

# Evaluation Method: Ripple Mapping

## HOW-TO-GUIDE

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### Purpose of Ripple Mapping:

- To look at how the work that has been done has made a difference in the community.
- To use that information to think about what we can learn from the work.
- To decide how to evaluate the information more deeply (if needed) and plan next steps.

### Ripple Mapping's 7 Steps:

#### 1. Choose a topic.

*How do you feel the work you have done has made a real difference in the community?*

Think about this question and share your response with a partner. Then, share with the whole group. As a large group, choose one difference the work has made in the community as the ripple mapping topic for this exercise. Write this topic in the center of the ripple map.

#### 2. Explain the Capitals.

Hand out copies of the list of Community Capitals (page 2 of this resource) and review what each one means.

#### 3. Ripple 1

*How are things different because of this work? What are people doing differently?*

Write responses inside the first circle around the topic. Code each response with a letter for what Capital it represents.

#### 4. Ripple 2

*Who is benefitting and how? How is the fact that people are doing things differently affecting others?*

Write responses inside the second circle around the topic. Code each response with a letter for the Capital it represents. Then draw arrows from the Ripple 1 items to the Ripple 2 items they led to.

#### 5. Ripple 3

*What changes do you see in the community's systems, institutions, and organizations? Are everyday ways of thinking and doing things changing? If so, how?*

Write responses inside the third circle around the topic. Code each response with a letter for the Capital it represents. Then draw arrows from the Ripple 2 items to the Ripple 3 items they led to.

#### 6. Vote.

*What do you think are the most important or significant changes listed on the map?*

Each person may place 3 "votes" (red stars) next to the changes they think are most important.

#### 7. Gather evidence.

*How do you know these important changes have happened? What evidence do you have?*

Look for data that already exists. If none exists, consider other evaluation methods to support what you learned with the ripple map.

#### 8. (Optional) Plan Next Steps.

*How do you want to share what you learned in the ripple map? What impacts might you want to build on?*

*Where might more work be needed? Who else should be involved?*

# What Are the Community Capitals?

The Community Capitals Framework provides a way of looking at assets of a whole community. The mapping process helps groups think about how their projects might ripple out and build many assets, as a stone dropped in the pond sends ripples in every direction. A project might directly or indirectly affect all of the capitals or only a few.

## Natural Capital

- Natural resources and natural beauty like rivers, parks, outdoor recreation and farmland.

## Cultural Capital

- Activities we feel comfortable with and ways the community nurtures creativity including local traditions, art, and music. It also includes ways of thinking, such as expectations the community has of youth.

## Human Capital

- Knowledge, skills, and abilities of people. Human capital also includes leadership ability and health and wellness of people.

## Social Capital

- Connections among people and organizations, including bonding, close ties that build group membership and sense of belonging, and bridging, linking to new and varied individuals and organizations.

## Political Capital

- Access to power and power brokers, such as government officials, what voices are heard and listened to, and the capacity of individuals and groups to exert power.

## Financial Capital

- Monetary resources available to invest including business development and entrepreneurship as well as philanthropy.

## Built Capital

- Infrastructure that supports the community such as telecommunications, roads, and buildings.

## Additional Resources:

This brief guide was adapted from the [Field Guide to Ripple Effects Mapping](#). For additional detailed information about this type of evaluation, click on the link above and scroll down the page to gain access to a free download of the full *Field Guide*.



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