Empowering communities to build resilience using participatory and human centered approaches

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“Human interaction is the key force in overcoming resistance and speeding change”

**An Example**

- Project to reduce malnutrition in Vietnam: the researchers “had given up on bringing outside solutions to villages with malnourished children. Over and over, that strategy had failed...most people proved reluctant to change such fundamental matters as what they fed their children and when just because outsiders said so.”

- The researchers therefore “focused on finding solutions from insiders.” It was “revolutionary” and “ideas began to spread. They took hold... In two years, malnutrition dropped 65 to 85 percent in every village the Sternins had been to.”

(Gawande, 2007, 2013)
1. What if… we capitalized on “insider” solutions to large-scale community problems related to climate change?

2. What if… we worked in partnership with communities, changing our role from expert-outsider, to solution-partner, and finding innovative solutions to build on individual and community strengths and resilience, and to address climate adversities and resulting strain on community well-being?
Participatory Approaches

• Participatory approaches call for a collaboration between providers and members of the target community/consumers.

• A true participatory approach strives to provide an equal voice to all members, in all aspects of the provision of services, including the focus, the design, the delivery, the monitoring and evaluation, the refining, the dissemination
Rationale for Using a Participatory Approach

- Target and deliver services and resources that are most RELEVANT and USEFUL to all partners

- Capitalizing on DIVERSITY of skill, knowledge, and expertise can lead to more innovative and effective ways of solving complex problems

- Using local knowledge makes your work more VALID

- Better services means more chance to actually MAKE A DIFFERENCE, creating effective and lasting change

Israel et al., 2012
Design thinking starts with **empathy** and uses collaborative and participatory methods, repeating all five steps of the process as many times as needed to achieve a complete solution.

Elective problems and participatory methods, repeating all five steps of the process as many times as needed to achieve a complete solution.

- Human-centered design (HCD) is a creative problem-solving framework based on the principle that “people who face those problems every day are the ones who hold the key to their answer.”

- One feature of HCD that is particularly useful in combination with participatory approaches is its focus on how to generate creative and innovative solutions to community or “human” problems.
HCD

• **Hear**
• **Create**
• **Deliver**
Participatory + Human Centered (P+HC)

Participatory co-design

Community driven discovery

I. EMPATHIZE
   Develop a deep understanding of the challenge

II. DEFINE
   Clearly articulate the problem you want to solve

III. IDEATE
   Brainstorm potential solutions
   Select and develop your solution

IV. PROTOTYPE
   Design a prototype (or series of prototypes) to test all or part of your solution

V. TEST
   Engage in a continuous short-cycle innovation process to continually improve your design

Effective & Lasting Change

Anchor Dialogue & Idea Generation

(Kia-Keating et al., 2017)
Empathy: Developing a Deep Understanding

- **Form Community Advisory Board (CAB)**
  - Included key stakeholders that representing individuals and organizations

- **Focus Groups & Interviews**

- **Host community forums:**
  - Free and open to the public
  - Facilitated by community leaders and volunteers

Diagram:
- **C** Content & Collaboration
- **A** Advertisement and Activities
- **B** Bring in speakers, resource tables
Eight Years After the Devastating Tea Fire, Many Have Yet to Rebuild Lost Homes

*About 1 in 4 survivors chose not to rebuild right away*

**Tracy Lehr Posted:** May 15, 2016 09:18 PM PDT

MONTECITO, Calif. - Montecito is known for its mansions, but in between many homes visitors can still see the ruins left by the Tea Fire almost 8 years ago. The fire burned 210 homes in Montecito, a community that stretches across city and county lines. County planners said about 31 percent of the homes in its jurisdiction have not been rebuilt. Santa Barbara City planners said about 20 percent of the homes have not been rebuilt, although some are in the midst of making a comeback.
Youth: After the fire. What did you say to me after the fire?  
Mom: I don’t remember saying much of anything. I just remember doing a lot of crying.
Youth: Yeah, I remember…
Mom: What did you say?
Youth: I think I said a lot of curse words.

Youth: “I started doing an astronomical amount of drugs… I got really super depressed and I wanted to commit suicide… I was doing really well before the fire. I was going to school, I was getting like B’s, A’s whatever, I got exercise every day, I’d bike up [mountain] Road, uh, I was on the water polo team, I was like, I swam, I was happy, I was fine.”
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Define & Clearly Articulate the Problem: Anchoring the Dialogue around Key Issues Identified by Community Opportunity Areas

• Generate a list of “opportunities”:
  name the issues, the places where change is needed
• stepping stones that rearticulate problems in generative ways to allow for a group to brainstorm multiple future-centered solutions

• NOT solutions: for example, “media campaign to increase community’s understanding of how to prepare for a disaster and understanding of how to keep themselves safe”
• NOT insights: “losing a home is harmful for youth and families,” “people don’t adequately prepare because they don’t think it will happen to them”
Define & Clearly Articulate the Problem: Anchoring the Dialogue around Key Issues Identified by Community

Example Opportunity Areas

1. Systems of support and mentorship

2. Educational opportunities to expand the knowledge of residents about their (safe) options in disaster preparation and response?

3. Screening and identification efforts to help youth and families who have experienced disaster/climate change effects in ‘hidden’ ways (no one reporting it)?
I. EMPATHIZE
Develop a deep understanding of the challenge

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Clearly articulate the problem you want to solve

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Brainstorm potential solutions
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Anchor Dialogue & Idea Generation

Ideate: Brainstorm Potential Solutions

Reciprocal Dialogue (“Circles”)

- Small groups

- Groups generated ideas (e.g., brainstorming on large post-it notes and then sharing with the larger group)
CONVERSATION STARTERS:

(1) What do these pictures say about our community?

(2) What vision for change do these pictures suggest?

(3) What memories do these pictures bring up for you?

(4) What do you see in these pictures?
Ideate: Brainstorm Potential Solutions

Let’s try it!

1. No – Yes exercise

2. Brainstorm & pass it down
Anchor Dialogue & Idea Generation

Ideate: Brainstorm Potential Solutions

Creating Storyboards

- Storyboards help foster idea generation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE</th>
<th>Human-Centered Design: Storyboard Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>READ scenario of issue and encourage participants to ADD complexity to the scenario with similar issues faced (i.e., what other stressors/challenges, how do these experiences affect the individual?).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>GENERATE potential solutions to the issues raised in the scenario. Write the solutions for the group to see and continue to brainstorm as many ideas as possible.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 3</td>
<td>Pair participants to add complexity to one of the ideas they find compelling. Have participants ELABORATE on that solution by adding a feature and then another.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 4</td>
<td>Participants CREATE a storyboard of the solution by creating a visual step-by-step depiction (i.e., images and words displayed in a panel-by-panel sequence) of how it would actually work or take place.</td>
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</tbody>
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Kia-Keating et al., 2017
Education & Radio PSA storyboard

Neighborhood Watch storyboard
Invites full participation of all key stakeholders from a diverse range of developmental, educational, socioeconomic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds to generate creative ideas and problem-solving and lead to innovative solutions.

Allows people from multiple immigrant and lifespan generations, alongside service providers, students, and researchers, to equitably and efficiently distill collective knowledge about community needs related to climate adversity and resilience in the local community and generate possible solutions to these identified needs.
Future Directions: A Revolutionary Idea
Scientific Research that begins with Empathy

More research is needed that uses innovative approaches, like those that are human centered and participatory, to elicit youth, family and community perspectives and solutions to address climate change, and other large-scale community problems and public health challenges.
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Knowledge without justice ought to be called cunning rather than wisdom.
Plato
Resources

HCD

• IDEO, a global design firm specializing in HCD has a free tool kit available with many specific strategies for quickly and effectively engaging communities in problem solving and generating solutions.

CBPR

• Book: Methods for Community-based Participatory Research
  (Israel, Eng, Schulz, Parker, 2013)
• Webpage: University of Washington
  https://depts.washington.edu/ccph/commbas.html
  https://ccph.memberclicks.net/