

Community Asset Mapping

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INTRODUCTION

- In South Africa, high levels of unemployment, poverty and inadequate infrastructure remain a problem and challenge for many communities; affecting communities both at economic and social health levels
- Challenges such as these are aggravated by the apparent lack of capacity and skills at an institutional, community, and individual level (Thwala, 2009)
- In order to deal with these challenges, various community mobilization approaches exist and have brought about change both by bringing resources into the community and by mobilizing or reorganizing existing community assets and resources
- McKnight and Kretzman (1990) suggest that for many people living in low income communities, new approaches are needed for rebuilding communities
- One way in which this can be achieved is through making use of community asset mapping approaches which map community assets, capacities, and abilities of people and community structures

INTRODUCTION

- **Pioneered by John McKnight and John Kretzman (1993), asset mapping is a process of documenting the tangible and intangible resources of a community by viewing the community as a place with strengths or assets that need to be preserved and enhanced, not deficits to be remedied (Kerka, 2003)**
- **By recognizing these assets, communities are able to reconfirm their capabilities and discover possibilities for mobilizing to meet their interests and needs, and to fulfil community aspirations (Rossing, 2000)**

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE REVIEW

- The aim of the literature review was to identify and examine a range of community asset mapping approaches to investigate how these tools could be used as a methodology for community development, specifically within the South African context
- The primary objective of the literature review was to source background information on
 - (a) community asset mapping approaches
 - (b) their methodologies
 - (c) measures used
 - (d) their applicability for the South African population
- This review also aimed to investigate ways to enhance community engagement, collaboration with community members and community service learning opportunities

LITERATURE REVIEW FINDINGS

Key Community Asset Mapping Approaches:

- **Participatory Inquiry into Religious Health Assets, Networks and Agency (PIRHANA)**
- **The Community Health Assets Mapping for Partnerships (CHAMP)**
- **The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA)**
- **Geographic Information Systems (GIS)**
- **Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD)**
- **Unitary Appreciative Inquiry (UAI)**
- **Planning for Real**

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF APPROACHES

Asset Mapping Approach	Background	Method	Applicability	Limitations
<p>Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD)</p>	<p>ABCD focuses on ways in which communities can mobilise their own resources for positive social and economic change</p>	<p>Appreciative interviewing, asset maps, skills inventories</p>	<p>Been successfully applied in a rural region (Mapothostat, Rustenburg) in South Africa however applicability in urban South African contexts is yet to be confirmed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABCD fails to clarify the exact role of external agencies and institutions in the community development process • ABCD fails to deal with unequal power issues • ABCD does not adequately address how to foster community leadership in varying settings
<p>Participatory Inquiry into Religious Health Assets, Networks and Agency (PIRHANA)</p>	<p>PIRHANA was developed to map the religious health assets of selected sites</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sampling techniques include: stratified, purposive, and snow-balling sampling • Measures used: participatory mapping, diagramming, indexing, and ranking • Seeker and Provider Workshops • Exercises: mapping and ranking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIRHANA is applicable in a variety of settings, both urban and rural • Special care must always be taken to ensure translation and adaption of the local context 	<p>Assumes that all communities are able to simply draw on a participatory and collaborative ethos</p>

Asset Mapping Approach	Background	Method	Applicability	Limitations
<p>Community Health Assets Mapping for Partnerships (CHAMP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaption of PIRANHA • CHAMP goes a step further by focusing on community health assets and existing community partnerships that can be built upon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative, quantitative, transparent, democratic, interpreted, appreciated and empowering information is produced and participants present are normally obtained using an appropriate sampling technique • No more than 20-25 people should participate • Exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHAMP has been developed in various contexts to work either with health providers, or health seekers • CHAMP is applicable in a variety of settings, both urban and rural • However, special care must always be taken to ensure translation and adaption in the local context 	
<p>The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA)</p>	<p>The SLA is an attempt to go beyond the conventional approaches of poverty eradication by enhancing poor people's ability to make a living in an economically, ecologically, and socially sustainable manner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An interdisciplinary approach to poverty research is required, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods • A wide range of methods and tools can be used such as: key informant interviews, participatory methods, and sample surveys 		

Asset Mapping Approach	Background	Method	Applicability	Limitations
<p>Geographic Information Systems (GIS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GIS is a powerful tool for community development planning, advocacy, organising, fundraising, and evaluation • GIS applications map information and data relative to geography or location • Tools to analyse data in a spatial context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GIS combines both quantitative and qualitative information about the location of assets in communities allowing one to visualise, analyse, and report information through maps and charts 	<p>GIS has been applied to many local contexts as a means to provide demographic and other information about specific contexts</p>	<p>Technology and data availability</p>

SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF APPROACHES

ABCD APPROACH

- **Asset-Based Community Development Approach**
- **Building communities from the inside out**
- **Process for mapping a community's assets and mobilising these assets to address community-defined issues and solve community-defined problems**

ABCD BENEFITS

- **Harnesses individual and collective talents of community members**
- **Ensures community participation in designing community development strategies and initiatives**
- **Community members' voices are heard and act as guiding force behind community development**
- **Increases communication capacities amongst community members**

ABCD BACKGROUND: THE LEAKY BUCKET THEORY

- **Social grants are given to community members**
- **Community members utilise grants to purchase external resources (food, housing, clothing, transport, etc) → community money ‘leaks’ out the community ‘bucket’**
- **An alternative: community uses social grant money for internal use (build a chicken farm, make a vegetable garden) → community money stays inside community ‘bucket’ which becomes a community asset that can be used toward community development**

3 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ABCD APPROACH

- 1) ***Asset-based:*** Community building begins with what is present in the community, as opposed to what is absent or problematic in the community. It is focused on indigenous assets as opposed to perceived needs. These assets are resources that the ABCD approach mobilises to achieve sustainable change
- 2) ***Internally focused:*** Community members identify their interests and build their capacities to problem solve. Emphasis on community resources rather than external resources
- 3) ***Relationship driven:*** Increases social capacity of community members. Ongoing Establishment of productive relationships between community members

(Pinkett, 2000)

THE 5 STEPS OF ABCD

- 1) ***Asset Mapping:*** mapping the assets of community citizens, institutions and organisations
- 2) ***Building Internal Relationships:*** Building relationships among local community assets
- 3) ***Asset-Mobilization:*** Mobilising community assets for economic and social development
- 4) ***Building a Vision:*** Convening as much of the community as possible for the purposes of building a community vision and plan
- 5) ***Establishing External Connections:*** Leveraging activities, investments and resources from outside the community to support asset-based locally-defined development

(Kretzman & McKnight, 1993)

UNITARY APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY (UAI)

Theoretical Assumptions:

- Groups are unitary and own a group identity
- Each group has unique patterns and potentials yet to be mobilised

Epistemological Framework:

- Construct a unitary profile from the multiplicity of pattern manifestations, information and knowledge emerging from the enquiry process with the community

(Tally et al., 2005)

UAI PROFILE

- **Consists of a variety of knowledge productions including:**
 - **Experiential knowledge (participation and relationships)**
 - **Presentational knowledge (meaning expression through forms of communication and cultural rituals)**
 - **Propositional Knowledge (synthesised facts about the community)**
 - **Practical knowledge (information about community skills, roles and developments)**

GENERATION OF UAI PROFILE

- **Steered towards a focus on positive experience of the past and current community successes**
- **Community assessors and change agents immerse themselves within the community**
- **Profile is compiled according to data collected via statistics, demographics, photographs, interviews, newspaper headlines, community stories, histories and legends and observations of infrastructure**
- **This information is only deemed significant once the meaning this data has for the community is extracted**
- **The profile is used as a foundation for community intervention and development**

PLANNING FOR REAL

- **Developed by the Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation (NIF) in the UK**
- **Model engages in a process of community consultation as a means to develop an Action Plan specific to a particular community**
- **Benefits:**
 - **Dynamic and transformable so that it can be adapted to any community**
 - **The engagement with the community happens according to the community's desires in terms of participating parties and venues for community engagement**

PLANNING FOR REAL PROCESS

- **Change agents and community members work together to build a 3 dimensional model of the community context**
- **Cards that represent both needs and assets are placed on the map**
- **The needs are prioritised into high, medium and low categories which then form the foundation of the Action Plan**
- **Creative exercises assist this process (painting self-portraits or 'self-maps', the creation of flags or quilts)**
- **Engagement occurs at the level of the personal, family and community life**

CONCLUSION

- The literature consulted indicated that various approaches have been developed in and outside South Africa, including the Participatory Inquiry into Religious Health Assets, Networks and Agency (PIRHANA); the Community Health Assets Mapping for Partnerships (CHAMP); The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA); and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for community development
- While these tools hold promise for community development in South Africa, further research needs to be conducted for optimum use
- An important consideration is that every community is unique and has different types of assets and needs. Given the adaptable and dynamic forms of these approaches, the use of these models offers a valuable and fairly easy mode of targeting a given community's unique context

RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is recommended that these tools are carefully examined to ensure that the asset mapping tools build on the strengths of existing instruments
- *The specific use of these tools - to promote safety and peace - needs to be highlighted*
- It is recommended that the most beneficial aspects of each of these tools are combined into an appropriate and novel model that is specific to the South African context

**Thank you for your
attention**

