP initiative, generates social and economic resilience in the town of Putney. I begin by presenting the evolution of the PFM, the market’s operational outcomes, the relationship between the TTP and the PFM, and findings in aspects of organizational structure, functionality and capacities of the PFM. The second part of this section describes the economic and social resiliency that PFM has generated so far for the Town of Putney.
Putney Farmers’ Market’s overview

As one of TTP’s initiatives, Putney Farmers’ Market started from option 1, where people sharing a common interest formed a group to start a project in the community. They received support from TTP who helped facilitate the group’s formation and project’s kick-start. PFM has its own board members, who do not have any position titles as to who should be the Chair, the Deputy, etc. The PFM board meets once a month for one hour. The market has a part-time manager who is a full-time staff at the local Food Co-op and works ten hours per week for the PFM. The only designated role on the Board is Treasurer, required by law. Most of the market’s working direction and decisions are made by the market manager. Board members’ roles are to hear the idea presentations from the manager, give some advice and approve them.

The market has been in operation since 2010. It served the community eight times (six times in summer and two times in winter), starting from September to December 2010. During the first year, the market generated net revenue of $39,121 U.S. into the local economy with more than 30 vendors participating. In 2011, in the summer market season alone, the market generated more than $52,000 U.S. in 23 weeks, with 45 vendors and approximately 200 customers present per weekly market. This report excludes the 2011 winter markets. The market has been open from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and located adjacent to the Putney Food Co-op on an open space close to Route 5. The market serves both local people and tourists with its mission “to support local agriculture by providing a direct marketing outlet for agricultural producers and food and craft artisans, while building community and providing regional sustainability” (http://putneyfarmersmarket.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/pfm-market-policies-2011-updated.pdf, 2012).
Putney Farmers’ Market’s organogram

An illustration of the PFM’s organogram appears to the right. Eight Board members, comprised of six vendor representatives and two active community members who are TTP core members, govern the market. Among the two TTP members, one of them is the manager of the Food Co-op who supervises the PFM market manager. As for the PFM’s manager, her primary jobs are to take care of the day-to-day work, accounting and marketing for the market.

Benefits from sharing the same personnel

During interviews with the PFM board members who also serve as the TTP core members and the market manager, a question was asked as to what the effect is likely to be of having a person or persons working for both the TTP and the PFM organizations. The findings reveal the benefits of having one or more persons working for two or more organizations. Those benefits are perpetuation of working philosophy, creation of confidence and unity, reduction of conflicts, and expansion of information channels.

Firstly, having member(s) representing both organizations (TTP and PFM) perpetuates and embeds the Transition movement’s philosophy in the program. A TTP core member said, “I think representing TTP and coming from TTP when it (PFM) started was really an asset.” He further said that:

I see the board’s mission as [being] in charge of creating a vision and frame for the PFM. Representing TTP and the very clear way we understand our role in the community sometimes added something to the answers in terms of local resilience, encouraging local foods, strengthening local economy, building community, creating a venue where people could meet to talk about those issues. (An interview with a Board member of PFM who is still a TTP core member)
Secondly, having a TTP core member as a PFM board member creates a sense of unity and confidence to kick off a new project, the PFM. A quote from a TTP core member who is working as the General Store manager of Putney Co-op demonstrates this. During a community forum organized by the PFM steering committee, a guest speaker who was a nearby farmers’ market manager discouraged the team by saying that the Putney Farmers’ Market would not become successful. At that time the TTP core member replied politely to him, “Putney has the potential to start and run the market. We share trust which has been strengthened and brought up together by the Transition movement.” Grounded by this encouragement the team gained the momentum to kick off their first market a week later. This specifically highlights how the community of Putney has benefited from the Transition movement. Having TTP core members as part of PFM’s working team, and vice versa, is beneficial.

Thirdly, having a person representing the two organizations reduces tension among other projects under the same organization. Data reveals that there is a tension between individuals from different projects under the TTP organization. For example, the market’s manager, who used to be a TTP initiating member, said, “Personally, I was able to ask questions about the market operations directly with other core members. In some cases, I was able to quell rumors and deal with problems (usually with other project coordinators).” In dealing with the tension, a male TTP core member who also serves as a PFM Board member said, “by me being a member of the TTP core group, and representing the PFM, allowed me to have a circle where I could share the issue and actually communicate our need, knowing that I represented all and that members of the community garden were there.” This clearly shows that TTP diffuses tension among individuals from different projects. Even though some personal agitation might persist, the projects still continue at their own pace, without much interruption. From this, it is apparent that having someone representing both the PFM and TTP can bring timely problem solving to the market.

Fourthly, having a TTP core member as a PFM member can provide a good opportunity to know community needs in a timely manner. A female core member said:

[TTP meetings are] a good venue for the market to know the needs and concerns of the community people where it is sometimes quite hard to get it directly at the market. It is a
way to triangulate the data of what the community needs are and how to make the market responsive to those needs. (An interview with a female core member)

In other words, having one or more persons working for both TTP and PFM can generate more direct opportunities for the representative to be exposed to community needs, viewpoints and feedback through various channels.

All in all, having the same members working for both TTP and PFM ensures the working philosophy is embedded, contributes to the sense of unity, lessens tensions and broadens communication. The more TTP can build on these benefits, the greater it likely impacts upon community resilience.

**Putney Farmer’s Market Organizational Profiles**

Factors that contribute to the Putney Farmers’ Market (PFM) maintaining its day-to-day function are worth exploring as a background to understanding the linkages between organizational capacity and its effectiveness. The following section presents an overview of findings from the data collected from the PFM using the same organizational assessment tools as used with the TTP. The tools were adapted to suit the PFM’s context. Interviews were conducted with the PFM’s management team. The data presentation begins with organizational structure, its functions, and its capacities in aspects of Project Cycle Management (PCM), human resource management, and Civic actions with its community and networking skills.

**Organizational structure**

Figure 8 depicts PFM’s overall organizational structure. It was found that almost all organizational capacity indicators were rated from satisfactory (3 out of 5) to excellent levels. The most prominent features in this aspect included a timely and democratic decision process (Q.3 and Q.4), the project design fulfilling organizational mission (Q.5),
transparency and information sharing (Q.6), friendly working atmosphere among the team (Q.8) and active listening (Q.9). PFM has relatively effective internal performance gap identification (Q.2), a mechanism to correct rumor (Q.7) and coaching system (Q.11). These findings indicate that PFM runs its organization in a horizontal structure where everyone’s voice is heard and considered. All information is equally shared so that people in the organization react to what they are supposed to do to improve the performance of the organization. The indicators of role delegation (Q.10) and smooth work flow (Q.1) received a moderate rating (3 out of 5). This is partly because the PFM has just recently been established. All work flows and job delegation are not yet in place.

Organizational functionality

When considering organizational functionality, Figure 9 best captures the current level of PFM’s effectiveness. The data fluctuated, but mostly leaned toward a low (1) or fair (2) territory. Only 10 percent of the organizational indicators were rated as excellent with a score of 5, among them, the ability to know community needs (Q.15), and the free-will of all members to share their ideas and concerns (Q.20).

![Figure 9.Organizational functionality](image)

Most striking in this picture is the low level of individual volunteerism (Q.12-13), and the limited experience of the PFM Board members to provide practical, corrective and proactive interventions in regard to the changing market environment (Q.21-25). This is partly because many Board members are
new to their positions. Also, this is due to the reality that the Board members devote only one hour to their monthly meeting which is insufficient to thoroughly review and plan for their market strategies. The market manager shed light on the Board members’ issues by saying, “I think the board members’ ideas for the PFM, and how sometimes our own ideas of the Board members, can be a little narrow and not expansive; [they are] not able to be creative, in creating something.” She further stated:

We do not have a process for understanding our shoppers other than speaking with them, watching sales numbers and seeing what vendors they respond to. And what you (the researcher working as an intern) are doing right now … the surveys, that’s really the first time we’ve done surveys. And that brings up something interesting… for PFM next year.

Another reason for the low level of PFM Board members’ involvement in interventions might be that the majority of them are vendors, with only two members being non-vendors from the local community. This raised the question of the Board’s diversity and the Board’s training. In regard to the Board’s diversity, how does PFM ensure a balance between the number of vendors and members from other groups with more diverse backgrounds? Also, in terms of training, what should be the process to train Board members?

Organizational capacities

Figure 10. Organizational capacity: PCM

The cylinder graph in Figure 10 above shows levels of capacities in the Project Cycle Management (PCM) of the PFM. From this figure it is clearly seen that the PFM’s management team rated the aspects of project design as relevant to PFM’s mission (Q.29), and responsiveness to its
community’s needs (Q.31) as excellent, with scores of 5 on both. They also rated a high score in the market’s ability to implement corrective actions (Q.39) when problems arise at the market. This was because there is a market manager. Having a long-term market manager resulted in a high rating scale of “Good” (4 out of 5) for the organizational ability to monitor the market place on a regular basis (Q.33 and Q.42) and the ability to solve all kinds of problems happening at the market (Q.34).

Of all the organizational indicators within this capacity, only timely feedback (Q.36) received the lowest rating of Fair (2 on a 5-level scale). Addressing this issue, the market manager said, “We don’t have a reporting format for our meetings, other than the financial report.” According to the management team, the remaining indicators were rated moderate (3 out of 5) respectively for all of the following areas: program planning (Q.30), role and responsibility analysis (Q.32), Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system in place (Q.35), regular program review (Q.37), drawing lessons learned (Q.38), level of understanding of the significance of M&E and the skill to do M&E among the board members (Q.40, Q.41 and Q.42). However, it is apparent that the PFM has not done any comprehensive program evaluation. To date, the manager has performed only routine work to monitor the market’s operation. If the PFM had previously been doing a systematic market evaluation, they would be able to utilize the findings from an M&E report to improve their project management.

**Human resource management capacity**

From Figure 11, it is apparent that the PFM has a strong reward system (Q.43) and an effective learning environment for application and knowledge transfer within the organization (Q.44), with both indicators receiving a score of 5. However, scores on personnel succession (Q.45) and personnel well-being (Q.46) are relatively low, receiving only a score of 1.
This finding in the human resource component is paradoxical. On the one hand, the PFM is excellent in rewarding its only paid staff (the market manager); while on the other, it is neglecting organizational planning for future staff turnover. The reason behind this low rating was shared by a board member during a group discussion:

There was a time that the market manager was sick for one month. At that time, a TTP core member who was also a PFM member, with the support of other TTP core members, had to step into all functions of the market with difficulties, both from his own personal health and the lack of guidance on the market operation. (A PFM Board member)

During the discussion, all participants agreed that the market manager should produce a manual explaining how to run routines of the market as a preventive measure. This also raised a question of sustainability of “one lady shows” in any kind of organization where full authority is delegated to one person to do all the work without having any reserve plan in case the key person becomes ill or resigns.

Organization’s community skills

![Figure 12. Organizational community skills](image)

Figure 12 shows the level of organizational community skills of the PFM. From this cylinder graph it is apparent that both abilities to create strong linkages with the community and conflict solutions were rated good (4) and excellent (5), respectively.

In supporting this data, an in-depth interview with the market manager revealed the truth behind this finding. It was found that the market manager was capable of balancing expectations between vendors and customers. The manager gave a very high priority to customer service as a way to retain vendors and maintain customers’ loyalty. One way to maintain vendors, the manager said, is to “keep them mindful that we are a very new market, in a very competitive market scene. In order for us to succeed, we first have to survive our ‘baby’ years. If this means that they should keep modest financial expectations, then that will be better in the
long run.” Furthermore, the manager reiterated the importance of being “fair and impartial with vendors, [to show] no favoritism.”

As for the method used for maintaining customers’ excitement and interest in buying locally, the same manager uses “real market imagery” as her advertising theme. This theme gives a sense of the “personality” to the market better than “text and a logo.” In the market’s Facebook page (http://www.facebook.com/putneyfarmersmarket, 2012), the manager has posted links to articles related to food security, climate change, GMOs, food activism, farm-to-school, and other topics that connect the market customers to other tangible aspects of “shopping locally.” This is another technique to balance the “anchor components” of the market—vendors and customers.

Organizational networking capacities

Figure 13 depicts the networking abilities of the PFM. It is clearly seen that all networking

indicators were rated as good (4 out of 5 scales) and excellent (a full 5 score) by the management team. The PFM is capable of doing research that develops its expertise (Q.49) in order to promote acceptance among its networks (Q.50 and Q.52). They are capable of collaborating with their network (Q.51), while ensuring their networks bring new ideas and resources (Q.54) necessary for achieving the organizational goal and mission (Q.53).

One example of effective networking with other organizations was that PFM could
successfully conduct market research with the help of graduate students who were working for TTP. Another positive outcome was PFM receiving a grant after becoming a member of a regional farmers’ market association.

In conclusion, Putney Farmers’ Market possesses several essential abilities to run its operation effectively, especially, in terms of sound finance, administrative rigor, democratic and equal organizational structure, and strong community and networking skills. However, there are still crucial issues for the organization to tackle. For example, it will be necessary to capacitate the new Board members with necessary skills to help them run the project successfully. PFM also needs to design an effective project management plan and, more especially, to create and put in place a monitoring and evaluation system.

Social Resilience

To address the sub-research question on how the PFM generates community resilience, the following paper segment describes the main findings from surveys among 131 customers, 18 non-customers, numerous informal interviews with the customers, two local authorities and six local business operators. This section is, then, sub-divided into three parts: 1) Survey Data presentation among shoppers; 2) Survey Data presentation among non-shoppers; and 3) Political buy-in and business alliance.

Survey Data: Shoppers

In order to measure empirically how the Putney Farmers’ Market contributes to resiliency in the town of Putney, the market survey was designed to measure changes in local-buying behavior among those surveyed. The survey consisted of four sections. The first section assessed the spending behavior of the respondents in terms of shopping frequency and length of time doing their shopping at the PFM. The second section asked the respondents about what makes them want to continue shopping at the market. This portion was designed to capture empirical data on social resiliency. Then, the third section focused on capturing the extent to which PFM has changed the shopping behavior of the shoppers. The last section asked the shoppers to reflect on the impacts that the market had on their time and money spent at the chain stores in comparison to that which they spent at the PFM project.
Customers’ baseline assessment

They have spent money at the market on an average of $14.79 U.S. per shopper. Almost half of those surveyed (47%) said when they did their shopping at the market they would buy agricultural produce. Nearly two-fifths (37%) preferred prepared foods; while crafts and other items were their third and fourth choices, with 12% and 4% respectively. As for the shopping frequency, more than a quarter (32%) came to shop at the market every week, a similar number (32%) to those who shopped at the market twice a month.

The market’s attractions

In the survey’s second section, when asked about what kept them coming to shop at the market, almost half of the shoppers (47%, N=131) saw accessibility to local food as “important”. About a quarter (26.45%) of them placed local food accessibility as an “extremely important” reason. Furthermore, almost a quarter of the respondents (21.74%) placed condition of produce as “important,” while an equal portion of those surveyed (21.74%) cited product condition “extremely good” as their prime reason.

Congruent to the access to local food, nearly a third of those surveyed (32.39%, N=131) held product freshness as “important”. More than a third (35%) saw knowledge of where their food came from as an “extremely important” consideration for them to do their shopping at the market. Finally, nearly a quarter of the respondents (24.66%) identified the social atmosphere of the market being an “extremely important” reason for them to shop at the market because the market had a “festive” and “fun” appeal.

Figure 14 is a graphic representation of data derived from the first section of the survey on spending behavior of the shoppers (N=131). It was found that the average shopping time among PFM’s customers was 27 minutes.
As far as the sense of community resilience is concerned and to what extent the PFM has created it, Figure 15 visualizes this finding within the second portion of the survey. My definition of social resilience in this paper describes it as “a long term commitment among local customers and vendors and occurrence of a sense of community and camaraderie.”

When asked the reason behind their becoming regular shoppers of the PFM, more than a quarter (28.36%) of the shoppers held the chance of getting to know local farmers/vendors in extremely high regard. This was followed by more than one-fifth of the respondents (23.24%) who considered getting to know other shoppers as very important for them.

Complementing the above findings, the market manager once explained:

PFM is meeting the people who are growing the food so that you can ask questions, or if you go so far as to see where the food is grown just because you met the farmer. Or, coming back week to week, having taken someone’s produce home, tried it and found something that tasted special about it to you. Being able to repeat that experience…Go to that same farmer saying, ‘I really like this guy’s arugula.’ That’s a really personal thing…it’s commerce on a level you are not likely to experience in chain grocery stores or supermarkets. (An interview with the market manager)

Also, in the second section of the survey, to the shoppers’ liking, they found the market a good place for promoting learning and sharing of new food, knowledge and skills. The PFM generates a place for the people to learn, adopt, practice and engrain new mindsets on buying local from their shopping experience. It is a place for local people to start thinking, practicing and maintaining their changed behavior from the old habits of spending money outside the community to spending it within the community. The market also makes local food more visible in public spaces; it educates customers on the potential for seasonal local foods. The place is also promoting positive interactions between vendors and customers to become life-long supporters.
In section two of the survey, nearly half of the respondents (43.06%, N=131) demonstrated the support of local business/agriculture as a paramount reason for them to continue their shopping at the market. Figure 16 visualizes these findings, which emphasize the effectiveness of the PFM project in generating the sense of commitment among community people to support local-buying.

Furthermore, PFM’s impacts on the community encompassed making a place for social activity and promoting a sense of community, in addition to providing fresh food for consumers and positive economic impacts for local businesses. From Figure 17, a quarter of those surveyed (25%) rated social atmosphere as extremely important for them to continue their shopping at the market. This confirms the importance of making the market fun and festive just like what the TTP had done during the first year and deemed necessary.

Qualitative data gained from informal discussions with the customers also showed that the market provides its customers with a unique shopping experience that is often lacking in today’s fast-paced world. A customer said, “I like PFM a lot. It is a place to meet people, friends. This place has its own specialty. For example, you cannot find some local vegetables at the chain store or even at the Putney Food Co-op.”

Behavioral change

The third part of this survey was designed to measure changed behaviors among the market’s customers. To measure behavioral change, I asked the respondents if they have completely changed their
shopping place from buying the same items available at the chain store to the farmers’ market and local
stores. For more than half of those surveyed (54%, N=121), lifestyle remained unchanged. They still
continued to buy the same items at chain stores. When asked why so, more than a third (39.71%)
preferred its convenience as chain stores are open 24/7. Nearly one third of them (31%) said the stores
had wider selections than the PFM. A few said because of the cheaper price and the life-style fit. Those
who indicated that their traveling routine to and from the chain stores remained unchanged had various
reasons why; for example, one customer stated that she would include going to the chain store since it
was on her way to do other errands.

Even though it is evident that a majority of the respondents preferred to do their shopping at chain
stores (54%), there was still another group of community people in Putney (46%) who changed their
shopping behavior. When asked why they did their shopping at the PFM and the local stores, like the
Food Co-Op, many said that the local market had its own “specialty” which was not available in the
mainstream stores. Most importantly, they preferred to support local businesses.

There is vivid evidence gained from on-street interviews showing that customers had changed
their spending behavior from shopping at chain stores outside the community to shopping locally. For
example, a customer delightfully said, “Despite its slightly higher price on some items, I am willing to
pay for the premium price. This is because I can support local agriculture, make new friends, see old
friends, and have high quality produce. That is why I continue shopping at the market (PFM).” This
finding shows a strong sense of localization in Putney.

*Observable impacts at the individual level: Time and money*

The fourth part of this survey completes the picture of how PFM contributed to changes in
shoppers’ time and money. This last section aimed to capture empirical data of the impact that the market
had on individual shoppers.

Customers were asked whether their shopping at the PFM had saved them time and money to and
from the community to the chain store. The data found that more than a quarter (29%, N=14) of those
surveyed experienced reductions in their traveling cost to and from the chain stores after they had done
their shopping at the PFM in an amount of as much as $13 U.S. per their weekly shopping visit.

Additionally, the data showed that those who did their shopping at the PFM could save time, up to 20 minutes per week (N=20). In other words, their time spent traveling to and from the chain stores to buy the merchandise was reduced.

Strikingly, when asked how much money they saved from spending money at the chain stores after doing their shopping at the PFM market, more than half of the respondents (59%, N=25) reported that they could save as much as $12.82 U.S. per week. Although this data is rudimentary, this finding is a starting point to explore the impact of the market on time and money. A more detailed study in terms of time and money values at individual levels could further estimate the real economic value that the market contributes to the community.

**Survey Data: Non-shoppers**

This survey was used to assess primary factors that hindered non-shoppers of the PFM from doing their shopping at the market. The same survey forms used by local shoppers asked non-shoppers to answer only two questions: Why have you not done shopping at the PFM? And, what might attract you to shopping at the PFM in the future?

Figure 18 explains the reasons why those surveyed did not do their shopping at the market. From this data, more than one third of the non-shoppers (38%, N=15) said they did not have time on Sundays when the market was open. This was because they were busy spending time with their family at home. Most importantly, many of the respondents reported that they were still in the church during the market’s operation hours, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Respondents also cited external factors which hindered their shopping at the market. A few (13%) mentioned public transportation as a limitation, while fewer mentioned their dissatisfaction with the
PFM’s facilities, for example, the parking area and infrastructure. It was striking also to find that only 6% of those surveyed mentioned they refrained from shopping because of high product prices at the market.

This implied that the majority of the non-shoppers have placed low priority on pricing as a hindrance for them shopping at the market. When the non-shoppers were asked what might attract them to do their shopping at the market, it was definitely apparent that they wanted the market to change its operational hours, either making them longer, earlier or on some days other than Sundays.

One striking finding from the survey was that the non-shoppers had an equally strong buy-local awareness, as did the shoppers at the market. The figure below shows a data comparison between the shoppers and the non-shoppers in regard to their awareness to support local businesses. From the graph, both groups shared a similarly high awareness to support local businesses and noted it as “extremely important.” Half of the non-shoppers (50%, N=14) placed this value as extremely important. More than two-fifths of those remaining (42.86%) specified that supporting local agriculture was a “very important” priority.

This data correlation confirms that Putney residents have a high awareness of local buying. TTP and the PFM are more likely to succeed in leveraging this elevated awareness. However, building a
shared awareness of localism among the shoppers and non-shoppers alike may not guarantee radical change in paradigm without the support of local government. Once policy makers gain a better sense of how PFM has benefited the local economy, they may become more supportive of TTP and PFM’s mission of building socio-economic community resilience.

**Political buy-in**

Interviews with two town officers revealed that those local government officers seemed to have limited understanding and awareness of what was going on at the market. This is partly due to a lack of communication by the market’s management team and an absence of empirical data to present to educate and guide decision making. This situation raises the question of how well the market collaborates with the local government to create political will on the buy-local concept.

An interview with the market manager reconfirmed this finding. The manager said, “As far as I know, we have no goals for the Town Hall to help us improve the market’s situation. We do not currently have an organizational plan for political support. It could, at some point, make sense for us to talk about it though.” That was the quote three months before a monthly meeting was convened and I was invited to present the research findings to the PFM manager and the Board members. During my data presentation, one of board members said, “I have to go to talk with the town manager to seek his support in promoting local buying.” Another Board member enthusiastically said after the meeting ended, “Next month, I will attend the monthly Town meeting and present them (the meeting participants) with the benefits [of how] PFM has contributed to the community so that they support us in the future.”

We do not know what the outcome of this informative encounter with local officials will be at this time. It would be interesting to follow up with what will happen next if the PFM receives more political support in the future. In order for the newly formed idea on localization to be perpetuated over the long run in the community, TTP should develop proactive relationships with the local government.

**Business alliance building**

Even if there is policy support from the local government, the Putney Farmers’ Market will still find it relatively difficult if it does not have a good connection with the local business sector. Data from
interviews with local business operators has shown a mixed picture of PFM having impacts on local businesses. With the exception of the Food Co-op which is located in closest proximity to the PFM, nearly all business operators stated that the market had not had any effect on their business. Until now, most business owners/operators in the town of Putney have yet to experience any increases in revenue and have not yet made any changes to their market strategies to promote practical local consumption due to the PFM’s impact.

However, they have shown eagerness to take part in any future collaboration that the market may want to initiate. A business owner said, “I never really thought about being a part of the PFM, because we’re so close. It would be a lot harder to have two stalls going at once, but we’re very supportive of it.” This is an indication that if the PFM starts a joint local consumption awareness raising project with the local business owners, PFM will contribute to a greater impact, apart from its local farmers and vendors. This will fulfill mission statements of both TTP and PFM to build a system that generates a more resilient community through betterment of the local economy.

**Economic Resilience**

Local economic viability is the prime goal of the Putney Farmers’ Market. To what extent it has contributed to the betterment of the local economy deserves to be studied thoroughly as PFM’s mission is different from the traditional business sector. While most business models focus on business-to-business (B2B) relationships, the PFM’s primary goal is ensure the well-being of both the businesses and the community. Interconnecting with the social resilience component, this section provides a detailed scenario of how the community of Putney benefits economically from the PFM project.

**Vendors’ survey**

Separate from the customers’ survey, the vendors’ survey was designed especially for vendors and used for collecting the data from the vendors. It contained five main sections. The first part focused primarily on residency and trading experience of the vendors with the PFM. The second section quantified levels of vendors’ satisfaction with the market. The third section explored how the vendors increased the awareness of localism among their customers. They were asked to describe the methods
they used for promoting local consumption among their customers. The fourth part of this survey evaluated the socio-economic contributions by vendors in the community. A set of questions asked the vendors about the extent they have contributed to strengthening local economy in terms of hiring, investing and sharing benefits locally. The fifth, and final, section examined vendors’ awareness, perspectives and participation in building relationships between each other and their customers. This part asked questions about the importance of being connected with the community. The information sought was considered important as it reflected the current level of localism among vendors.

Additional interviews were conducted to ask if the vendors’ entrepreneurial skills have changed after selling their products at the market. Increased entrepreneurial skills are an indicator of the revival of local business, necessary for building local economy.

*Findings from the vendors’ survey*

The findings from *section one* of the vendors’ surveys were crucial in addressing the research question of how PFM’s contribution to the local economy has increased entrepreneurship. It was found that nearly two thirds of the vendors (61%, N=18) have their residency in the town of Putney. Almost one third (27.78%) began their business for the first time at the PFM, indicating that the market creates local entrepreneurship.

Findings in *section two* revealed that more than half (50%, N=18) of the surveyed vendors had a high level of satisfaction for the market’s location, management time and operating hours. However, when asked about their satisfaction with financial benefits from the market, almost half (49%) of them stayed “Neutral”. Asked about the reason why their benefit is in a neutral territory, some of them said they preferred to maintain a low profile as their income is related to personal tax claims. Nonetheless, a significant growth was reflected through local vendors increasing from 30 vendors in 2010 to 45 in 2011.

The focus in *section three* aimed to discover how the vendors educate their customers to change their shopping behavior. The findings revealed four key messages that the vendors used to educate the shoppers to buy products at PFM: locality, uniqueness, local support and food education.
To elaborate the findings in this section, the conveying message under “locality” included “buy homemade stuff.” As for the word “uniqueness”, the vendors emphasized “freshness”, “quality”, “wide varieties”, “specialty (not available in stores)”, “one of a kind” and “authenticity.” Regarding the concept of local support, the vendors employed the messages of “supporting local producers” and “using locally available resources.” In terms of food education, the vendors conveyed themes to their customers, which included: “locality plays into obtaining quality”, “available knowledge of your food (product)”, “healthiness” and “an affordable price.” These key messages indicated that there had been interaction between vendors and shoppers.

Improving interactions between vendors and the shoppers may enhance the sense of commitment among shoppers to buy local. These interactions in the supportive environment of the PFM may also result in the same customers tending to purchase more regularly, resulting in a higher likelihood of revenue for vendors. With higher earnings, the vendors will be more able to ensure the future hiring opportunities and reinvestment in their business.

The fourth section of the vendors’ survey sheds light on how the vendors contributed to the local economy after they sold their products at the Putney Farmers’ Market. For example, Figure 19 describes local hiring opportunities categorized by business sectors. It is obvious that the agricultural sector led all industries within the PFM, as almost two thirds (60%, N=16) of the vendors hired local workers. This was followed by the Craft and the Prepared Food industries, which equally shared a 20% hiring rate. By contributing to increases in local entrepreneurship and employment, both indicators of local economic resilience, this finding indicated the impact of the PFM project.
In addition to the benefit on local hiring, data on new investment among the market’s vendors was compiled to determine revival in the local economy. Figure 20 portrays areas of new investment. Among the surveyed vendors, nearly half (42%, N=18) of the vendors have invested in their business after selling their products at the market. More than half of the investment area (60%) fell on the setting-up cost, followed by the asset expansion and advertisement cost, each at 20 percent.

Furthermore, in the fourth section, the vendors were asked about the percentage of their investment which used local services and materials from the community. Figure 21 demonstrates a scenario of how the community benefits from vendors’ investment. The vertical axis contains interval scales, ranging from 0, 1-10%, 11-30%, 31-50%, 51-70%, 71-90% and >90%, respectively.

It was found that the majority of the vendors (86%, N=18) have used local supplies in their business investment in different scales, ranging from 1 to 100%. Almost a third (28.50%) of them have used local supplies at the scale interval of 1 to 10 percent, while one-fifth of them (20%) indicated they have used local supplies in their investment at the scale interval of 71 to 90%. When asked why some of them were using relatively few local resources, especially those who have used none, they said, “there is no local product available in the community, but we buy materials from other green organizations.” From the findings, it is obvious that money that would have been spent elsewhere is being circulated locally. For example, vendors who buy materials from local

![Chart: Percentage of local materials used](chart.png)
suppliers are reinvesting in the community. As for the ripple effect, those vendors who hire local workers increase employment in response to their growing business demands. This is a sign of how local PFM vendors generate local economic resilience.

Additionally, the fourth section examined the societal benefits that the local community has received from the vendors who return their business surplus to the community. The vendors’ survey found that almost all (94%, N=16) have donated their surplus products to charities within their community. Donations ranged from $1 U.S. to as much as $1000 U.S.

Figure 22 shows donation recipient demography. Nearly half (40%) of the vendors donated their surplus to community level charity organizations, followed by a third (35%) giving to regional or state level charities. One-fourth of the vendors (25%) donated their surplus to local individuals, friends and neighbors in hard times. As for local community charities, it was found that area churches, schools and projects have been direct recipients, especially, the Food Shelf project, the Food Bank project, the Morningside Family Shelter project, the New England Youth Theater and the Friends of Music at Guilford (FOMAG). Charities at the regional and state level included the Fair Trade Organization and Feed the Thousand projects. In order to attain community resilience, local charities should be supported.

Giving-away excess product or surplus to community charities ensures better access to locally available resources in the community for the needy, whose quality of life will be improved since these supports are readily available for them at the local level. Meanwhile, the local charities can accomplish their cause to help as many people in need as possible. Vendors living in the community tend to more likely see the outcomes of their contributions and feel satisfaction with their cause.
In turn, vendors may be more inclined to maintain or increase their donation levels to the local charitable organizations. This ongoing relationship indicates that a social support system is evolving in relation to the PFM project. Further, this community relationship can be inferred to have a ripple effect within the charities and broader community, indirectly generating social resilience.

Section five of the survey revealed the PFM vendors’ perspectives, emphasizing the importance of interactions between vendors and the community. Almost three-quarters (72.22%, N=18) of the vendors either agreed or strongly agreed that increasing interaction between vendors and customers was important. More than four-fifths of vendors (89%) indicated that they knew more vendors and customers since they began selling their product at the market.

Figure 23 visualizes the vendors’ opinion on the benefits they gained from getting to know more people. When vendors were asked about the positive points of getting to know each other, nearly half (40%, N=16) noted it helped gain support for their business. More than a third (33.33%) mentioned that building community and the sense of synergy were benefits gained from knowing people at the market. A quarter of the vendors (26%) stated that spiritual support and quality of life improvement were the positive reasons for them to know more people in the market. Apparently, not only does the market provide a place for vendors to strengthen the sense of localization, but it also lends a place for spiritual and caring support for the vendors. This is a sign of community building, which is considered part of a resilient community.

It is evident that the PFM creates interactions and relationships between consumers and vendors which satisfy both emotional and spiritual needs and may lead to long-term relationships.
All in all, the PFM has generated social and economic resilience that benefits the Putney community. These achievements exemplify a broader community resilience that the TTP and the PFM are striving to promote.

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Discussions and Analysis

In this section, I first discuss the findings using Quinn and Rohrbaugh’s (1983) model of organizational effectiveness, tying them to each organizational stage that TTP has undergone. [See detailed explanations of the models on pp. 8-10.] I then describe linkages between the organizational capacity and effectiveness of the TTP. At the end of this section I explain major issues identified from my findings and suggestions using Avina’s (2002) NGO life cycle model. Avina’s model helps conceptualize the organizational challenges as an organization evolves. The last section contains my suggestions for further research.

Transition Town Putney’s initiative core group and its organizational life cycle

As mentioned earlier, the present TTP is now reaching its final working stage. As they plan to step down from their leadership and hand over the reins to a new core group, it is important that they know what they have gone through at each organizational life stage. Using Quinn and Rohrbaugh’s model to portray TTP’s organizational experiences, I am certain that stakeholders of the TTP and the greater global Transition movement will gain insights from each of TTP’s organizational life stages. As well, lessons learned from TTP’s organizational experiences may also help prepare other grassroots organizations and international communities of practice for pragmatic organizational design.

To begin with, at the entrepreneurial stage, TTP introduced its organization to the public through conducting several awareness raising activities in the community. To generate awareness, TTP excelled in designing their activities to be enjoyable and exciting for the public. The PFM project is an example. Furthermore, the organization was able to secure necessary resources both from within and outside the community to support its own functions and its beneficiaries (the working groups and the supported groups). Donations of assets, labor and goodwill were good indicators of community participation and resource acquisition. With a minimum budget, TTP sought to expand its activities to cover as many target groups and themes as possible.

In the collectivity stage, the concept of acquiring community relationships and building teamwork were pivotal. TTP sought to build a sense of camaraderie and increased participation. At this
stage, TTP has been successful in generating these components at the community, organizational and individual levels.

At the community level, TTP readily welcomed participation in all forms and facilitated the collaboration of like-minded people to encourage the formation of working groups, and to some extent its evolution. The organization possessed the abilities to work productively with its target groups to meet their immediate needs, for example, to negotiate with the landowner to lease the land parcel at low cost to both the TTP and the Community Garden Project. These abilities ensured the perpetuation of the movement’s “brand” and the success of their target groups.

As well at the community level, TTP placed high priority on building the sense of leadership transparency in response to community people and the direct target groups’ expectations. Also, in this stage, TTP engaged in ongoing “community conversations” and relationship enhancement at both organizational and individual levels. For example, TTP organized public hearing venues through Open Space meetings and produced media such as TTP’s newsletters and web-site to communicate with the general public.

Within the collectivity stage, TTP has also remained a very horizontal and loosely structured organization. The team has been fluid and uses a non-bureaucratic system. Each team member is able to communicate with one another without being worried about rank and position titles. Information flows freely; decisions require touching multiple bases. In other words, prior to any decision being made, all members are invited to share their opinion. Then, a unanimous group decision is reached. This is similar to the concepts of Helgesen’s “Web of Inclusion” and Bolman and Deal’s “All-channel or Star Network” organizational structural formation, where equal and organic communication prevails within the organization. Morale in all channel networks is usually very high. Everyone checks in with each other to determine whether what the core members are doing is aligned with the founder’s idea prescribed in the Transition Handbook.

Also at the organizational level, the team appears to have the capacity to immediately allocate and re-locate the members to help out with situational shortcomings in response to organizational needs. In
other words, the team tends to have been very successful in identifying needs and reorganizing available members and other resources to meet those needs. For example, a core member was assigned to present the organization’s outcomes at a conference when the co-founder was unavailable. Even the use of interns is characterized by flexibility since they often have more than one organizational role. For example, when it was time to publicize activities, interns who might not have a role in publicity were asked to help out with the process.

At the individual level, the team members, interns included, expressed satisfaction with the fluid and informal nature of the organization and the relative freedom, responsibility, and room for creativity which occurs in TTP. This is frequently reflected through the interns spending longer hours at work, working during weekends, taking work home and carrying out multiple organizational roles. Exit interviews with former interns have confirmed this. A former female intern said, “It turned out to be that I worked more than the time that I was previously assigned, but I am happy with it.” Another male core member said, “I like the flexibility of this organization because I can try my new idea.”

Transition has many good practices on how to maintain volunteers’ commitment and motivation. This missionary-like dedication seems infectious among the team members, even to the researcher who was at that time working as an intern.

In the stage of formalization and control, it is notable that members of the TTP called themselves the “Core group,” rather than the “initiating group” as prescribed in Hopkins’s book. A core member recalled the reason behind this name as being “a way to gain institutional recognition in the community when we had to contact local potential supporters.”

Whereas TTP claimed to have a loose organizational structure, it has formulated more institutional processes and practices to meet with more complicated needs and issues which have arisen in the community. An example of an institutional process was conflict resolution between some disputing project managers and project members. In addition, TTP’s motivation to conduct an organizational performance assessment using evaluation techniques was anticipated to improve their work performance and enhance the public’s awareness of the organization’s own work. These were attempts by TTP to
ensure goal achievement, productivity and efficiency. It was in this stage that these ideas were most emphasized.

During the **elaboration stage**, a new working direction is required for an organization to renew or revisit its roles and involvements within the community. When this study was conducted, Transition Town Putney was in this stage. TTP was in the process of transferring leadership to new core members. For TTP’s core members, leadership transfer is a decentralized and democratized process. This process enhances the ability of new leaders to maintain the momentum that the initiating group has achieved by using their new ideas (differentiation) under the same working principles (integration).

As a result, at the time of this report, TTP has drafted a succession master plan in order to make sure their leadership sustains the momentum of the initiatives and the movement. In order to organize a successful unleashing, TTP members have planned to create a database containing stories of their success, and are encouraging identification of potential working group representatives to become interim core members. To congeal the “slow” working groups’ ability so that they become capable in time is their next priority. Next, they have planned for the Official Unleashing day by assigning an ad-hoc committee to work on it. They have planned to invite a Transition certified trainer to give a key-note speech at the event and train the new core members.

Although these plans are still incomplete, it would be interesting to know what factors contribute to a successful leadership transfer that will ensure a continuation of the Transition initiatives after the steering group has dissolved itself. Also, prior to the succession of leadership, what should be practical and pragmatic criteria for TTP’s initiating group to make informed decisions?

Throughout the organization’s four evolutionary stages, TTP has achieved several milestones during their first two-and-a-half years. TTP has excelled in utilizing its organizational capacity and ability to succeed in their mandates, laid good foundations for the Transition movement and worked productively with its target groups. The relationships between organizational capacity and programs’ success are central to this paper. The following section sheds light on this.
Linking organizational capacity and effectiveness

The following three outstanding organizational capacities have a strong bivariate relationship to the success of TTP working with the Putney Farmers’ Market in making community resilience. The capacities include: having resourceful personnel, marshaling external help networks, and working cooperatively with target groups. This analysis addresses the fourth sub-research question: What is the relationship between the organizational structure and capacity and program effectiveness in contributing to resilience?

Having resourceful personnel

The findings reveal that programs with more helping hands are more likely to exhibit evidence of effectiveness. For example, the number of TTP’s initiating group members during the inception of the PFM had been relatively large. There were as many as 12-15 initiating members and many volunteers, as opposed to only 7 at the time this study was conducted. In the context of organizational capacity, having more core members and volunteers working with the TTP was an indicator of high capacity in the organization. Are these related to effectiveness? Programs with greater numbers of like-minded helpers resulted in an increased ability to acquire sufficient community resources, in forms of monetary and in-kind donations, to meet emerging demands.

These TTP initiating group members were valuable resources. They had skills, knowledge and networks which proved to be assets for the start-up of the PFM project. TTP utilized these human resources to raise community awareness on localization, conduct publicity and research to enhance the market’s viability, and generate the sense of festivity and liveliness at the market. Furthermore, these people coordinated with key stakeholders, allocated volunteers for the market, and performed fundraising to purchase equipment.

With their strong communication and relationship building skills, these resourceful TTP members have a high inclination to invite community people to participate in the Putney Farmers’ Market, thus ensuring effectiveness of the PFM program. The TTP co-founder once said that TTP’s mandate is “to make their [community people’s] interest real.” With help from the TTP members, the PFM was able to
actualize the dream of many community members to have a local farmer’s market which is making a difference in their lives and supporting the local economy. By drawing from a full array of human resources, there is greater tendency “to make it the community we want to live in” (the TTP co-founder).

Marshaling external help networks

Starting a social movement is no simple proposition. In order for grassroots organizations to achieve their social change mandates, they must succeed in revenue acquisition, volunteer management and good administration. Equally important, they should have abilities to secure external support. In the case of the PFM, TTP has clearly acted as a liaison to meet with potential donors both within and outside of the community to cope with high start-up costs. This leveraging of its own resources has resulted in all of its initiatives having relatively low start-up costs. If the PFM had been required to rent its land at a high cost and pay outrageous daily wages to hire fulltime workers to begin their project, it would be likely that they would have struggled to meet a breakeven point, or even failed. This strong capacity to leverage its human resources through utilization of external networks is the key to the success of TTP’s initiatives.

Working cooperatively with target Groups

TTP has been actively involved with the PFM operation. Through supervising the formation of PFM’s mission statement and providing hands-on involvement with PFM, the TTP has demonstrated program effectiveness which indirectly contributes to the building of socio-economic resilience in the town of Putney. For example, having two TTP core members as board members of the PFM has created the sense of unity and confidence necessary for the project’s start-up and has perpetuated the Transition movement’s philosophy and values within the sub-projects. Furthermore, having a person representing the two organizations (TTP and PFM) benefitted the projects in that s/he was able to bridge issues and to liaise with other project managers within the Transition Town Putney. Together, they helped solve problems at the project level or at project-to-project level in a timely manner. Otherwise, unresolved conflicts would likely damage working relationships and cause break-up within the organization, which would deteriorate the effectiveness of the projects.
Through these involvements, TTP worked productively with its direct beneficiaries, in the case of the PFM, to ensure program success and effectiveness in building community resilience. Consequently, the Putney Farmers’ Market has generated pragmatic community building activities and has attained its mission, supporting local vendors and building community.

It is observed that the organizational effectiveness of TTP in supporting the community groups is a function mainly from individual efforts and skills rather than rules, routines, support networks, or planning. This innate effectiveness comes from humanistic nature rather than by training. TTP members are apt to help the community groups when needed without having to think twice.

Conclusion
Although TTP has been successful in laying good foundations for the Transition movement, there are major points of concern that the organization is now facing. If the major concerns are not addressed in a timely manner, they might slow down or interrupt the community’s resilience building process that TTP is pursuing. This section explains emerging issues observed of the TTP through the lens of Avina’s four organizational life cycle stages: start-up, expansion, consolidation and close-out. This observation is hoped to be useful not only for the TTP and other Transition Towns under the global Transition movement but also for the community of development practitioners in general who are seeking good lessons on how to prevent failure when starting a grassroots organization.

At the start up, the data revealed that TTP’s action plan to solve the mega-problems was not derived from the whole community. The lack of stakeholders from different socio-economic backgrounds and the individualized formation of each working group might be the root cause of it. At that time, the movement had limited diversity and minimal inclusion of community people as compared to what it might have been in the founder’s book.

Lack of political buy-in

Although realizing that the political buy-in is important, the co-founder expressed reluctance to incorporate local government into his prime target group. He said, “We want to be politically neutral and free from political influence.” This perspective coincided with the PFM manager who did not think that the local authorities would be of great help for the market. The lack of political buy-in might cause TTP to spend more time and effort to advocate their mandates. The absence of political buy-in might in turn hinder the sustainability and success of the programs within TTP.

Excessive idealism

The principle that “Transition is at its best when it emerges naturally and shapes itself” (Hopkins (2012), p.173), seems to absolve the organization and the movement from being blamed for underdevelopment or failure. If the leadership transition fails, for example, neither Hopkins nor the TTP are to be blamed. This is because things are shaped “naturally”, not by human inputs. However, this working principle is too idealistic and may be too optimistic in reality. An undercurrent can develop from
the “ebb and flow” that can undermine the credibility of TTP and the Transition movement globally. The working groups might feel discouraged once the transition of leadership fails because TTP has not yet developed their internal skills. Conversely, the working groups could have become more capable and effective prior to any unleashing events. People remember bad memories longer than good ones. And to regain trust and the same excitement among those discouraged is comparatively much more difficult.

At the stage of organizational expansion, while expansion implies growth in programs, beneficiaries, funding and management responsibilities, the reality is that the TTP is underprepared for such growth. This may result in unmet needs and heightened frustration among the two parties, TTP and its beneficiaries.

Awkward supporting roles

While on the one hand, TTP’s out-going members believe that they should not provide any support to the working groups, on the other hand, many of the members have been providing support individually to various working groups. This is an ironic situation. They assume that the groups will find their way to build their own organization and work productively. By following this “let it go where it wants to go” course as Hopkins advocates, the TTP initiating members may find themselves in an awkward predicament. While they want to respond to the community needs, they must adhere to the governing principle of the global Transition movement.

During a bi-monthly meeting, when I mentioned the Farmers’ Market manager’s expectation about the future collaboration between the two entities of TTP and PFM, everyone said, “It is the job of the market manager and the PFM board members to seek the best possible solution on how to keep the market viable.” They added, “It is not the initiating group members’ ‘responsibility’ to follow up and make sure the groups are doing well and succeed.” They emphasized the role of the TTP’s initiating group as being to “facilitate the community people to form working groups and help with the start-up” mainly in the first year. At a retreat meeting, all reiterated, “We cannot act for our child all the time; we want them to take action by themselves by not relying too much on us.”
This strongly held principle of “minimum inputs” can bring about more harm than good. For example, TTP’s approach of promoting the formation of working groups without having a clear plan to follow-up with these groups is relatively prone to program failure. The TTP’s unclear roles to support and follow up with new and existing target groups will lead the target groups to missing golden opportunities to improve their capacity once TTP expands. TTP’s expansion is inevitable as it encourages community participation and the creation of new initiatives.

The lack of a comprehensive and responsive monitoring and evaluation program of the TTP, in the consolidation stage, means that valuable lessons which would have surfaced in time for the TTP to offer support to existing working groups, will also be unavailable to potential new groups. Moreover, this may create a credibility issue for the TTP.

The lack of systematic evaluation

The evaluation process produces a more systematic approach toward program management, resource management, organizational capacity and effectiveness and other important matters. Through the TTP’s co-founder’s connection with an academic institution to source unpaid interns due to his teaching profession, this organizational demand is met. However, what will happen if he has resigned from the institution and no unpaid interns could come to work for the organization, amidst the expansion of the projects and beneficiaries? How can the new core members make informed decisions without having lessons learned from the past, so that they do not repeat the same mistakes? These are the challenges for TTP and the Transition movement at the global level to bring about well-rounded strategies.

As far as the close-out is concerned, TTP still falls short of strategies to ensure successful leadership during the transition. The following four issues are apparent in this stage: insincere leadership transfer, hastened close-out, limited helping hands and conflict of success-story’s ownership.

Risk of misperception: Insincere leadership transfer

At the time of this report being written, TTP core members were working on how to successfully transfer their leadership to the new group members. Some of the initiating members who have worked with one or more community working groups privately hoped that they would be re-selected by their own
group as the group representative to continue working for the TTP. However, selecting the same representatives is like, “changing an old wine to new bottle”. Doing so may create misunderstanding among the community people who may perceive the process as insincere. Adversely, this might lead community people to distrust in the process.

_Hastened close-out_

TTP’s timeline to transfer leadership was grounded in a vague recognition that “it is about time!” In reality, there are many factors to be considered before unleashing. They hastily planned to organize the unleashing event hoping that the leadership roles would transfer without having any concrete plans in place. TTP did not conduct any non-subjective situational assessment as to whether the new core group members would work cooperatively with each other; whether the internal capacity and effectiveness of the working groups was adequate for them to run their projects successfully; or, whether the community had reached the sense of “buzz.” Overlooking these factors will likely bring about the movement’s discontinuity.

_Conflict of success-story’s ownership_

Another issue for the TTP to consider is the possible conflict of the ownership of success which may erupt between the capable working group(s) and the TTP’s initiating group. In other words, it is likely that a dispute will arise over who should claim the success of the subproject, whose success came through the initial support of TTP, but by the working efforts of the subproject working group(s). It is apparent in the PFM example that TTP has been dramatically reducing its involvement with the market. Yet, at the same time, TTP takes credit for having shared in the initiation of the PFM through its early supports. While TTP includes the PFM among its success stories, it may need to more clearly articulate its supportive involvement. Otherwise, TTP in simply citing the PFM as one of its many “successes” runs the risk of creating a conflict of “TTP brand” association. Maintaining the identity of the working groups under their brand, while not being considered as “reaping the rewards of what others have sown,” is an ongoing challenge for TTP.
Using Avina’s model, we have seen TTP’s organizational dilemmas as it evolves. If all the above issues are not addressed on a timely basis, and if TTP does not take those issues seriously, many predictable consequences may hinder its goal achievement. The following chapter highlights suggestions which might be useful for the TTP and the Transition movement to prevent these dilemmas from happening.
Suggestions for Transition Town Putney and the Transition movement

Based on the findings, the following recommendations may be of use for any like-minded individuals interested in establishing a Transition Town (TT) in their community. By following these recommendations, and using Avina’s model, I believe that any initiating group and its members will save themselves from a great amount of stress when starting their movement, and hopefully, ensure the success of the project they are going to support.

During the startup stage, the initiating group should find possible ways to include as many people from different socio-economic sectors as possible, as a way to promote community participation and inclusion. Acquiring political buy-in in the first place is a guarantee for the initiating group to get policy support for helping the group create social change. Furthermore, TTP should have a clear working direction for following-up with the beneficiaries beforehand to prevent the chaos that often stems from unwanted supporting roles and the unrealized expectations among TTP and its initiatives.

In the Expansion stage, a regular assessment of the organizational capacity and management is warranted and necessary. During this stage, what the TTP must also seek to expand are its leadership capacity, its administration and program management through additional human resource development and taskforce creation. When these areas are expanded or put in place, the organization is better poised to deal with the diverse needs of their beneficiaries. A periodic self-assessment is important for helping to guide this expansion process in an informed manner.

Organizations in the Consolidation stage should establish a system to ensure periodic and extensive evaluation. To achieve this goal, TTP’s initiating group should have a process for well-planned and systematic evaluation. Additionally, TTP should incorporate lessons learned in order to strengthen administration by creating a user-friendly monitoring and evaluation practice. An on-site evaluation form may be helpful in reducing the workload of initiating members to evaluate the preliminary outcomes. This form is concise, yet, informative. [See sample in Appendix L.]
In the close-out phase, the TTP’s initiating group should have clear exit-strategies, timeline and indicators. A timeline and detailed action plans should be readily produced and endorsed by the working group representatives as a method to obtain their participation, before launching the Unleashing. Full-blown organizational assessment among working groups might be beneficial to start. Various organizational assessment tools exist ubiquitously for the organization to try and use. However, everyone concerned should see the assessment as valuable for enhancing the organization’s capacity and effectiveness. A democratic approach must be given high priority.

As for the Transition Network at the global level, Hopkins should give a clearer description of the basic and universal requirements for the initiating group to kick-start local initiatives, instead of repeatedly saying that “it depends on the community context”. The pre-criterion would prepare the initiating group to equip themselves with skills or start looking to identify the right personnel to help with start-up of the initiatives. This does not mean they exclude the less skillful like-minded initiating members. Instead, this preparation process ensures that “what is well begun is half way done” (http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What_does_well_begun_is_half_way_done_mean, 2012).

It is obvious that the initiating group is the most crucial taskforce to lay Transition foundations in the project community. Furthermore, there should be a capacity and effectiveness database available on the Transition Network website, as the website aimed to promote learning among all Transition movements worldwide. This data pool would collect lessons learned from the initiating groups and/or the core groups globally as an open-learning source for all local initiatives worldwide to share and learn from their like-minded comrades.
Recommendations for further research

Each time I exchanged views with people involved with Transition Putney, I found that they wanted to learn how to enhance the success of their work. From time to time, they mentioned that becoming competent working groups was their greatest desire so as to achieve community resilience. Many also showed their eagerness to learn how to make the groups more effective. Many wanted to attain an organizational capacity level where they could work at ease while aligning themselves with the permaculture concept. However, the TTP initiating group members, interns and volunteers embracing this understanding acknowledge among themselves that these issues remain a great challenge. It would be of interest in academic circles and the Transition movement itself to continue this inquiry in greater depth.

One might consider grappling with the research question: What should be a necessary prerequisite for the initiating group to have in place in order to ensure a successful social movement under Transition’s working philosophy? Sub-questions of this study might be: What are the capacity-building processes necessary for the initiating group to work effectively for the community and with the working groups? These suggested questions for future study could be followed by another question: What learning system should be in place within the Transition Network to promote knowledge sharing as a way to enhance the capacity and effectiveness of the initiating groups and the working groups? And finally and most importantly, what should be the most practical ways to ensure successful leadership transfer? These inquiries would require a long-term effort from all stakeholders involved in this movement. By doing so, I believe, would generate a “buzzing” in discussion loudly and clearly enough to answer for the world the question as to what extent the Transition Movement contributes to the making of community resilience among individuals, groups, communities, and beyond.
Bibliography


Appendix A

The Twelve Steps of Transition

Step 1. Set up a steering group and design its demise from the outset

Step 2. Raise awareness

Step 3. Lay the foundations

Step 4. Organize a Great Unleashing

Step 5. Form groups

Step 6. Use Opens Space

Step 7. Develop visible practical manifestation of project

Step 8. Facilitate the Great Reskilling

Step 9. Build a bridge to local government

Step 10. Honor the elders

Step 11. Let it go where it wants to go

Step 12. Create an Energy Descent Plan

Source: The 12 steps of Transition, Hopkins (2008), Pp.146-175.
Appendix B

Four Models of Effectiveness Values by Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983)

1. Entrepreneurial Stage

2. Collectivity Stage

3. Formalization and Control Stage

4. Elaboration of Structure Stage

Appendix C

Interview questions for local town officers

1) What is your opinion toward the Putney Farmers Market (PFM) project?

2) In your opinion, what benefits does the PFM project contribute to the Town of Putney?

3) How does the PFM philosophy in building local economy and community inspire you to incorporate it into your work in solving local economic issues?

4) What is the town’s plan/policy to promote local economy utilizing the PFM philosophy?

5) What points of improvement would you suggest to the PFM project to enhance local economic issues?
Appendix D

Interviews with local business operators

1) What do you think about the weekly Putney Farmers Market (PFM)?

2) What have you done differently to your business in order to respond to this market from the time when there was no the PFM (2009) in terms of business strategies, marketing, public relations, business management and organization and etc.?

3) To what extend does the weekly PFM have an effect on your business?
Appendix E

Organizational self-assessment (TTP)

Please rate your organizational capacities in the following areas and provide the reason as to why? What is your plan to enhance them to reach the ideal level in the future?

1= Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Satisfactory, 4= Good, 5= Excellent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure and functionality</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Decisions on administration, programs/projects, and finance are made timely.</td>
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<td>2) Performance gaps and opportunities are identified quickly enough to resolve them to the benefits of the individuals involved and the productivity of the organization.</td>
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<td>3) Core/volunteers receive non-distorted information about the organization’s mission and its progress in fulfilling the mission.</td>
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<td>4) Mechanisms are in place to correct rumors.</td>
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<td>5) Listening is valued.</td>
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<td>6) Coaching and consultation system is in place to a person in need.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Self- governance: individual level</th>
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<th>Satisfactory</th>
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<td>7) Core/volunteers are willing to take on leadership roles in - Administration works (office work)</td>
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<td>- Program (design, implement and follow-up)</td>
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<td>- Financial (fund raising activities)</td>
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<td>8) Core/volunteers are motivated to work together to get things done.</td>
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<td>9) Core/volunteers have abilities in understanding and responding appropriately to important environmental trends and influences in the community, e.g. social context, political trend or economic issues for working to achieve their organizational goals.</td>
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<td>10) The organization has strategies that help identify its opportunities and constraints in terms of financial resources, program management and administration.</td>
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<td>11) The organization has a process for ongoing review and updating of its strategy to reflect internal and external realities.</td>
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12) Core/volunteers have ability to develop education media material related to community resilience through training material development and pedagogical skills.
13) Core/volunteers understand areas of specialization of the organization.

**Project cycle management**
14) The organization’s programs and projects are consistent with its mission, needs, strategies, and priorities.
15) The organization devotes resources to assist the working groups and the supported groups to do program planning and budget-program to ensure the projects are carried out successfully and in line with the organization’s mission statement.
16) Program implementation is on a self-interest basis rather than research-based
17) Program planning includes an adequate analysis of roles and responsibilities of people in charge.
18) The organization has a reporting system to follow progress of all implemented activities.
19) There is a procedure in place to evaluate results of every project.
20) Program team members receive timely feedback on program performance.
21) Programs are reviewed on a regular basis to determine how well they contribute to the organization’s overall strategy.
22) Drawing of lessons learned is encouraged and used for making changes as a result.
23) Core/volunteers have skills to perform monitoring and evaluation on a regular basis.
24) The organization has a clear direction of what/how to follow up in regard to its initiatives that have different levels of progress between the working groups and supported groups.

**Personnel and finance**
25) The organization has sufficient orientation and training systems for new core/volunteers.
26) The organization has a way of dealing with succession.
27) The organization has a system to facilitate between core members and other volunteers (interns) to understand and respond to each other’s expectations.
28) Core/Volunteers are provided with sufficient/realistic/critical feedback by those with whom they work.
29) Measure and procedures are established in the organization for dealing with people in emotional or physical distress.
30) Members of the core/volunteers are involved in financial planning and monitoring.
31) Members of the core/volunteers review financial statements on a regular basis.

**Community skills**

32) Core/volunteers have ability to create strong linkages to and grounding in the local people’s and community’s needs.

33) Core/volunteers have ability to resolve and manage conflicts in the community.

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<tr>
<th>Civic Action level: Networking</th>
<th>Poor</th>
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<th>Satisfactory</th>
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34) The organization undertakes research and development that strengthens its uniqueness.

35) Core/volunteers have collected information on the organization’s expertise and disseminated it at local, regional and national levels.

**Forging intra-and–inter sectorial alliance and coalitions**

36) Core/volunteers have ability to forge/build intra and inter-sectorial partners and like-minded organizations at local, regional, national and international levels.

37) Fruitful, ongoing partnerships with external organizations through these linkages bring new ideas, achievements or resources to the organization’s goal and mission.

**References**


Appendix F

Organizational self-assessment (PFM)

Please rate organizational capacities of the PFM in the following areas and provide the reason as to why? What is your plan to enhance them to reach the ideal level in the future?
1= Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Satisfactory,4= Good,5= Excellent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
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<tr>
<td>1) The implementation of work flows smoothly at every level of the organization.</td>
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<td>2) Performance gaps and opportunities are identified quickly enough to resolve them to the benefits of the individuals involved and the productivity of the organization.</td>
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<td>3) Decisions are made timely.</td>
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<td>4) People in the organization feel there is adequate, ongoing communication about the organization’s activity.</td>
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<td>5) Staff members receive information about the organization’s mission and its progress in fulfilling the mission</td>
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<td>6) Information circulated in the organization about activities is rarely distorted.</td>
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<td>7) Mechanisms are in place to correct rumors.</td>
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<td>8) People have easy access to others they much deal with in the organization and can easily communicate with them.</td>
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<td>9) Listening is valued.</td>
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<td>10) Roles and responsibilities are shared and delegated among the members based on their ability.</td>
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<td>11) Coaching and consultation system is in place to the person in need.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Organizational functionality</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
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<tr>
<td>12) Staff/boards have ability to distinguish between the “public” interest and “private” interest.</td>
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<td>13) Staff/boards have level of understanding on the benefits of voluntarism as contribution to achieve collective objectives.</td>
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<td>14) Staff/boards have ability to practice and follow principles of democracy and good governance practice internally.</td>
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15) Staff/boards have ability to identify, prioritize and deliberate on public (shared or collective) problems.
16) Staff/boards have ability to develop education media material related to community resilience through training material development and pedagogical skills.
17) Staff/boards have ability to run effective public meetings/events.
18) Staff/boards understand area of specialization of the organization.
19) Staff/boards are willing to take on leadership.
20) Staff/boards are willing to express new ideas to those in position of power.
21) Staff/boards have abilities in understanding external and internal environment/forces affecting organizational performance.
22) Staff/boards have ability in responding appropriately to important environmental trend and influence ex. socially, politically or economically.
23) Staff/boards have the ability to provide adequate framework for carrying out the mission of the organization and for dealing with external challenges to the organization.
24) The organization has a process for understanding clients, for clarifying and revising its mission and beliefs, and for working to achieve its goals.
25) The organization has a process for scanning the environment to consider potential threats and opportunities.
26) The organizational strategy helps the organization identify its opportunities and constraints in terms of financial resources and infrastructure.
27) The organization has a process for ongoing review and updating of its strategy to reflect internal and external realities.
28) Staff/boards are motivated to work together to get things done.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational level: Organizational capacity</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Project cycle management**

29) Program and project plan are linked to the organizations’ mission.
30) The organization undertakes adequate program-planning and budget-programing activities to ensure that its program support its mission.
31) The organization’s programs and projects are consistent with its mission, needs, strategies, and priorities.
32) Program planning includes an adequate analysis of roles and responsibilities of people in charge.
33) There is a procedure outlined to monitor results of the project.
34) The program team has good problem-solving skills.
35) Monitoring and evaluation system, policy and procedure are in place.
36) Program staff receives timely feedback on program performance.
37) Programs are reviewed on a regular basis to determine how well they contribute to the organization’s overall strategy.
38) Drawing lessons is encouraged and used for making changes as a result.
39) Corrective actions are taken when difficulties arise.
40) Staff/board members see monitoring and evaluation as ongoing, normal and valuable processes as ways to improve performance.
41) Organization obtains and uses data to monitor and evaluate its activities.
42) Staff/boards have skill to perform monitoring and evaluation.

**Personnel and materials**
43) Functioning systems are in place to reinforce the organization’s values, such as incentives (both monetary and none-monetary).
44) Organization supports application and transfer of new learning on the job.
45) The organization has a way of dealing with succession.
46) Measure and procedures are established in the organization for dealing with people in emotional or physical distress.

**Community skills**
47) Staff/boards have ability to create strong linkages to and grounding in the local people’s and community’s needs.
48) Staff/boards have ability to resolve and manage with conflicts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-governance: Civic Action level</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Niche-management**
49) The organization undertakes research and development that strengthens its unique role.
50) Staff/board has ability to collect information and disseminate at local, regional and national levels.

**Forging intra-and inter sectorial alliance and coalitions**
51) Staff/boards have ability to forge/build intra and inter-sectorial partners and like-minded organizations at local, regional, nation and international levels.
52) The organization is appropriately linked externally, and its place is seen as important by peer organization(s).
53) Institutional linkages contribute efficiently to the organization’s goals and mission.
54) Fruitful, ongoing partnerships with external organizations through these linkages bring new ideas or resource, or both to the organization.
55) The organization is using these linkages to communicate information about its work to external stakeholders, including the general public.

References

Appendix G

Volunteer management interview questions

1) Who has the responsibility for volunteer recruitment and management within your organization?
2) How many volunteers does your organization engage on an annual basis?
3) How do you personally support or work with the Volunteer/interns?
4) Why does your organization need volunteers/interns?
5) What kind of volunteers do you need? Please check all that apply
   - Professional services volunteers
   - Skilled volunteers
   - Administrative support volunteers
   - Direct service volunteers (work with clients)
   - Large numbers/groups of volunteers on a daily basis
   - Daytime volunteers
   - Tech savvy volunteers
   - Evening/weekend volunteers
   - No volunteers needed
   - Other(s) Please list others:…………………………………………………………… …………………………………………
6) What are the biggest challenges for your organization’s work with volunteers?
7) What is the process of recognizing Core members, Volunteers/ Interns?
   a) Recognition system of energy of Core members, Volunteers/ Interns:
      - What reward system is in place for Core members, Volunteers/ Interns after they have done their job successfully?
      - What is the organizational practice if Core members, Volunteers/ Interns have done a mistake at their job?
      - What is the organizational reaction if the Core members, Volunteers/ Interns have gone an “extra mile”- doing beyond their assigned roles?
   b) Recognition system of Core members, Volunteers/ Interns’ choice of preference to deliver their creativity
      - What is the reaction of the organization if Core members, Volunteers/ Interns propose a new idea/project?
      - What is the organization’s role in helping the Core members, Volunteers/ Interns deliver their creativity/innovation?
   c) Recognition system of how Core members, Volunteers/ Interns feel as they work for the organization
      - What is the organization’s system for recognizing the Core members, Volunteers/ Interns feeling as they are working in the organization?
      - What is the organization system for solving the conflicting feelings that might occur among the Core members, Volunteers/ Interns?
   d) Recognition system of personal perception of development
      - How is each Core member, Volunteer/ Intern assigned to do their job?
      - What is the training/ capacity building system in place for the Core members, Volunteers/ Interns?
      - What is the supervision system for Core members, Volunteers/ Interns in your organization?
      - What is the job performance assessment process in your organization?
Appendix H

Transition Town Putney

Volunteer/intern Assessment of the Volunteer Program

As part of our continued effort to improve our volunteer/internship program, we would like your responses to the following questions. All responses will be kept completely confidential.

**Baseline**

1. How long have you been volunteering with us? ____________________________

2. To what extent do you think that you were well accepted by the core members in our organization?
   - Well accepted
   - Not well accepted
   - Generally well accepted, but some exceptions
   - Generally not well accepted, but some exceptions

3. To what extent do you think you were involved in decisions that affected your work?
   - Well involved
   - Sometimes involved
   - Not well involved

4. To what extent do you think you were accepted and welcomed by target groups within the program of which you were responsible?
   - Well accepted
   - Mixed reception
   - Not well accepted

5. To what extent do you think you felt comfortable with the assignments you were given?
   - Comfortable
   - Not very comfortable
   - Don’t know

6. Do you feel that you received sufficient orientation about our agency before you began work?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Don’t know

7. Do you feel that you received enough training to carry out your assignments?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Don’t know

8. In your experience, did your job match the job description you were given?
   - Yes
   - No
9. Did you find your volunteer work to be interesting, challenging, and rewarding?
   - Yes
   - Somewhat
   - No

10. Do you think that you were provided with sufficient feedback by those with whom you worked?
    - Yes
    - No
    - Somewhat
    - Don’t know

11. To what extent did you feel appreciated for your volunteer efforts?
    - Well appreciated
    - Not well appreciated
    - Generally well appreciated, but with some exceptions
    - Generally not well appreciated, but with some exceptions

12. To what extent did you feel you received help when you needed it?
    - Excellent
    - Good
    - Fair
    - Poor
    - Unacceptable

13. Overall, how would you rate our volunteer program? (Please circle. 1= Terrible; 7= Great)
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Self-assessment

14. What were the major benefits of this internship for you?

15. What new skills did you develop in this internship?

16. What did you like the least/most about this internship?

17. How could you have been better prepared for this internship?

  Professional Goals Assessment

18. What were your goals/expectations to achieve prior to starting your internship at TTP?

19. Which goals do you feel you achieved, why and why not? What factors contributed to, or hindered, your ability to accomplish your goals?

20. How has this internship impacted your future career plans?
21. How could Transition Town Putney be improved to support the volunteer/intern through the internship process?

22. Feel free to use the space below to make any other comments regarding utilization of volunteers, or any additions you would like to make to any of your answers above.

Reference

Silicon Valley Volunteer Assessment Project (2011)
Appendix I

Putney Farmers’ Market Survey for Shoppers and Non-shoppers

Your Zip code............................

Please make an “X” mark on the box and fill in information where appropriate

1) From September 2010, how you done shopping at the Putney Farmers Market? ☐ Yes (continue to Q.2) ☐ No
Why?..................................................................................................................................................( go to Q. 7)

2) How did you hear about the Putney Farmers Market (PFM)? ☐ Word of mouth
☐ Advertisement ☐ Transition Town Putney’s Web-site ☐ I-Putney
☐ Co-op newsletter ☐ PFM board or managers ☐ Other (specify)................................................................................................................................................................................................

3) What do you buy from the PFM? ☐ Agro produce ☐ Prepared food ☐ Crafts ☐ Other
................................................................................................................................................

4) How much money do you spend weekly at the PFM? ☐ $1-10 ☐ $11-20 ☐ $21-30 ☐ $31-40 ☐ $41-50 ☐ > $50

5) How much time do you spend shopping at the PFM weekly?
☐ 10-15 mins ☐ 16-20 mins ☐ 21-30min ☐ 31-40 mins ☐ 41-50 mins ☐ 51-60mins ☐ >1 hr

6) How often do you do your shopping at the PFM? ☐ Every week ☐ Twice a month ☐ Once a month ☐ Occasionally

7) What might attract you (for “No” in Q. 1)/what are your reasons for shopping at the PFM?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attractions</th>
<th>Not important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Extremely important</th>
<th>Unable to rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to locally produced food</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Condition of produce (no bruises, blemishes etc.)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Freshness of products</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
8) How would you rate the overall benefit of the PFM to you and to the Putney community?

☐ Excellent  ☐ Good  ☐ Fair  ☐ Poor

9) How can the PFM be improved?

..............................................................

10) Have you bought the same items that you purchased from the Putney Farmers Market (PFM) from chain stores outside your community?  ☐ Yes (go to Q.No. 3)  ☐ No. Why?

..............................................................

11) What items did you buy?  ☐ Agro produce  ☐ Prepared food  ☐ Crafts  ☐ Other..............................................................

12) Where did you buy the items?  ☐ Wal-Mart  ☐ Hannaford  ☐ Price-chopper  ☐

Other..............................................................

13) How often do you go to buy the items at that chain store?  ☐ Every day  ☐ Twice a week

☐ Once a week  ☐ Twice a month  ☐ Once a month  ☐ Occasionally

14) How long does it take for you to travel from your home to that(those) shopping place(s)?

☐ 1-9mins  ☐ 10-20 mins  ☐ 21-30 mins  ☐ 31-40 mins  ☐ 41-50 mins  ☐ 50-60mins  ☐ >1 hr

15) How much does it cost for transportation to and from that store?  ☐ $1-9  ☐ $10-20  ☐ $21-30

☐ $31-40  ☐ $41-50  ☐ > $50

16) Why do you continue going to buy at that store?..............................................................
17) Before the PFM started in 2010, how long did it take you weekly to travel to and from the chain stores to buy your same goods? □ 1-9 mins □ 10-20 mins □ 21-30 mins □ 31-40 mins □ 41-50 mins □ 51-60 mins □ > 1 hr

18) How has your choice of shopping at the PFM affected your overall weekly time traveling to and from chain stores to buy the same locally available items? □ Unchanged

□ Time reduced by □ 1-9 mins □ 10-20 mins □ 21-30 mins □ 31-40 mins □ 41-50 mins □ 51-60 mins □ > 1 hr

□ Time increased by □ 1-9 mins □ 10-20 mins □ 21-30 mins □ 31-40 mins □ 41-50 mins □ 51-60 mins □ > 1 hr

19) Before the PFM started in 2010, how much did it cost you to travel to and from chain stores to buy your goods? □ $1-9 □ $10-20 □ $21-30 □ $31-40 □ $41-50 □ $50-60 □ > $60

20) Since you have begun purchasing locally available items from the PFM, to what extent has your weekly travel costs been affected? □ Unchanged

□ Travel cost reduced by □ $1-9 □ $10-20 □ $21-30 □ $31-40 □ $41-50 □ $51-60 □ > $60

□ Travel cost increased by □ $1-9 □ $10-20 □ $21-30 □ $31-40 □ $41-50 □ $51-60 □ > $60

21) Each time you do your shopping at the PFM, how much money do you NOT spend at the chain store?

□ Spending at chain store Unchanged

□ Spending reduced by □ $1-9 □ $10-20 □ $21-30 □ $31-40 □ $41-50 □ $51-60 □ > $60

Thank you so much for your time and feedback
Appendix J  Local Vendors Survey

Please make an “X” mark and fill in information where appropriate

1) What is your Zip code? ........................................................................................................

2) What products do you sell at the Putney Farmers Market (PFM)? Agro produce
   ☐ Prepared food ☐ Crafts ☐ Other (please specify)............................................................

3) How did you hear about the PFM? Word of mouth ☐ Advertisement ☐ Transition
   ☐ Town Putney’s PFM Web-site ☐ I-Putney ☐ Co-op newsletter ☐ PFM board or
   managers ☐ Other............................................

4) According to your understanding, what is the purpose of the Putney Farmers Market?
   ........................................................................................................................................

5) Is the Putney Farmers Market (PFM) the primary market for you to sell your products?
   ☐ Yes, go to Q. 7 ☐ No, go to Q. 6

6) If no, please specify other outlets you own/have before joining the Putney Farmers Market?
   ☐ Farm-stand ☐ CSA ☐ Other (Please specify) .................................................................

7) What percentage of your household income is from selling your products at the PFM?
   ☐ < less than 50% ☐ Between 51-75 % ☐ >More than 76-100%

8) Please select one response for each statement below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptions</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutra l</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I'm comfortable with the location of the market.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with the hours of the market</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am happy with the market staff and volunteers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The market has been beneficial to my business outside of the market.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with the financial profit I gain from the market.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

How have the vendors contributed to the local economy and resilience:

09) Describe your method(s) in emphasizing quality and localness over premium price to the
    customers as a way to distinguish your goods and services from mainstream chain
    stores........................................................................................................................................

10) What is the percentage of locally produced materials (seeds, ingredients, etc.) that you use to
    produce your products?...........................................................................................................

11) From September 2010 until now, apart from your family members, have you hired local people
    to help produce the product you sell at the PFM? Yes, go to Q13. No, go to Q14.

12) If yes, how many people, hours per week and what rate per hour?
    ...........................................................................................................................................
    (continue to Q.16)

13) If no, why? ......................................................................................................................(continue to Q.16)

14) Have you donated any of your products or surplus earnings to the community?
    Yes (go to Q.18) ☐ No
15) If no, Why? .................................................................................................................................(go to question Q.20)
16) If yes, what was the dollar value that you donated?
..........................................................................................................................................................
17) What kinds of community people or organizations received your donation?
..........................................................................................................................................................
18) Since you have sold your products at the PFM, apart from buying materials to produce your
product, have you invested anything new in your business?  □ Yes (go to Q. 21) □ No (go
to Q.24)
19) If yes, on what items or areas of investment have you invested for your business?
..........................................................................................................................................................
20) What was the dollar value that you invested in your business?
..........................................................................................................................................................
21) Among the items that you have purchased for your new business investment, what is the
percentage of your dollars being spent to buy such items at local stores/shops, not at chain
stores? ................................................................................................................................................
Partnership/relationship
22) How many new vendors/shoppers have you made friends with since you first sold your products
at the market? .......................................................................................................................................  
23) What are the positive benefits of getting to know more vendors/shoppers?
..........................................................................................................................................................
24) As a vendor, which of the following do you believe would be helpful to your business at the PFM?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptions</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More interactive activities between shoppers and vendors to excite the senses, build relationships and establish loyalty</td>
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<tr>
<td>More entertainment activities to attract shoppers to spend longer time at the market</td>
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<tr>
<td>More promotion on buying/supporting local</td>
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<td>More market schedules other than Sundays</td>
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<td>More diversity of products</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extended season</td>
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<tr>
<td>More vendors at the markets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Longer hours at the markets</td>
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</table>

25) What suggestions do you have to improve the Putney Farmers Market?
..........................................................................................................................................................

Thank you for your time.  **Chain stores:** Multi-international or national franchised stores whose
owners are not living in the same community where the store is located. For example, Walmart,
Hannaford, PriceChopper, Walgreens, Home Depot and etc.
Appendix K

The Evolution of a Transition Putney Working groups

Option 1

1. The key to Transition Putney is to listen to the community members to see what is percolating. Keep your ear to the ground.
2. Someone shares an idea (e.g., wouldn’t it be great to have a playground, farmers’ market, or community orchard in Putney?)
3. TTP invite the person /persons to sit and talk about what interest them. “Great idea! What do you need to do next” What do you need to know” what would help you move this along? Have you thought at x,y,z? You might want to contact these people who share a similar interest. Etc.
4. TTP might encourage the person to form a team of 3 or 4 people to continue exploring the idea.
5. The individual or team does the initial research to see if the community is interested, and how they might manifest their idea.
6. The individuals/ teams (perhaps with a TP member) hold a forum on the topic. Two or three “experts” are invited who are familiar with the topic, or type of project, who can bring some excitement to the conversation. Small group and large group discussion, leading to level of interest of the group in the project, and next steps.
7. Create an initial working group to move the project forward. (Might set a time limit that encourages moving to action.).
8. Working group takes charge and, with the help of others, does the work needed to make the project happen. Anyone who would like to join the project is invited to do so.
9. Action- and development of a final working group (e.g., the Putney Farmers’ Market Board, or the community Garden Steering Group). The working group creates a president, treasurer, and secretary. One person for the working group is elected to join the TTP core group. Working groups meet at least once a month.
10. Basic training and working group norms are provided for the working group by TTP core or Admin Team.

Option 2

1. An Open Space (or World Café) event is held around a broad topic, e.g. how Putney can feed itself?
2. During the event, a group comes together with the desire to focus on a particular interest, e.g., starting a Localvore Group that will hold regular Locavore Potlucks, created a Localvore Cookbook, and hold an annual Localvore Challenge.
3. The group forms a working group, elects a president, secretary, treasurer, and begins holding monthly meetings and regular events. They attract new members.
4. The Localvore Working Group elects a representative to be a member of TTP core.

Courtesy of Transition Town Putney’s co-founder.
Appendix K

On-site Evaluation Form

Name of Event ___________________________________ Date ________________________ Doc. No............

Your Zip code................................................................

1) How do you rate
   1.1 Content  4  3  2  1
   1.2 Presentation  4  3  2  1
   1.3 Advertisement  4  3  2  1

2) How did you hear about the Event? (Please circle all that apply)
   Listserv (5)  Sandwich-board (6)  Word of mouth (7)  iPutney (8)
   Posters(9)  Other (please specify) (10)

3) What is the one thing you took from this event/activity?
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

4) What kind of follow-up activity would you like to see and why?
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

5) Any suggestions for improving this event?
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________