



Ripple Effects Mapping for Evaluation

A new way to explore overall (individual, group, community, or regional) changes that have taken place since participating in the Extension program.

The Ripple Effects Evaluation process is an effective and engaging way to get information out of a person's brain and on to paper in a visual way.

This curriculum demonstrates how to use mind-mapping to draw the stories and ripple effects of a complex program and code it to measure outcomes.

Using the Community Capitals Framework, you can trace the impacts of investments in one or more of the Capitals and then make strategic alliances by understanding links of organizations to different capitals.

Successful communities pay attention to each of the seven capitals: social, cultural, human, political, natural, built, and financial. The Community Capitals Framework is to conceptualize a community system in a way that leads to effective community and economic decision-making and sustainable development.

Ripple Effects Mapping for Evaluation

PURPOSE OF THIS EXERCISE:

To better understand the ripple effects and relationships of the Extension program on individuals, groups, communities, and regions.

Evaluation Steps

TIME REQUIRED:

45-90 minutes depending on the depth of the mapping process

ITEMS NEEDED:

Large white paper posted on the wall, tape, markers, blank paper for participants to write on.

Introductions and establishing ground rules (5 minutes)
i.e. everyone should feel free to share, avoid interrupting, etc.

Brief overview of the session and objectives (2 minutes)

This mapping evaluation provides a method of illustrating to stakeholders the ripple effects of this program, validating the effects of the program, and creating stronger support and public value. The purpose of this study is to explore overall (individual, group, community, or regional) changes that have taken place since participating in the WSU Extension program.

Appreciative Inquiry Interview (5 to 10 minutes)

Mapping Your Impacts (30 to 60 minutes)

Reflection (5-15 minutes)

Coding

Appreciative Inquiry Interview

Appreciative Inquiry (Ai) is a way of thinking about the world around us. Ai invites us to think and ask questions about the positive things we appreciate and value – what do we want more of in our lives? Ai is a philosophy of seeing the possibilities in life, of seeing the glass half full. Ai is a hopeful place where change comes with wonder and encouragement for a better future.

TIME REQUIRED:

10-15 minutes

ITEMS NEEDED:

Paper for people to take notes.

1. Find a partner (not a good friend)
2. Share a story briefly about the program using one of these questions:
 - Tell me a story about how you have used the information received through the program.
 - Is there anything you are proud to share?
 - Were there cost savings?
 - New ways to work?
 - Did you tell others about what you learned?
 - List an achievement or a success you had based on your learning from the program – what made it possible?
3. Try to use as many details as possible when you tell the story to your partner.
4. Have a few people report out to get examples and a starting point for the mapping.

Mapping Your Impacts

HOW TO DRAW THE MAP

1. Post a large piece of white paper on the wall and write the program or project name in the middle of the map.
2. Draw out several branches from the list identified through Appreciative Inquiry conversations:
3. Begin brainstorming the immediate results of the program drawing lines to connect things. You may have to ask probing questions such as
 - How are things different as a result of the activities and events you planned?
 - What are people doing differently?
 - What effect did participation have on attitudes, behaviors, knowledge and action?

Bold indicates possible main branches; the examples would be secondary branches. At this second level begin brainstorming the impact of those results. For example, “who benefits from the activity and how as a result of the things that people are doing differently?” Continue drawing lines to connect items.

A community leadership map might start out looking like the example below. Each map will look different based on the program area and concepts taught.

Example concepts from a financial management training...

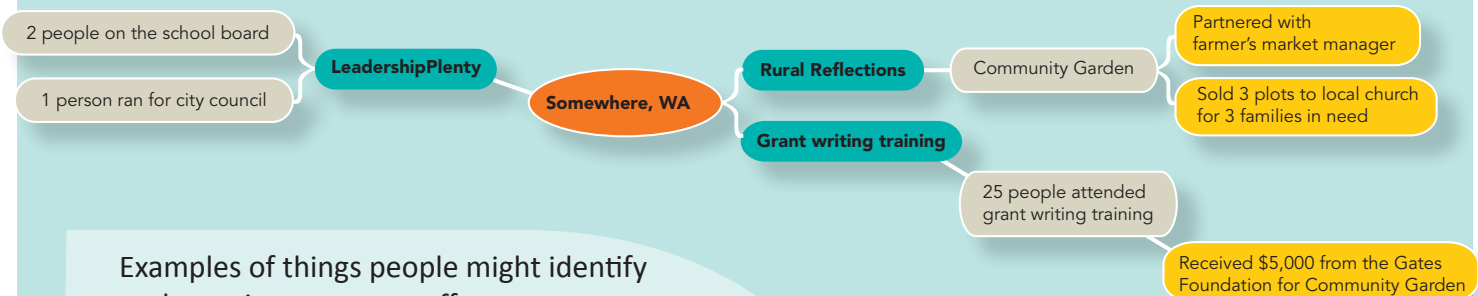
- Budgeting
- Insurance
- Savings
- Retirement planning
- Started new 401 plan

Example concepts from a community leadership training...

- Leadership training
- Grant writing training
- New people running for office
- Community garden development

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL MAPPING...

- Individual learning and action items may be the easiest to start with.
- When mapping, get as detailed as possible. After collecting information for the “map” there will be opportunities for them to add and embellish. This provides ideas about how to dig deeper.
- People may be shy about sharing their own successes, but may be more willing to talk about how others have used the information.



Examples of things people might identify under various program efforts:

PROJECTS/ ACTION ITEMS	Community gardens, youth councils, transportation assistance
VISIONING	Demonstrated renewed community pride
SPECIAL EVENTS	Extension Field Days, new crop varieties used
YOUTH ACTIVITIES	Youth leadership councils, 4-H camps, newfound confidence
PARTNERSHIPS	State agencies, campus departments
NEW RESOURCES	Grants received
JOB/BUSINESS CREATION	Specific jobs and businesses
POLICY/ ADVOCACY	Testifying to legislature or city council
WORKSHOPS/ TRAINING	Specific action items from workshops conferences

4. When the hand-written map is completed, consider transferring it to a computer software program for ease of reading and understanding. There are multiple programs available including XMind, Freemind, and others.



Reflection

1. Group members are asked to reflect on how the mapping processes made them feel.

Ask them to identify the most significant change on the map.
 - What is most interesting about the map?
 - How can Extension use the map to help tell the story about how we are making a difference?
 - What should we do next? Do we need additional evaluation - i.e., talking to other people in the community?
 - Should we be sharing this information with stakeholders? If so, what's the story you want to tell?
 - What new action could we take?
 - Where are there gaps in the program?

2. Have each of the participants write down the three concepts that were the most important.
3. Provide each participant with a summary report of the mapping process and findings.



Coding

The process of coding will be directed by the outcomes you wish to track. Methods could include coding short, medium and long term impacts toward the Community Capitals Framework, the triple bottom line (economy, environment, and social; or people, planet, and profit) or any other metric you want to track.

This can give you a quantitative perspective about the qualitative nature of the mapping process, but may not hold up to rigorous critique.

1. Type the data collected as you map, or after the fact into one of the mapping softwares available. If you wish to code the data, be sure and find a software that will import to a word or spreadsheet format.
2. The software should also be able to save the map in a pdf format to share, and print to the size you want for sharing with funders, partners or stakeholders.
3. Once you export or save the data into a spreadsheet, you can code the data to the framework you want to track. Here is an example of a community development Mind Map that is coded with short (S), medium (M) and long-term (L) impacts using the Community Capital Framework. It is easy to imagine inserting other metrics.

Capitals	Natural	Cultural	Human	Social	Political
Study Circles		L	L	M	
Identified Community Issues		L	L	M	
Visioning		L	L	M	
Gang Prevention		L	L	L	M
Graffiti Abatement Program	L	M	M	M	S
Law Enforcement Gang Training		M	M	M	L
Sheriffs from 3 counties		S	S	M	L
Local law enforcement		S	S	M	L
Highway patrol		S	S	M	L
Federal		S	S	M	L
JDAI			M	M	L
\$50,000 grant			M	M	L
Albuquerque Conference			M	M	L

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Appreciative Inquiry material adapted from: "Appreciative Inquiry: Rethinking Human Organization Toward a Positive Theory of Change", Cooperrider, D., Whitney, D., Yager, T. (2000) Champaign, Ill: Stripes Publishing.

Community Capitals material adapted from: "Spiraling-Up: Mapping Community Transformation with Community Capitals Framework." Emery and Flora (2006).

Mind Mapping material adapted from The Mind Map Book, Tony Buzan (2003).

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