Using Ripple Effects Mapping to Give Voice to Coalition Outcomes

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Plan for Today

- Evaluation Focus
- Evaluation Approach
  - Overview of Ripple Effects Mapping
- Evaluation Process
- Evaluation Findings
- Final Thoughts

Evaluation Focus

- Coalitions, and other community-based groups, are often complex in structure:
  - Traditional evaluation techniques less effective for capturing group outcomes
  - Value in drawing out group accomplishments and obtaining stories of their work in a group setting
- Protocol developed to measure coalition success and strategically plan for the future:
  - Ripple Effects Mapping
  - Key Informant Interviews
    - Participant validation and follow-up

Allowed for coalition members to use their own voices to capture outcomes and impact

Evaluation Focus

- Focus on three food system related coalitions
  - Primary goals of each coalition were similar:
    - To reduce hunger and strengthen their local or regional food system
  - The coalitions included the following types of partners:

Healthcare Organizations	University Extension Service
Nonprofits	School Districts
Public Health Agencies	Public Officials
Food Banks & Pantries	Farmers & Producers
Churches	Other Relevant Individual Stakeholders

Evaluation Approach: Ripple Effects Mapping

Participatory Evaluation Technique

- Developed to understand both the intended and unintended results of a program or project on individuals, groups, communities, or regions

- Used to effectively evaluate the contextual work of coalitions

Evaluation Approach: Ripple Effects Mapping

Four Key Components

1. **Participatory Approach**
Stakeholders directly impact the process by contributing to evaluation questions, participants, and prioritization of themes

2. **Appreciative Inquiry (AI) Questions & Interviews**
Through a paired-interview process, participants use positively framed questions to reflect on their coalition's work

3. **Mind Mapping**
Individuals share stories, as a facilitator visually maps those stories to the wall, enabling all participants to contribute and see connections

4. **Qualitative Data Analysis**
Follow-up occurs and then analysis of the data through map organization, coding, and theming

During a Mapping

A Completed Map

Evaluation Process

- Each of the three coalitions had similar goals:
  - To understand how their work had impacted the local food system
  - To reflect on what their future direction should be

- First Steps:
  - Work with stakeholders (coalition leaders) to establish event logistics:
    - Time, location, participants, recruitment

Evaluation Process

Appreciative Inquiry Questions: Developed with input from coalition leaders

Tell us a story about how the Coalition has had an impact within the community.

When thinking about the Coalition work, what makes you the proudest?

Are there any specific achievements or successes you are aware of?

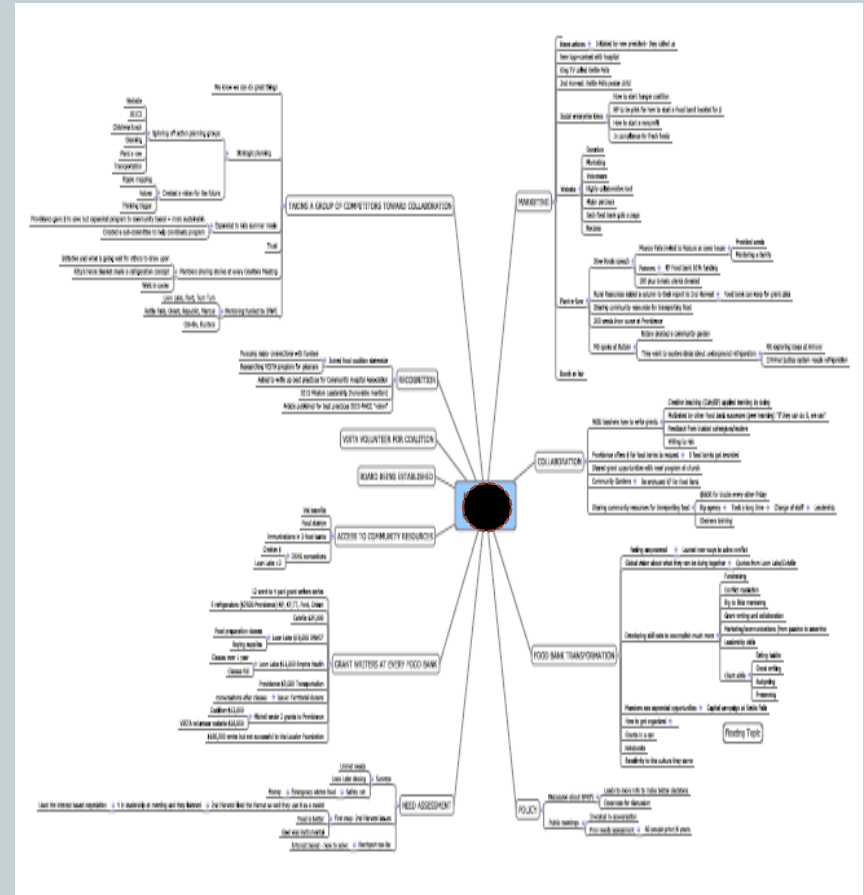What changes in community engagement have occurred as a result of the Coalition?

What has been the most effective part of the Coalition?

Evaluation Process

- Following the mapping:
  - Digitized the wall map using Xmind Mapping Software
  - Used an inductive coding process to reveal patterns and develop broad themes
  - Interviewed coalition leaders to review data and perform participant validation
  - Contacted key informants not at mapping to collect additional information
  - Completed final analysis and reporting

Evaluation Process

- The data from each coalition was coded individually:
  - This allowed for each coalition to receive a personalized report
- The process also identified uniformity across coalitions:

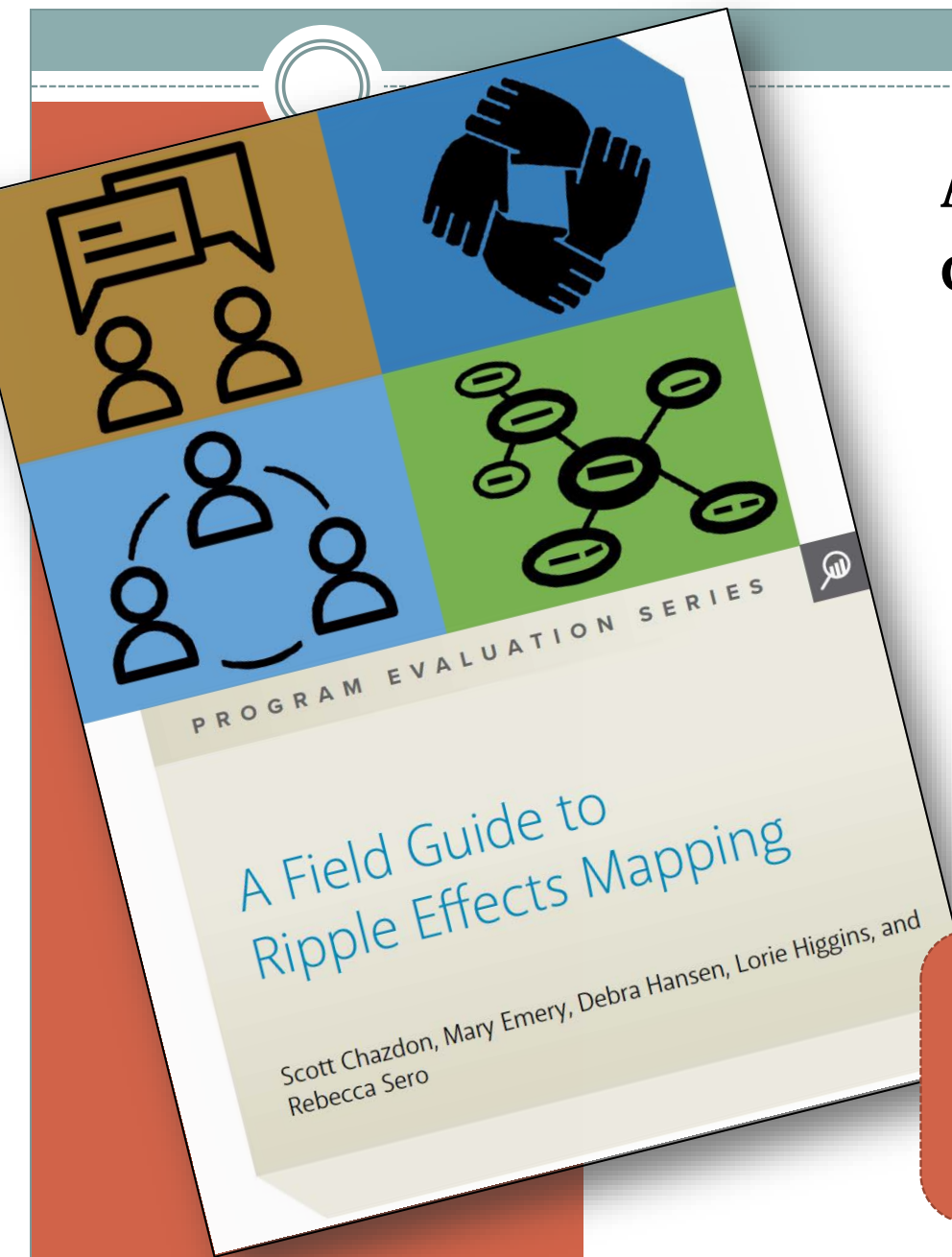| Advantage to Food System	Advantage to Local Community / Individuals	Advantage to Coalition Members
Increase Local Food Access and Availability	Knowledge and Awareness	Collaboration of Partners
Decrease Food Insecurity	Collaboration of Partners	Coalition as a Hub
Increase Awareness by Identifying Barriers & Gaps		Reduce Duplication
		Relationship Building

Final Thoughts

Overall:

Be open to using both inductive and deductive analysis depending upon your group.	Working closely with stakeholders both prior and following the REM & interviews is critical.	Using this participatory method allows for a rich and visual narrative to be collected.

Additional questions or comments:

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https://www.lib.umn.edu/publishing/monographs/program-evaluation-series

A Field Guide to Ripple Effects Mapping

PROGRAM EVALUATION SERIES

Scott Chazdon, Mary Emery, Debra Hansen, Lorie Higgins, and Rebecca Sero

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