Reviewer’s report

Title: Evaluability Assessment of “Growing Healthy Communities,” a Mini-grant Program to Improve Access to Healthy Foods and Places for Physical Activity

Version: 0 Date: 20 Feb 2019

Reviewer: Paula Silva

Reviewer's report:

The review process of the paper entitled Evaluability Assessment of 'Growing Healthy communities', a Mini-grant Program to Improve Access to Healthy Foods and Places for Physical Activity, has set some questions despite the relevant work developed by authors.

Evaluability Assessment "is a method for examining a program (or a proposed program) to assess its structure, to determine the plausibility of the program achieving intended goals, the evaluability of those goals, and the utility of implementing further evaluation of the program" Smith (1989, p.11). Yet "...by itself it is not adequate as an evaluation. It does not have a sufficient standard of evidence to demonstrate effectiveness or describe implementation. However, it is valuable to identify programs that are unlikely to be effective in their current form, as well as those that show promise to address societal needs. It can assist program planners to adjust their activities and resources to achieve objectives, or to adjust their objectives in light of program reality" (Leviton, Khan, Rog, Dawkins, & Cotton, 2010).

Research is needed in order to provide further guidance on how to conduct an EA, which is the model more appropriate for conducting it, and the known facilitators and challenges that may arise during the process.

The careful analysis of this paper has put some doubts about the design of the manuscript and even its nature. The purpose of the manuscript is clear, "...to conduct an Evaluability Assessment of a pilot mini-grant program to determine if this program was ready for evaluation and identify any changes needed for future implementation and evaluation that could also inform similar programs" (p.5). Therefore, the main question is if we can consider this description of an evaluation process as a study… Honestly, I do not feel comfortable to make that decision…I will leave that decision to the editors.


Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

Does the work include the necessary controls?
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Unable to assess

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
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Unable to assess

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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