Using Ripple Effects Mapping to Evaluate Community Development Programs

Debra Hansen

Lorie Higgins
REM Speed Dating

• Background
• Benefits
• How and why to use it
• Basic elements
Getting to Know REM

- Process
- Demonstration
- Coding and using the data
- Limitations and suggestions
Purposes

Intended and *unintended* results of a program for individuals, groups, or communities.
Benefits

• Effective process for reflection (important but not always done!)
• Captures impact of complex or evolving work
• Participatory and appreciative approach that engages stakeholders
• Group validation of results
Why It’s Helpful

• Complex community programs often build social capital, but don’t get credit.

• Strengthened social capital is a necessary pre-condition for other impacts.

• Ripple effects may not be evident for months or even years.
Timing

Post-program (summative) or Mid-program (formative)
Why Does it Work?

Blending Effective Theory and Practice

- Appreciative Inquiry Interviews
- Mind Mapping
- Community Capitals Framework
Program Examples

- Leadership Programs (WA, ID, ND, MN)
- Community Tourism Development (MN)
- Business Retention & Expansion (MN)
- Master Gardener Program (MN, WA)
- Youth Development (multi-state)
- Hometown Competitiveness (NE)
## Three Approaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One Ripple at a Time</th>
<th>Theming 1\textsuperscript{st}, Ripple 2\textsuperscript{nd}</th>
<th>Community Capitals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Hansen &amp; Higgins)</td>
<td>(Chazdon)</td>
<td>(Emery)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Round robin</td>
<td>• Round robin to list what happened</td>
<td>• Start by listing impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Invite others to add to what is being shared</td>
<td>• Develop themes</td>
<td>• Code to CCF on spider graph, starting with short-term impacts</td>
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<tr>
<td>• One story at a time is ripple mapped</td>
<td>• Ripples identified</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Code to CCF</td>
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</table>
Process Steps

• Identify the intervention
• Schedule the event & invite participants
• Hold group mapping session
• Follow-up interviews
• Cleaning, Coding, Analysis
Appreciative Inquiry Interview

Tell me a story about how you have used the information from the program?

Is there anything that resulting from the program that you are proud to share?

List an achievement or a success you had based on what you learned.

(Cooperider, 2008)
Mind Mapping

The Whole is Greater than the Sum of the Parts
Prompts and Ripples

Community Leadership

Youth learned to be leaders

Prompt 1:
What happened as a result?

Created Youth Council
Wrote news articles
Community Clean-Up
Prompt 2: What is different in your community?

Community Leadership

Youth learned to be leaders

Created Youth Council

Wrote news articles

Did service projects

Youth feel more connected to the community
Details from Northport, WA
Horizons

Community Gardens
- Provides a venue for people to be involved
- Produce to the "poor" in town
- Garden promotes hospitality
  - Artisans are making money
  - Flowers

Farmers' Market
- Provides a venue for people to sell
  - Can envision a market that grows so much it is like a festival every week
- Farmers' Market vendors are using local services (i.e. dog groomer)
- Provides a forum for new people to get to know people in the community
- Cooperation in setting up tents
- Increasing economic vitality
- Has been able to work with regulation and have not ran into any problems

Actions/Events
The Community Capitals Framework

(Emery and Flora, 2008)
Coding and Reporting

- Data management strategies
- Effective communication with participants, stakeholders and decision makers
Prompts and Ripples

Community Leadership

Youth learned to be leaders...

Created Youth Council...

Wrote news articles...

Cleaned a river...

Feel more connected to the community

Long term Cultural Cap
NCPR, Northport: Building Relationships Changing perceptions of 'help'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capitals</th>
<th>Human</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Political</th>
<th>Financial</th>
<th>Built</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Community Center</td>
<td></td>
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<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Several business people use community center for free advertising</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1.1 Generated business for computer technician because it provides a place to advertise - at least 3 or 4 referrals</td>
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<td>1.2 Ran completely by volunteers</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2.1 15 volunteers work steady, 3 on call</td>
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<td>1.3 Gives kids something positive to do</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.3.1 Especially for kids who don't have anything else to do</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4 Individual computer usages/provides wireless internet</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4.1 Dramatic increases between April to June</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4.2 223 total registered computer users</td>
<td>S</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4.3 Who uses?</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4.3.1 Resume writing</td>
<td>M</td>
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<td>1.4.3.2 Beginning computer classes</td>
<td>M</td>
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<td>1.4.3.3 Ebay business</td>
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<td>1.4.3.4 Avon business</td>
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<td>1.4.3.5 Media consumption</td>
<td></td>
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<td>M</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4.3.6 Printing receipts to get across the boarder</td>
<td>S</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4.3.7 To do taxes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limitations / Suggestions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk of bias in participant selection</td>
<td>Put effort into recruitment</td>
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<td>Risk of bias in recording &amp; reporting impacts</td>
<td>Share the credit</td>
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<td>Use 3rd party facilitator</td>
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<td>Limitations / Suggestions</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Inconsistent implementation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Use same facilitator, recorder and “mapper”</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Develop a facilitator guide with prompts and probes</strong></td>
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</table>
## Limitations / Suggestions

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants may not have complete information</th>
<th>Follow-up with interviews to get details and connect with key participants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sharing the data</td>
<td>Poster-sized maps for communities</td>
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</table>
## Limitations / Suggestions

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Difficult to balance breadth and depth</th>
<th>Facilitator must be experienced</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gather details later</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Keep three key things you want to know in mind...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Three Key Things

1. **What participants learned**
2. **What participants did**
3. **How things changed as a result**
QUESTIONS?
Contact the Presenters

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Ripple Effects Mapping Tools:
stevens.wsu.edu/tools
ERCC CoP

http://www.extension.org/community_development