



Case Study Research Plan

Karen Geraci & Marisa Mazzulla

April 25, 2014



Contents

Introduction	3
Research objective	3
Methods	3
Sampling strategy.....	4
Site Selection.....	4
Participant sample	4
Letter of information.....	5
Data collection	5
Data analysis	7
Case studies.....	7
Cross-case analysis.....	8
Challenges	8
Working within project timelines.....	8
Ensuring site / participant anonymity	8
Sharing findings.....	9
References	10
Appendix A: Letter of Information	11
Appendix B: Draft Data Collection Tools	12
Interview Guide 1.1: Implementation Lead	12
Interview Guide 1.2: Agency Manager.....	13
Interview Guide 1.3: RESDAC Support Personnel	14
Interview Guide 2.1: Implementation Lead	14
Interview Guide 2.2: Program Designer	15
Interview Guide 2.3: Steering Committee Member(s).....	16
Interview Guide 3.1: Implementation Lead	16
Interview Guide 3.2: Instructor(s)	17
Interview Guide 3.3: RESDAC Support Personnel	18
Appendix C: Work Plan.....	19

Introduction

Education offerings for adults with limited literacy skills too often consist of stand-alone programs tied to specific funding objectives. Integrated programming, in contrast, offers the opportunity to combine programs and services in effective and meaningful ways to meet the needs of learners, not institutions. Geraci and Mazzulla (2013) describe the characteristics of integrated programming and the different ways in which service providers in Canada, the United States, Australia and England have endeavored to construct such programs. Sometimes characterized as “busy intersections” (Leander, 2009 as cited in Reder, 2012), it is evident that integrated programming requires the efforts of many, including local community service providers and employers, and provincial and territorial policy makers and funders.

While some have documented what integrated programming is and why it is worth considering (Geraci & Mazzulla, 2013), few have described the realities faced by those who attempt to implement it. In order to address this knowledge gap, a two-year project, funded through Employment and Social Development Canada’s Office of Literacy and Essential Skills, will explore and document the process of implementation in different contexts. *Designed to Work / Sur Mesure pour l’Emploi* will work in four provinces to support implementation sites as they set up integrated programming for adults with limited literacy skills. Within this project, research will be conducted to identify the conditions that are conducive to the establishment of integrated programs. The research detailed in this plan documents the activities associated with the case study research.

Research objective

The aim of the research is to explore the conditions that support the development and delivery of an integrated programming approach. Case studies will be used to explore how these programs are implemented. An in-depth understanding of the implementation processes undertaken in different provinces, and in particular an analysis across the cases, will allow us to address the question guiding the research: *What are the conditions that are conducive to developing and delivering integrated programs?*

Methods

A qualitative case study method will be employed using multiple cases. Each case will reflect one site’s experiences in conceptualizing, designing, planning and offering integrated programming. Case studies have been chosen for their ability to illustrate processes (Merriam, 1998) and to

present phenomenon holistically along “with any context necessary for understanding the case” (Patton, 2002, p. 450). Descriptive case studies as defined by Merriam (1998) will present a detailed account of one site’s implementation activities against the backdrop of their community and provincial contexts. Themes and issues arising from the individual case studies will be analyzed across cases; the expectation is that the learning gained through in-depth examinations of multiple sites can contribute to a broader understanding of the conditions that support the implementation of integrated programming.

Sampling strategy

Site Selection

RESDAC management and support personnel, in collaboration with government representatives from each province involved in *Designed to Work / Sur Mesure pour l’Emploi*, will choose the eight implementation sites that will take part in the project. A case study will be prepared for each site to document the activities and experiences associated with setting up an integrated program.

A minimum of five case studies will serve as the foundation for the cross-case analysis that examines implementation conditions. This number is large enough to provide sufficient data to illustrate how implementation takes place and to identify topics for comparative purposes in the cross-case analysis (Creswell, 2013). Purposive sampling will be employed to select the case studies that will be part of the cross-case analysis. These will be selected to reflect some diversity, including language of provision, size of community and province. Case studies selected for inclusion in the cross-case analysis will be chosen from those that are ready by early spring 2015.

Participant sample

Research participants¹ will be purposively sampled from implementation sites. Those who are involved in implementation, including implementation leads, managers, program designers, instructors, steering committee members and RESDAC support personnel will be chosen to participate. Researchers will seek guidance from implementation leads to ensure that key personnel involved in implementation at each site are included. Where several individuals carry out a similar role at a site, efforts will be made to choose a research participant so that varied perspectives are achieved.

¹ Research participants are defined as those individuals who will be interviewed to gather data to write the case studies. Learners enrolled in the integrated programs will not be interviewed for the case studies.

Letter of information

All individuals involved in implementation at each of the project's implementation sites will participate in research activities as part of their agreement with RESDAC's *Designed to Work / Sur Mesure pour l'Emploi* project. A letter of information (**Appendix A**) will be given to all research participants in either English or French that explains the purpose of the study and how the data they provide will be used. Research participants will have an opportunity to review the letter and seek clarification as required before they begin participating.

Data collection

Three data collection techniques will be used to gather data: individual interviews, group interviews and documents. The rationale behind using multiple sources of data is its ability to yield different information that will contribute to a more complete understanding of the implementation process and associated challenges at each site (Patton, 2002).

Interviews will be used to gather information about the experiences of those who are directly involved in implementation. The purpose of the interviews will be to collect data about the:

- Context in which implementation occurs
- Nature of the program that is implemented
- Activities, experiences and personal reflections associated with:
 - Initiating implementation
 - Designing the program
 - Developing and delivering the program
 - Evaluating the program

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted using interview guides that include questions and probes (See **Appendix B**). Data will be collected in English or French, depending on research participants' preferences. Interviews will be conducted by either one of two Anglophone researchers or by a Francophone team member in their first language. Interviewers will take notes during interviews to document responses. As soon after the interviews as possible, interviewers will type their interview notes, noting the implementation site, date, time and interview participants. Any gaps in information or understanding will be noted and following discussion with the researchers, follow up interviews will be scheduled as required.

Individual interviews will be conducted with those involved in the implementation process including implementation leads, managers, program designers, instructors and RESDAC support personnel. Other interviewees may be identified during the data collection period.

Group interviews with steering committee members will be conducted to understand the ways in which the steering committee was involved in the implementation process. Group interviews will focus on eliciting information about steering committee activities and any decisions with which the steering committee was involved.

There are three stages at which interview data will be collected from implementation sites in an effort to document the process as it unfolds. Two of the three sets will be conducted by telephone, as will any interviews required to clarify responses or fill information gaps. One set of interviews will take place in person during site visits.

The following table summarizes a tentative plan for individual and group interviews. Data collection schedules specific to each implementation site will be produced once implementation efforts have begun. Schedules will be designed to give us adequate time to investigate as much of the implementation process as possible, from project conceptualization through to delivery and evaluation, while leaving sufficient time for a cross-case analysis.

Interview	When	How	Focus of interviews	Who will be interviewed
Set 1	During project initiation activities	By telephone using interview guides 1.1, 1.2, 1.3	Understand the program context and motivation for implementing this type of program Identify and describe activities completed to date	Individual interviews with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation lead • Agency manager(s) • RESDAC support personnel
Set 2	During program design	In person using interview guides 2.1, 2.2, 2.3	Outline idea for integrated program Identify and describe activities completed to date Explore challenges, successes	Individual interview with implementation lead Individual or group interviews with individuals playing key roles in implementation, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program designer • Steering committee member(s)
Set 3	Once program is being delivered	By telephone using interview guides 3.1, 3.2, 3.3	Describe integrated program Identify and describe activities completed to date Explore challenges, successes	Individual interview with implementation lead Individuals playing key roles in implementation, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructors • RESDAC support personnel

Documents that are produced or used by the study sites will be collected when interviews take place. Such documents may include needs assessments, outreach materials and classroom resources such as curriculum and assessments. These documents will contribute to an understanding of the activities carried out during implementation and the products of implementation. Researchers will ensure that all documents are appropriately labelled and dated.

Data analysis

All data analysis activities will occur in English. Interview notes and documents collected in French will be translated into English by a qualified translator prior to data analysis.

Case studies

Interview data and documents collected from each implementation site will be analyzed to produce individual case studies that describe the site's implementation experience. One of the two researchers will be assigned primary responsibility for each case study. This will involve reviewing, organizing and coding the data as well as drafting the case study.

Interview data will be coded to identify events, challenges and successes of implementation. Documents will be coded to identify the implementation events with which they are associated. The researcher will look for multiple perspectives and experiences of the events that occur within the implementation process. The data will be used to provide descriptive detail of the chronology of implementation, the context in which implementation occurred and a description of the integrated program that was implemented.

Codes from the pilot case study (Équipe d'alphabétisation - Nouvelle-Écosse) will be used to begin analyzing the data. These codes were developed by both researchers and will provide consistency in coding of new data. In addition, the researchers will work together to corroborate any emerging codes and themes.

To verify the credibility of the descriptive case study and ensure it is an accurate representation of events, implementation leads and RESDAC support personnel will be asked to review a draft of the case study. These individuals will each have been interviewed several times and will be most familiar with the events described in the case studies. Consistent with recommended research practice (Patton, 2002; Stake, 1995), they will be given an opportunity to suggest revisions and their recommendations will be used to corroborate the findings.

Cross-case analysis

To produce the cross case-analysis, the case studies will be analyzed to identify themes and issues associated with implementation. Creswell (2013) explains that case study research that involves multiple cases typically explores themes specific to each case (within-case analysis) followed by analysis across cases. The researchers will work together to identify and refine themes. Themes may take the form of events, challenges or successes experienced by more than one site, or experiences of only one site that are determined to be noteworthy. In the cross-case analysis, themes will be explored in an effort to identify the conditions that support the development and delivery of integrated programs.

Challenges

The following challenges have been identified for their potential to influence the findings. They are described here along with proposed methods of reducing the impact of these challenges.

Working within project timelines

The *Designed to Work / Sur Mesure pour l'Emploi* project occurs within a two-year timeframe. These timelines include project initiation activities and the selection of Francophone and Anglophone implementation sites in four provinces. Thus, for most sites implementation will begin on or after Month 6 of the project cycle, leaving 18 months or less for sites to carry out the whole implementation process. At the same time, case studies are intended to capture as much of the implementation process as possible, in order to fully reflect the extent of its activities and the experiences of those involved.

Timelines for the case study research are heavily reliant on the timelines associated with implementation (see **Appendix C**). Any delays in identifying implementation sites or in sites initiating the implementation process will affect case study development timelines. Delays in the production of case studies could in turn affect the number of case studies used in the cross-case analysis and the extent to which they can be purposively selected. Significant delays in identifying case study sites could restrict our ability to produce case studies before the end of the project.

Ensuring participant anonymity

The context within which implementation occurs will need to be part of the descriptions in the case studies. At a community level, readers will need to understand features such as the size of

the community, its local labour force and economic conditions. At a program level, the history of the organization(s) involved, the services they provide and the clients they serve will all be important in decisions they make about implementing integrated programming. Since these descriptive details may reveal the identities of programs or service delivery agencies being studied, a decision has been made to name the implementation sites in publications. By extension this may make it possible for some readers to identify individuals involved in implementation. As a consequence, some interviewees may feel pressure to downplay challenges out of concern that their experiences will reflect poorly on colleagues and themselves. This will be addressed by presenting information and quotes anonymously or assigning a pseudonym to individuals.

Sharing findings

All eight case studies will be produced in English, translated into French by a qualified translator and made available to implementation sites. A research report will be produced that includes the cross-case analysis and the case studies that support that analysis. The research report will be produced in English and translated into French. The primary audience for the research report will be policy makers and others in decision-making roles. Findings from the report will be presented at one national and several provincial forums on the topic of integrated programming. The final research report will be posted on the RESDAC website and distributed widely to federal and provincial government representatives, and to adult education and research organizations.

References

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Geraci, K. & Mazzulla, M. (2013). *The what & why of integrated programming: A review of the literature*. Ottawa, ON: Le Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). Case studies as qualitative research. In S. B. Merriam, *Qualitative research and case study applications in education* (pp. 26-43). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Inc.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Reder, S. (2012). *The longitudinal study of adult learning: Challenging assumptions*. Montreal: The Centre for Literacy.

Stake, R.E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Appendix A: Letter of Information

Project Title: Designed to Work

Lead Researchers: Karen Geraci, Marisa Mazzulla

Project Manager: Gabrielle Lopez

Le Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences (RESDAC) has received funding from Employment and Social Development Canada's Office of Literacy and Essential Skills to support eight implementation sites as they set up integrated programming for adults with limited literacy skills. *Designed to Work* will support two implementation sites in four provinces: New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Saskatchewan.

As part of this project, RESDAC will prepare case studies that describe the events and experiences of those involved in implementation at each site. The case studies will be used to investigate the conditions that support the development and delivery of integrated programs.

To prepare the case studies, interviews will be conducted with implementation leads, managers, program designers, instructors, steering committee members, RESDAC support personnel and other key personnel involved in implementation. Copies of documents produced or used by sites over the course of implementation will also be collected. The data collected for the case studies will be shared with RESDAC project team members but will not be shared publicly.

Implementation leads will have an opportunity to review a draft of his or her site's case study to verify that it accurately reflects the events that occurred during implementation.

The case studies that are produced and the analysis of the case studies will be presented at one national and several provincial forums on the topic of integrated programming. The final research report will be posted on the RESDAC website and distributed widely to federal and provincial government representatives, and to adult education and research organizations. Implementation sites will be named in the case studies and cross-case analysis; efforts will be made to ensure that the individuals who are involved in implementation at each site remain anonymous.

If you have any questions about this research project, contact Gabrielle Lopez, project manager at 1-888-906-5666, ext. 7, or at projets-gl@resdac.net.

Appendix B: Draft Data Collection Tools

Before conducting an interview, the interviewer should:

- Begin by thanking the participant(s) for setting time aside to be interviewed
- If this is the first interview conducted:
 - Introduce yourself and your role
 - Explain that the purpose of the interview is to gather information to understand the process of implementation including the events, challenges and successes
 - Review contents of the letter of information
- Explain that the interview is private and that only RESDAC project team members will know what interviewee(s) has said
- Confirm that interviewee(s)' name(s) will not be used
- Point out that the interviewee does not have to answer any questions or provide information that he/she does not feel comfortable sharing
- Mention that given the innovative and ground breaking approach that is being implemented, challenges are to be expected
- Explain that there are no right or wrong answers; you are just looking for descriptions of experiences and the interviewee(s)' perspective

Interview Guide 1.1: Implementation Lead

Program context

1. Can you describe the programs and services your agency currently offers?
 - Probe for clients target group(s), client group(s) served, funding, partnerships
2. How would you describe the community in which you offer your services?
 - Probe for population of community, economy/labour force, service providers offering complementary or competing services
3. Can you tell me what led your agency to decide to offer integrated programming?
 - Probe for provincial/community context, learner needs

Implementation Process

4. Can you tell me about all the people and organizations that are involved in implementation?
 - Probe for roles, responsibilities, collaboration between people/groups

5. Can you tell me about your role in the implementation process?
 - Probe for activities, responsibilities
6. Can you tell me about any aspects of implementation that have gone well?
 - Probe for successes related to activities they have been directly involved with (e.g., needs analysis, partnership development, design, staffing, communications)
 - Probe for reasons behind successes identified (e.g., information, resources, policies)
7. Can you tell me about any aspects of implementation that have been challenging?
 - Probe for challenges related to activities they have been directly involved with (e.g., needs analysis, partnership development, design, staffing, communications)
 - Probe for reasons behind challenges identified (e.g., information, resources, policies)

Interview Guide 1.2: Agency Manager

Program context

1. Can you describe the programs and services your agency currently offers?
 - Probe for clients target group(s), client group(s) served, funding, partnerships
2. How would you describe the community in which you offer your services?
 - Probe for population of community, economy/labour force, service providers offering complementary or competing services
3. Can you tell me what led your agency to decide to offer integrated programming?
 - Probe for provincial/community context, learner needs
4. Who was involved in the decision to offer integrated programming?
 - Probe for involvement of boards of directors, other governing bodies

Implementation Process

5. Can you tell me about your role in the implementation process?
 - Probe for activities, responsibilities
6. Can you tell me about any aspects of implementation that have gone well?
 - Probe for successes related to activities they have been directly involved with (e.g., needs analysis, partnership development, design, staffing, communications)

- Probe for reasons behind successes identified (e.g., information, resources, policies)
7. Can you tell me about any aspects of implementation that have been challenging?
- Probe for challenges related to activities they have been directly involved with (e.g., needs analysis, partnership development, design, staffing, communications)
 - Probe for reasons behind challenges identified (e.g., information, resources, policies)

Interview Guide 1.3: RESDAC Support Personnel

Implementation Process

1. Can you tell me about your role in the implementation process?
 - Probe for activities, responsibilities, activities before implementation began
2. Can you tell me about any aspects of implementation that have gone well?
 - Probe for successes related to activities they have been directly involved with (e.g., needs analysis, partnership development, design, staffing, communications)
 - Probe for reasons behind successes identified (e.g., information, resources, policies)
3. Can you tell me about any aspects of implementation that have been challenging?
 - Probe for challenges related to activities they have been directly involved with (e.g., needs analysis, partnership development, design, staffing, communications)
 - Probe for reasons behind challenges identified (e.g., information, resources, policies)

Interview Guide 2.1: Implementation Lead

Integrated Program Model

1. Please describe the integrated program you are designing.
 - Probe for occupational focus, target group, schedule, skills addressed, staffing, assessment / evaluation practices

Implementation Process

2. Can you tell me about all the people and organizations that are involved in implementation at this stage?
 - Probe for roles, responsibilities, collaboration between people/groups

3. Can you tell me about your role in the implementation process since the last time we spoke?
 - Probe for activities, responsibilities
4. Can you tell me about any aspects of implementation that have gone well?
 - Probe for successes related to activities they have been directly involved with (e.g., needs analysis, partnership development, design, staffing, communications)
 - Probe for reasons behind successes identified (e.g., information, resources, policies)
5. Can you tell me about any aspects of implementation that have been challenging?
 - Probe for challenges related to activities they have been directly involved with (e.g., needs analysis, partnership development, design, staffing, communications)
 - Probe for reasons behind challenges identified (e.g., information, resources, policies)

Interview Guide 2.2: Program Designer

Integrated Program Model

1. Please describe the integrated program you are designing.
 - Probe for occupational focus, target group, schedule, skills addressed, staffing, assessment / evaluation practices

Implementation Process

2. Can you tell me about your role in the implementation process?
 - Probe for activities, responsibilities
3. Can you tell me about any aspects of implementation that have gone well?
 - Probe for successes related to activities they have been directly involved with (e.g., needs analysis, partnership development, design, communications)
 - Probe for reasons behind successes identified (e.g., information, resources, policies)
4. Can you tell me about any aspects of implementation that have been challenging?
 - Probe for challenges related to activities they have been directly involved with (e.g., needs analysis, partnership development, design, communications)
 - Probe for reasons behind challenges identified (e.g., information, resources, policies)

Interview Guide 2.3: Steering Committee Member(s)

Program context

1. Can you describe the programs and services your agency currently offers?
 - Probe for clients target group(s), client group(s) served, funding, partnerships
2. What led you to become part of the Steering Committee?

Implementation Process

3. Can you tell me about your role in the implementation process?
 - Probe for activities, responsibilities at all stages
4. Can you tell me about any aspects of implementation that have gone well?
 - Probe for successes related to activities they have been directly involved with (e.g., needs analysis, partnership development, design, staffing, communications)
 - Probe for reasons behind successes identified (e.g., information, resources, policies)
5. Can you tell me about any aspects of implementation that have been challenging?
 - Probe for challenges related to activities they have been directly involved with (e.g., needs analysis, partnership development, design, staffing, communications)
 - Probe for reasons behind challenges identified (e.g., information, resources, policies)
6. What have you learned from the implementation experience?

Interview Guide 3.1: Implementation Lead

Integrated Program Model

1. Please describe the integrated program.
 - Probe for occupational focus, target group, schedule, skills addressed, staffing, assessment / evaluation practices
2. What is different about this program than others you have offered in the past?

Implementation Process

3. Can you tell me about all the people and organizations that are involved in implementation at this stage?
 - Probe for roles, responsibilities, collaboration between people/groups
4. Can you tell me about your role in the implementation process since the last time we spoke?
 - Probe for activities, responsibilities
5. Can you tell me about any aspects of implementation that have gone well?
 - Probe for successes related to activities they have been directly involved with (e.g., partnership development, design, staffing, delivery, communications)
 - Probe for reasons behind successes identified (e.g., information, resources, policies)
6. Can you tell me about any aspects of implementation that have been challenging?
 - Probe for challenges related to activities they have been directly involved with (e.g., partnership development, design, staffing, delivery, communications)
 - Probe for reasons behind challenges identified (e.g., information, resources, policies)
7. What have you learned from the implementation experience?

Interview Guide 3.2: Instructor(s)

Integrated Program Model

1. Please describe the integrated program.
 - Probe for occupational focus, target group, schedule, skills addressed, staffing, assessment / evaluation practices
2. What is different about this program than others you have offered in the past?

Implementation Process

3. Can you tell me about your role in the implementation process?
 - Probe for activities, responsibilities at all stages
4. Can you tell me about any aspects of implementation that have gone well?

- Probe for successes related to activities they have been directly involved with (e.g., partnership development, design, staffing, delivery, communications)
 - Probe for reasons behind successes identified (e.g., information, resources, policies)
5. Can you tell me about any aspects of implementation that have been challenging?
- Probe for challenges related to activities they have been directly involved with (e.g., partnership development, design, staffing, delivery, communications)
 - Probe for reasons behind challenges identified (e.g., information, resources, policies)
6. What have you learned from the implementation experience?

Interview Guide 3.3: RESDAC Support Personnel

Implementation Process

1. Can you tell me about your role in the implementation process since the last time we spoke?
- Probe for activities, responsibilities at all stages
2. Can you tell me about any aspects of implementation that have gone well?
- Probe for successes related to activities they have been directly involved with (e.g., partnership development, design, staffing, delivery, communications)
 - Probe for reasons behind successes identified (e.g., information, resources, policies)
3. Can you tell me about any aspects of implementation that have been challenging?
- Probe for challenges related to activities they have been directly involved with (e.g., partnership development, design, staffing, delivery, communications)
 - Probe for reasons behind challenges identified (e.g., information, resources, policies)

Appendix C: Work Plan

The following deadlines indicate when data collection and analysis activities will need to be completed. The deadlines below allow the cross-case analysis and report writing to occur between April 2015 and June 2015.

Once implementation sites are identified, a schedule will be prepared that specifies when data will be collected from each of the seven remaining implementation sites. Efforts will be made to stagger data collection activities so that there is adequate time to analyze data and prepare the case studies.

Activity	Deadline by which this needs to occur for the case study to be part of the cross-case analysis	Deadline by which this needs to occur for the case study to be produced before the end of the project
Set 1 interviews, document collection which occur while implementation sites are completing initiation activities	Sept 2014	Jan 2015
Set 2 interviews, document collection which occur while implementation sites are designing their integrated programs	Nov 2014	Mar 2015
Set 3 interviews, document collection which occur while implementation sites are delivering their integrated programs	Feb 2015	Jun 2015
Data analysis and case study development	April 2015	Sept 2015