

ECO-MAPPING

A FACILITATION GUIDE

Participatory evaluation is an approach that ensures program participants are actively involved in evaluation activities from start to finish. The goal of the Eco-Mapping method is to have participants spend time reflecting on the partnerships they have within their community, as well as collectively brainstorming about how to strengthen and expand their connections with current and future partners.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

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WHAT IS IT?

Eco-mapping is a process of creating visual diagrams that represent the connections between people or organizations within a social network and the interactions or attributes they share at a certain timepoint. Digital network “maps” are created and shared back with the group. All maps are combined into a complete initiative network graph and analyzed using network metrics in analysis software like NodeXL. The eco-mapping process is also repeated at a second rechecking session to identify any changes in connections, relationship attributes, and to capture any new additions of partners.

???

WHAT IS IT USED FOR?

Eco-mapping is used to catch the snapshot of partnerships, describe attributes of those partnerships, to compare change over time, and to help groups identify gaps of engagement to focus their efforts on.

MATERIALS LIST

SUPPLIES

For this activity you will need:

- A large space or canvas to place the cards (Sticky Wall, large poster/chart paper, digital template)
- Masking tape to adhere the canvas to a wall
- Flip chart paper and markers to record the group reflection questions
- Notepads and pens/pencils for individual/small group brainstorming
- Sticky notes or cardstock cut into quarter sheets to write the group ideas on large enough to read
- VIRTUAL OPTION: Virtual meeting platform, PowerPoint presentation, a polling tool to capture responses, or a shared document (e.g., Google doc or screen sharing) to record answers electronically

LOGISTICS

Consider the size of your group and the space needed to allow people to comfortably participate in discussion. Plan the room layout, wall space and location for hanging the cards so everyone can see clearly. Arrange the room to allow individuals to do parts of the activity on their own (classroom style) or together in small groups (tables of up to 8). If you are conducting this virtually, you may decide to set-up small group breakout rooms using a virtual platform to facilitate the activity virtually.

HEADS UP!

If you are using a Sticky Wall, apply adhesive spray to the wall 24 hours beforehand so it can dry and the cards will stick. Bring an extra spray can in case you need to spot spray any areas are not sticky.

FACILITATION PLANNING

PREPARATION

This activity has two main prep periods. Things you will need to do include:

4 WEEKS PRIOR TO SESSION

- Create an Excel worksheet with different tabs for group to record partnerships in each sector of the Circle of Engagement (CoE)
- Send worksheet to group to be completed and sent back

WEEK OF SESSION

- Create the template of the CoE on the canvas (sticky wall or paper roll) that you will use at the session
- Receive group's worksheet back or prompt for completion if you have not received it
- Transfer partnerships from worksheet onto sticky notes or quarter sheet cardstock paper
- Write group agreements and reflection questions on flipchart paper

Supplies and materials you will need include:

- Sticky wall/ roll paper
- Masking tape
- Quarter sheet cardstock
- Sticky Notes (variety)
- Markers
- Flip chart paper
- Voting dot stickers
- Notetaker

WARM-UP

- Orient group to the purpose of the activity
- Go over group agreements
- Explain the CoE and how each sector plays an important role in their program's success
- Review prework
 - Read inputs from each sector
 - Place on the canvas
 - Repeat until all partnerships are up on the canvas

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

- Review eco-map and ask for participants to consider relationship with each partner
- Individual brainstorming time
 - Strong relationship = solid connecting line
 - Weak relationship = dotted connecting line
 - Conflict in relationship = slashes in connecting line
 - Communication = arrows at ends of line to signal one-way or reciprocal
- Have participants share connections with the group
- Note any characteristics of the partnership on cardstock or sticky notes and place with the partner card



WRAP UP

- Reflect as a large group to wrap up activity
 - What stands out overall
 - Scan for strengths and gaps in partnerships
 - Consider next steps to build/ expand upon eco map partners
- Share that group will get a document that reflects the work they did together
- Take pictures of the group's finished work so that, when you take it down, you can keep it organized and have a visual to refer to during analysis.

FACILITATION PLANNING

Eco-Mapping Evaluation Activity – Facilitation Plan			
Location:	Date:	Time:	# of participants:
<u>Facilitator(s):</u>	<u>Rational Aim:</u> To assist the group in a visual and reflective conversation, interpreting what we notice, what is missing, and to think about what we may need to do based on existing partnerships.	<u>Experiential Aim:</u> To create a picture of the baseline/current reality of existing partnerships and their characteristics, & what they contribute to the innovative practice.	
<u>Room set-up:</u> One large round table, sticky wall hanging on large open wall.	<u>Materials:</u> One large sticky wall, Facilitation Kit, Extra Markers, Masking Tape, Large Post-It Sheets, Eco-Map Example, Eco-Map legend printout, red dot stickers		
Eco-Mapping Session			
Introduction	Data Sensemaking	Shared Reflection/ Interpretation	
<p>Hi everyone! [INTRODUCE STAFF IF NEEDED]. We want to hear from you about your community-based partnerships and the connections you have to other organizations and agencies. To do this, you will be creating a diagram of your community-partnership connections and systems, called an eco-map.</p> <p>The eco-mapping process is used to show the key players (agencies, groups, organizations, resources) in your existing community partnerships, and their relationships with your agency. Over the course of the project, we will be able to see how the connections grow in quality and quantity.</p> <p>[Use the eco-map example to illustrate what a finished eco-map looks like and highlight some of the key components/quadrants]</p> <p>Do you have any questions about this process before we get started?</p>	<p>We are going to start by sketching an eco-map of your current system. The center circle represents your organization (your program specifically) and the outer circles that will be created represent the different types of working relationships your agency/program has, or would like to have, with other organizations. This can include existing partnerships, partnerships that are currently being created, and potential partnerships/ partnerships that you would like to create.</p> <p>Let's begin by brainstorming and identifying organizations you work with in the community as part of your organization's work. Make a list on your paper.</p> <p>Write the names of the other organizations on the post-its and place each post-it in the quadrant(s) that best describes the type of organization. If the organization fits into more than one quadrant, then write the organization's name on two post-its and put it in multiple places.</p> <p>(To begin to explore what data may exist or be possible to access) Please put the letter 'D' next to the agencies that have data that is available or is shared among partners.</p> <p>For each organization/program, we are going to talk about the strength of your relationship with them, the flow of communication and resources, and the level of collaboration between you and them. Please use your legend for reference while drawing your diagram.</p> <p>Rate the strength of your relationship with each organization as weak, average, or strong.</p> <p>Look at the legend for the strength of relationship line characteristics. Draw a line from the middle circle to the organizations to represent the strength of the relationship for each organization. Does the relationship with each organization have any conflict? (challenges, barriers) If so, put slash marks through the strength of the relationship line (refer to legend).</p>	<p>Reflective Questions:</p> <p>Let's look at your eco-map and discuss what it reveals to your team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Are there any edits that need to be made? •What are your first impressions about your eco-map? •What stands out to you? •What questions came up for you while doing this? *Note questions on cards* •Where in your eco-map might your organization's connections (or lack of) create barriers for goals? *Mark these with red dot stickers* •What new connections or improvements could be made to strengthen your system (and/or improve access for youth)? *Write these organization/program names on post it notes, add them to the map in the correct quadrant; DO NOT draw any lines or attributes* <p>Any other last closing thoughts, comments, or questions?</p>	

FACILITATION PLANNING

Eco-Mapping Evaluation Activity – Facilitation Plan		
Eco-Mapping Session		
Introduction	Data Sensemaking	Shared Reflection/ Interpretation
	<p>What direction does communication travel? Do both of you communicate with each other, or does only one-person communicate with the other? Draw arrows at the ends of each line to signify the direction that communication flows. Communication includes communication and/or exchanging of resources such as time, money, space, and information.</p> <p>What is the level of collaboration between you and the organizations? Label each line:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Networking: Aware of organization; loosely defined roles; little communication; all decisions are made independently 2. Cooperation: Provide information to each other; somewhat defined roles; formal communication; all decisions are made independently 3. Coordination: Share information and resources; defined roles; frequent communication; some shared decision making 4. Coalition: Share ideas; share resources; frequent and prioritized communication; all members have a vote in decision making 5. Collaboration: Members belong to one system; frequent communication is characterized by mutual trust; consensus is reached on all decisions 	

FACILITATION PLANNING

Eco-Mapping Evaluation Activity (Rechecking Partnerships)- Facilitation Plan

Location:	Date:	Time:	# of participants:
Facilitator(s):	Rational Aim: To assist the group in a visual and reflective conversation, interpreting what we notice, what is missing, and to think about what we may need to do based on existing partnerships.		Experiential Aim: To create a picture of the new/updated reality of existing partnerships and their characteristics, & what they contribute to the innovative practice.
Room set-up: One large round table, sticky wall hanging on large open wall.	Materials: One large sticky wall, Facilitation Kit, Extra Markers, Masking Tape, Large Post-It Sheets, Eco-Map from first session, Eco-Map legend printout, red dot stickers, (OPTIONAL – PowerPoint presentation for reflection if you compiled the connections digitally after the first session.)		

Eco-Mapping Recheck Session

Introduction	Data Sensemaking	Shared Reflection/ Interpretation
<p>Hi everyone! [INTRODUCE STAFF IF NEEDED]. We want to hear from you about how your community-based partnerships and the connections may have changed over time. To do this, we will be reviewing your eco map from the first session and will be making updates to the relationships and/or adding new partnerships.</p> <p>To review, the eco-mapping process is used to show the key players (agencies, groups, organizations, resources) in your existing community partnerships, and their relationships with your agency.</p> <p>[Use the group's completed eco-map example to illustrate what their finished eco-map looks like and highlight some of the key components/quadrants]</p> <p>Do you have any questions about this process before we get started?</p>	<p>We are going to start by reviewing your eco-map of you created awhile ago. To review, The center circle represents your organization (your program specifically) and the outer circles that will be created represent the different types of working relationships your agency/program has, or would like to have, with other organizations. This can include existing partnerships, partnerships that are currently being created, and potential partnerships/ partnerships that you would like to create.</p> <p>Let's look at your eco-map and discuss what it reveals to your team.</p> <p>Reflections:</p> <p>What are your first impressions about your eco-map?</p> <p>What stands out to you?</p> <p>What questions are coming up for you?</p> <p>Where in your eco-map might your organization's connections (or lack of) create barriers to your goals? *Take note of/ highlight these ones*</p> <p>Moving forward:</p> <p>And now that you are seeing the eco-map you created last time:</p> <p>Are there any edits that need to be made?</p> <p>What new connections or improvements have you made to strengthen your system?</p> <p>For new connections, draw a line from the middle circle to the organizations to represent the strength of the relationship for each organization. Does the relationship with each new organization have any conflict? (challenges, barriers) If so, put slash marks through the strength of the relationship line (refer to legend).</p>	<p>We are going to send you the spreadsheet you received last time before the first session. Please update it with new partnerships, and with new relationship status/ quality of those that have changed. Please send us the updated spreadsheet, and we can create a new eco-map for you!</p> <p>Explain importance of updating eco-maps, and how it is beneficial. Data party as follow up activity?</p> <p>Any other last closing thoughts, comments, or questions?</p> <p>Now that you are further along in your program activities, you can see how the quantity and quality of how your partnerships have changed!</p> <p>Any other last closing thoughts, comments, or questions?</p>

FACILITATION PLANNING (VIRTUAL ADAPTATION)

PREPARATION

This activity has two main prep periods. Things you will need to do include:

4 WEEKS PRIOR TO SESSION

- Create an Excel worksheet with different tabs for group to record partnerships in each sector of the CoE
- Send worksheet to group to be completed and sent back

WEEK OF SESSION

- Complete any set up needed for the digital software to be ready to input partnerships
- Receive group's worksheet back or prompt for completion if you have not received it
- Transfer partnerships from worksheet into NodeXL or similar software
- Create PowerPoint template to share virtually with the group
- Send out virtual meeting invitation to participants with link to meeting space

Supplies and materials you will need include:

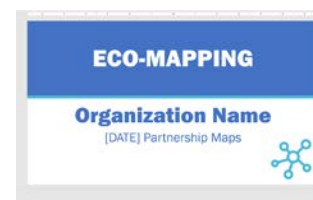
- Virtual meeting platform
- Digital template
- Accessibility options (closed captioning, translation, etc.)
- Notetaker

WARM-UP

- Orient group to the purpose of the activity
- Go over group agreements
- Explain the CoE and how each sector plays an important role in their program's success
- Review prework

CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITY

- Review eco-map and ask for participants to consider relationship with each partner
- Individual brainstorming time
 - Strong/ weak relationship
 - Conflict in relationship present
 - Communication type
- Have participants share connections with the group
- Note any characteristics of the partnership on cardstock or sticky notes and place with the partner card
 - Strong relationship = solid connecting line
 - Weak relationship = dotted connecting line
 - Conflict in relationship = slashes in connecting line
 - Communication = arrows at ends of line to signal one-way or reciprocal



WRAP UP

- Reflect as a large group to wrap up activity
 - What stands out
 - Are there any surprises
 - Last thoughts
- Share that group will get a document that reflects the work they did together
- Take screenshots of the group's finished work so that you can have a visual to refer to during analysis

FACILITATION PLANNING (VIRTUAL ADAPTATION)

Eco-Mapping Evaluation Activity – Facilitation Plan			
Location:	Date:	Time:	# of participants:
<u>Facilitator(s):</u>	<u>Rational Aim:</u> To assist the group in a visual and reflective conversation, interpreting what we notice, what is missing, and to think about what we may need to do based on existing partnerships.	<u>Experiential Aim:</u> To create a picture of the baseline/current reality of existing partnerships and their characteristics, & what they contribute to the innovative practice.	
<u>Room set-up:</u> Virtual meeting platform	<u>Materials:</u> Virtual meeting platform, closed-captioning/ADA resources, PowerPoint presentation, eco-map visual		
Eco-Mapping Session			
Introduction	Data Sensemaking	Shared Reflection/ Interpretation	
<p>Hi everyone! [INTRODUCE STAFF IF NEEDED]. We want to hear from you about your community-based partnerships and the connections you have to other organizations and agencies. To do this, you will be creating a diagram of your community-partnership connections and systems, called an eco-map.</p> <p>The eco-mapping process is used to show the key players (agencies, groups, organizations, resources) in your existing community partnerships, and their relationships with your agency. Over the course of the project, we will be able to see how the connections grow in quality and quantity.</p> <p>[Use the eco-map example to illustrate what a finished eco-map looks like and highlight some of the key components/quadrants]</p> <p>Do you have any questions about this process before we get started?</p>	<p>We are going to start by sketching an eco-map of your current system. The center circle represents your organization (your program specifically) and the outer circles that will be created represent the different types of working relationships your agency/program has, or would like to have, with other organizations. This can include existing partnerships, partnerships that are currently being created, and potential partnerships/ partnerships that you would like to create.</p> <p>Let's begin by taking a look at what you brainstormed as the organizations you work with in the community as part of your program activities. If the organization fits into more than one sector, then we can write the organization's name on additional post-its/ cardstock and put it in multiple places.</p> <p>(To begin to explore what data may exist or be possible to access) Please put the letter 'D' next to the agencies that have data that is available or is shared among partners.</p> <p>For each organization/program, we are going to talk about the strength of your relationship with them, the flow of communication and resources, and the level of collaboration between you and them. Please use your legend for reference while drawing your diagram.</p> <p>Rate the strength of your relationship with each organization as weak, average, or strong.</p> <p>Look at the legend for the strength of relationship line characteristics. Draw a line from the middle circle to the organizations to represent the strength of the relationship for each organization. Does the relationship with each organization have any conflict? (challenges, barriers) If so, put slash marks through the strength of the relationship line (refer to legend).</p>	<p>Reflective Questions:</p> <p>1. Let's look at your eco-map and discuss what it reveals to your team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Are there any edits that need to be made? •What are your first impressions about your eco-map? •What stands out to you? •What questions came up for you while doing this? *Note questions on cards* •Where in your eco-map might your organization's connections (or lack of) create barriers to your goal? *Mark these with red dot stickers* •What new connections or improvements could be made to strengthen your system (and/or improve access for youth)? *Write these organization/program names on post it notes, add them to the map in the correct quadrant; DO NOT draw any lines or attributes* <p>Any other last closing thoughts, comments, or questions?</p>	

FACILITATION PLANNING (VIRTUAL ADAPTATION)

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FACILITATION PLANNING (VIRTUAL ADAPTATION)

Eco-Mapping Evaluation Activity (Rechecking Partnerships)- Facilitation Plan			
Location:	Date:	Time:	# of participants:
Facilitator(s):	<u>Rational Aim:</u> To assist the group in a visual and reflective conversation, interpreting what we notice, what is missing, and to think about what we may need to do based on existing partnerships.	<u>Experiential Aim:</u> To create a picture of the new/updated reality of existing partnerships and their characteristics, & what they contribute to the innovative practice.	
Room set-up: Virtual meeting platform	<u>Materials:</u> Virtual meeting platform, closed-captioning/ADA resources, PowerPoint presentation, eco-map visual		
Eco-Mapping Recheck Session			
Introduction	Data Sensemaking	Shared Reflection/ Interpretation	
<p>Hi everyone! [INTRODUCE STAFF IF NEEDED]. We want to hear from you about how your community-based partnerships and the connections may have changed over time. To do this, we will be reviewing your eco map from the first session and will be making updates to the relationships and/or adding new partnerships.</p> <p>To review, the eco-mapping process is used to show the key players (agencies, groups, organizations, resources) in your existing community partnerships, and their relationships with your agency.</p> <p>[Use the group's completed eco-map example to illustrate what their finished eco-map looks like and highlight some of the key components/quadrants]</p> <p>Do you have any questions about this process before we get started?</p>	<p>We are going to start by reviewing your eco-map of you created awhile ago. To review, The center circle represents your organization (your program specifically) and the outer circles that will be created represent the different types of working relationships your agency/program has, or would like to have, with other organizations. This can include existing partnerships, partnerships that are currently being created, and potential partnerships/ partnerships that you would like to create.</p> <p>Let's look at your eco-map and discuss what it reveals to your team.</p> <p>Reflections:</p> <p>What are your first impressions about your eco-map?</p> <p>What stands out to you?</p> <p>What questions are coming up for you?</p> <p>Where in your eco-map might your organization's connections (or lack of) create barriers to your goals? *Take note of/highlight these ones*</p> <p>Moving forward:</p> <p>And now that you are seeing the eco map you created last time:</p> <p>Are there any edits that need to be made?</p> <p>What new connections or improvements have you made to strengthen your system?</p> <p>For new connections, draw a line from the middle circle to the organizations to represent the strength of the relationship for each organization. Does the relationship with each new organization have any conflict? (challenges, barriers) If so, put slash marks through the strength of the relationship line (refer to legend).</p>	<p>We are going to send you the spreadsheet you received last time before the first session. Please update it with new partnerships, and with new relationship status/ quality of those that have changed. Please send us the updated spreadsheet, and we can create a new eco-map for you!</p> <p>Explain importance of updating eco-maps, and how it is beneficial. Data party as follow up activity?</p> <p>Any other last closing thoughts, comments, or questions?</p> <p>Now that you are further along in your program activities, you are able to see how the quantity and quality of how your partnerships have changed!</p> <p>Any other last closing thoughts, comments, or questions?</p>	

DATA ANALYSIS



HOW DO WE ANALYZE IT?

For this activity, the inputs from participants can be analyzed by considering the total number of partners, the number of partners by sector, the strength of the partnership by sector, and making note of where gaps occur.



WHAT DO WE DO WITH IT?

We take the inputs identified by participants and turn it into a map that contains all of their organized partnerships. This can be done in list format or a visual interpretation of what they created as a group. If you are doing this digitally, you can simply create a PDF of your map from your software to share with the group.

OTHER HELPFUL INFORMATION



HOW SHOULD IT BE SHARED?

A polished version of the eco-map can be shared with the participants as an overview of their work and a progress tracker as they start to shift their efforts to be aligned with what they discovered during the activity. This activity can be repeated for each snapshot in time, and can also be revisited to see where changes have been made or to identify new takeaways or next steps, etc.



FACILITATION TIPS

1

Make sure to spray the sticky wall ahead of time with spray adhesive so that the cardstock/ sticky notes will stick when you place them on it.

2

Walk around while the group is brainstorming to see how much time they need and keep them on track with time.

3

If you're doing this virtually, it's best to present your screen and type for them, rather than having them fill it out.

4

Providing participants with the facilitator instructions for this activity can build capacity for evaluation.

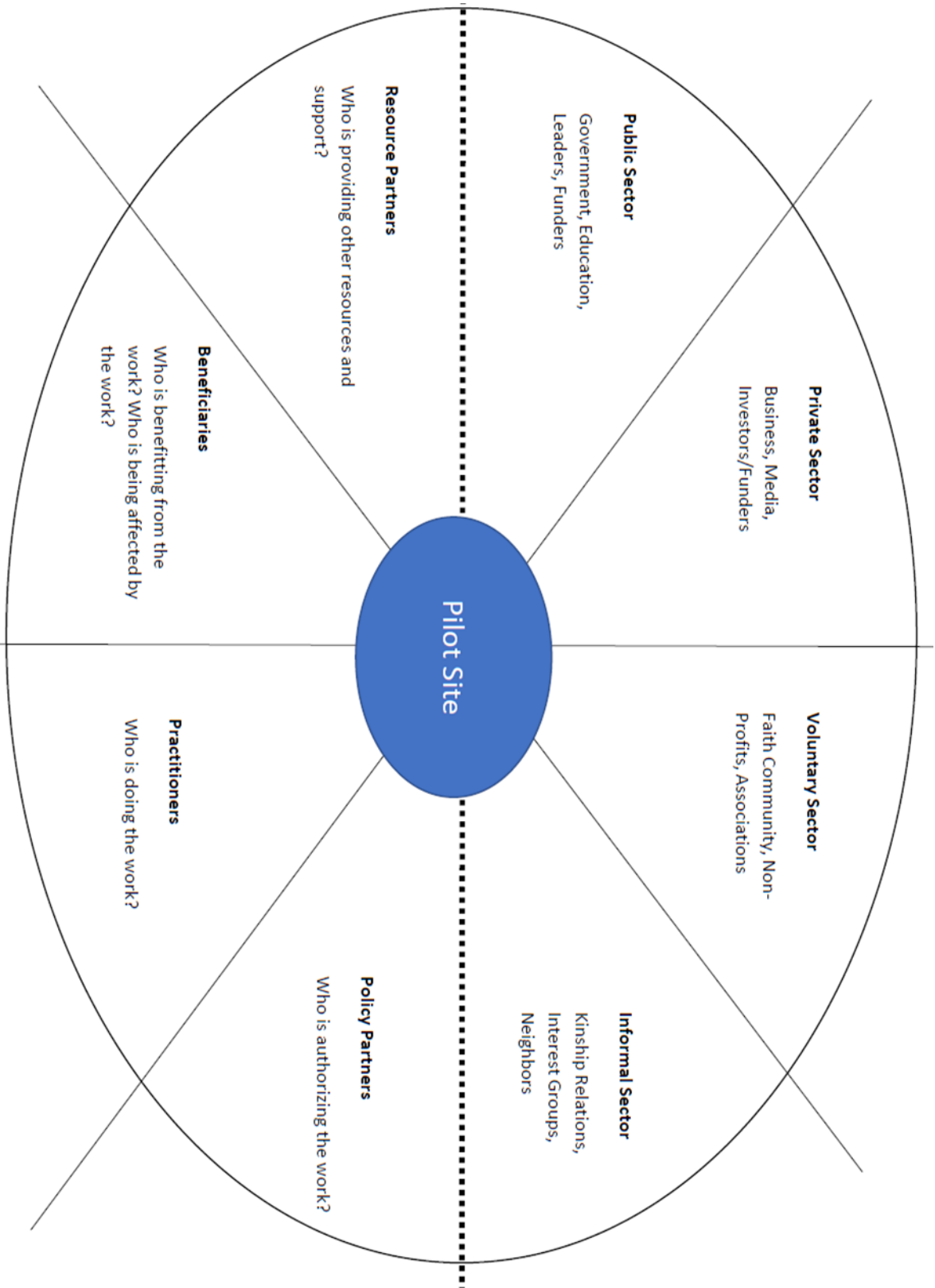


PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION ACTIVITY SOURCE(S)

1. [Spirit of Community Health: Key Informat Interview & Eco-Map Protocol](#), by MPHI, 2014
2. [Using an Ecomap as a Tool for Qualitative Data Collection in Organizations](#), by New Horizons in Adult Education & Human Resource Development, May, 2016
3. [Ecosystem Map](#), by Service Design Tools

ACTIVITY TEMPLATE

CIRCLE OF ENGAGEMENT



ACTIVITY TEMPLATE

EXCEL SPREADSHEET EXAMPLE

Let's Create Your Eco-Map!

The eco-mapping process is used to show the key players (agencies, groups, organizations, resources) in your existing community partnerships, and their relationships with your agency. Over the course of the project, we will be able to see how the connections grow in quality and quantity.

For the First Session brainstorm, we ask that you:

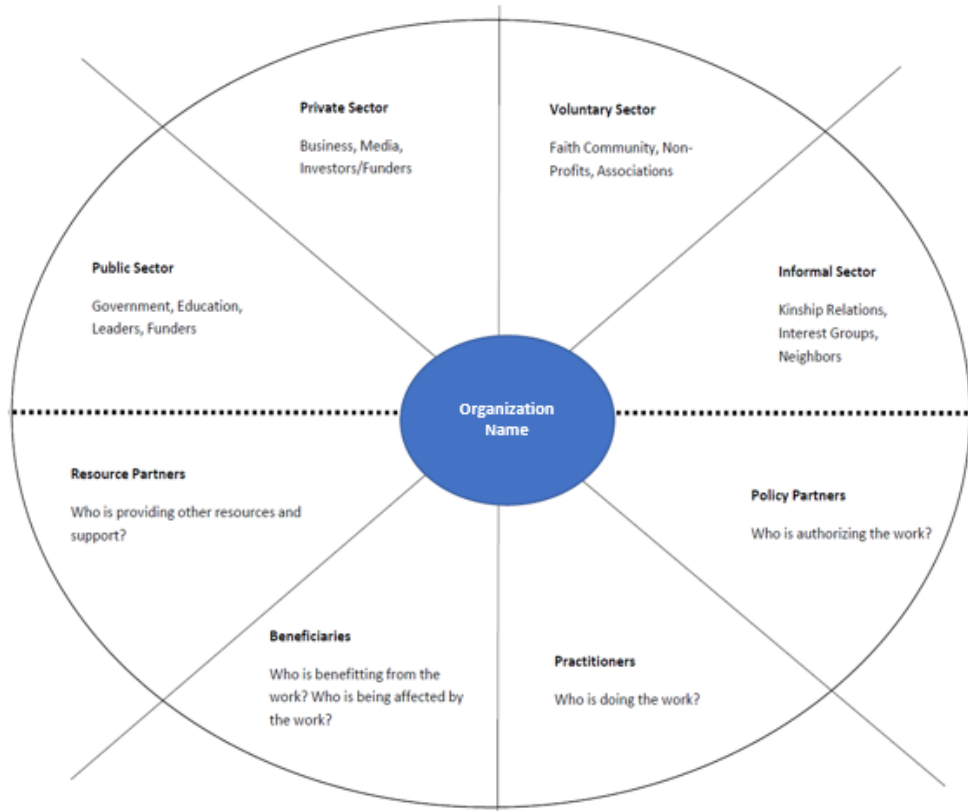
1. Identify current existing relationships you have established
2. Determine the relationship quality, the direction of communication, and the level of collaboration (possible categories are listed on the 'options' tab of this worksheet.
3. Return the completed worksheet to us a week prior to your scheduled first session.

For the Recheck Session updates, we ask that you:

1. Add new relationships you have established and the relationship quality.
2. Document the changed relationship quality to the existing relationships. You do not need to edit if there is no change.
3. Mark each relationship/partnership you no longer have.
4. Return this follow up sheet within 3 weeks

We define each level of collaboration as follows:

1. **Networking:** Aware of organization; loosely defined roles; little communication; all decisions are made independently
2. **Cooperation:** Provide information to each other; somewhat defined roles; formal communication; all decisions are made independently
3. **Coordination:** Share information and resources; defined roles; frequent communication; some shared decision making
4. **Coalition:** Share ideas; share resources; frequent and prioritized communication; all members have a vote in decision making
5. **Collaboration:** Members belong to one system; frequent communication is characterized by mutual trust; consensus is reached on all decisions



ACTIVITY TEMPLATE

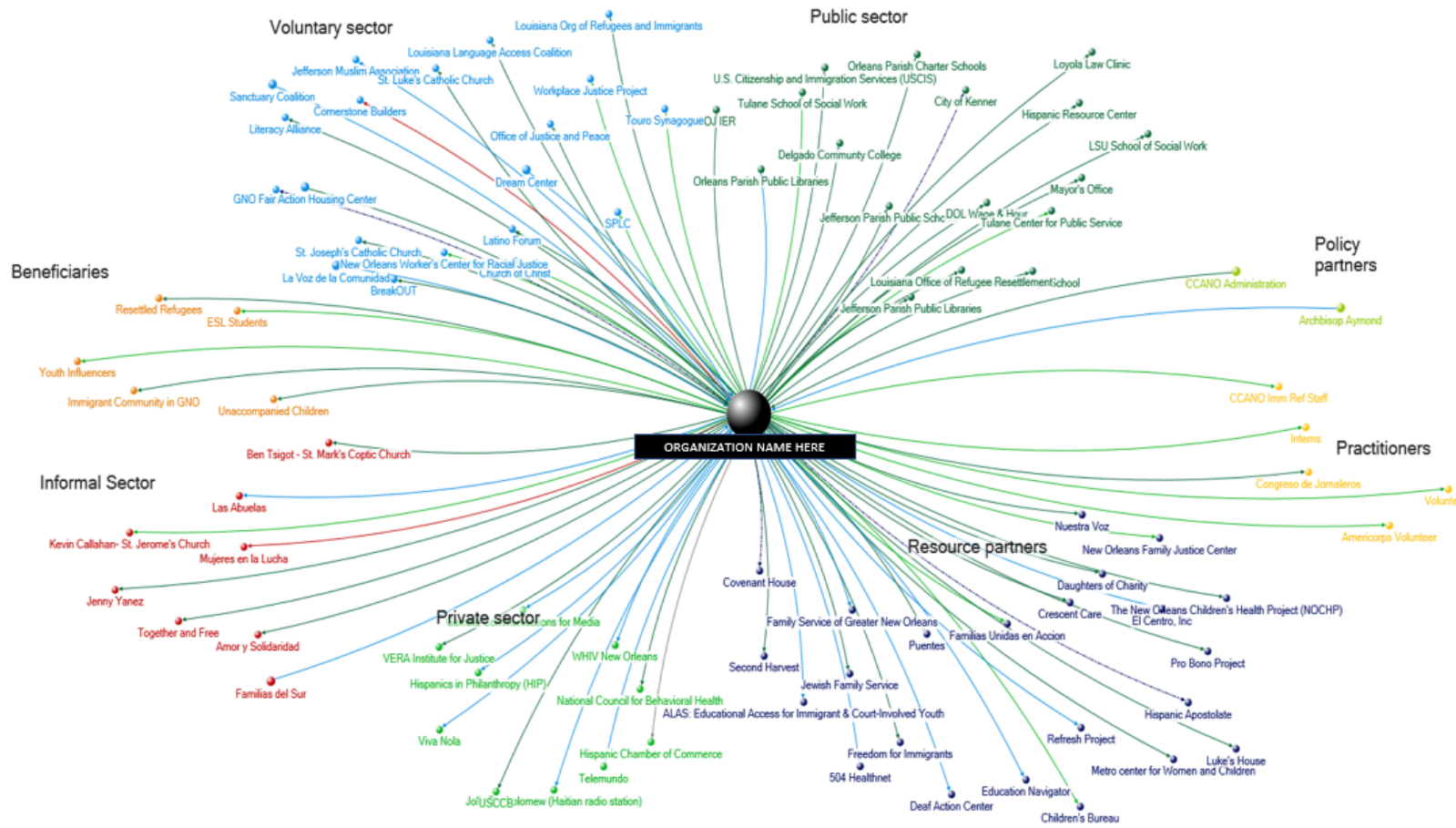
EXCEL SPREADSHEET EXAMPLE

	A	B	C	D
1	Sector	Strength of relationship	Direction of communication	Level of collaboration
2	Beneficiaries	Strong	One way from Organization to Partner	Networking (1)
3	Informal Sector	Average	Communication is reciprocated (both ways)	Cooperation (2)
4	Policy partners	Weak	One way from Partner to Organization	Coordination (3)
5	Practitioners			Coalition (4)
6	Private sector			
7	Public sector			
8	Resource partners			
9	Voluntary sector			
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Navigation tabs: Circle of Engagement | NetworkMap | Org Name | Options (+)

ACTIVITY TEMPLATE

DIGITAL SOFTWARE VISUAL EXAMPLE (NODEXL)



LINE COLOR by relationship

- Strong relationship
- Average
- Weak
- Conflict
- Relationship not established yet