

# Planning for impact in your research project: What's implementation planning got to do with it and how to boss it?



Peter van der Graaf & Mandy Cheetham (SKIM), 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023  
ARC NENC Conference



## SKIM Team



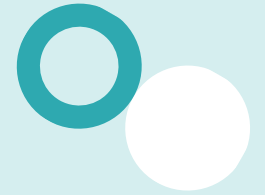
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**Leah Bührmann**  
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**Susan Sleight**  
Theme Administrator



**Ruth Muscat**  
Phd Student



# TODAY



<b><i>Time</i></b>	<b><i>Activity</i></b>
1.00-1.10	<b>Welcome and introductions</b>
1.10-1.30	<b>Planning for impact</b> (what is impact, why is it important, available tools and KM activities)
1.30-2.00	<b>Practical exercise: developing a Knowledge Mobilisation plan</b>
2.00-2.15	<b>Evaluating and adapting your feedback plan</b>
2.15-2.45	<b>Practical exercise: Ripple Effect Mapping</b>
2.45-3pm	<b>Reflection and close</b>

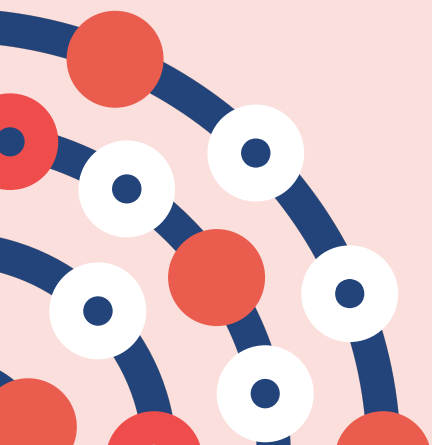
# Our approach....

- Everyone brings knowledge, ideas, experience and ways of thinking
- Mutual respect and courtesy
- Supportive
- Learning





# Planning for impact



*‘An effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia’*

(<https://re.ukri.org/research/ref-impact>)



- Academic / Educational
- Social
- Cultural
- Technological
- Environmental
- Economic
- Health
- Political / policy
- Legal
- International development
- Public discourse or understanding

# Why should we be bothered?

- Despite **£8 billion annual expenditure** on health research, most research **fails to have significant or lasting effect on policy or practice** (Beckett et al, 2018)
- it takes **17 years** for **14%** of research to make it into practice (Morris et al., 2011)
- Impact plans/ Pathways to Impact are a **requirement** for most fundings applications
- REF2021: **weighting for impact 25%** (up from 20% in 2014)
- **Core objective of ARCs**: “support implementation of health and care evidence into day-to-day practice”



## Reflections on impact

*“While research co-production can lead to demonstrable benefits such as policy or practice change, it may also have **more diffuse and subtle impact on relationships, knowledge sharing, and in engendering culture shifts and research capacity-building.** These relatively intangible outcomes are harder to measure and require new emphases and tools”. (Beckett et al., 2018)*

*“The key problem can be summarised as: the attempt to measure “impact” as a concrete, visible phenomenon that is fixed in time and space, that one party does to another party... whereas deep co-production is a process often **involving a gradual, porous and diffuse series of changes undertaken collaboratively.**” (Pain et al., 2015)*



## SKIM members reflections on impact (April 2023)

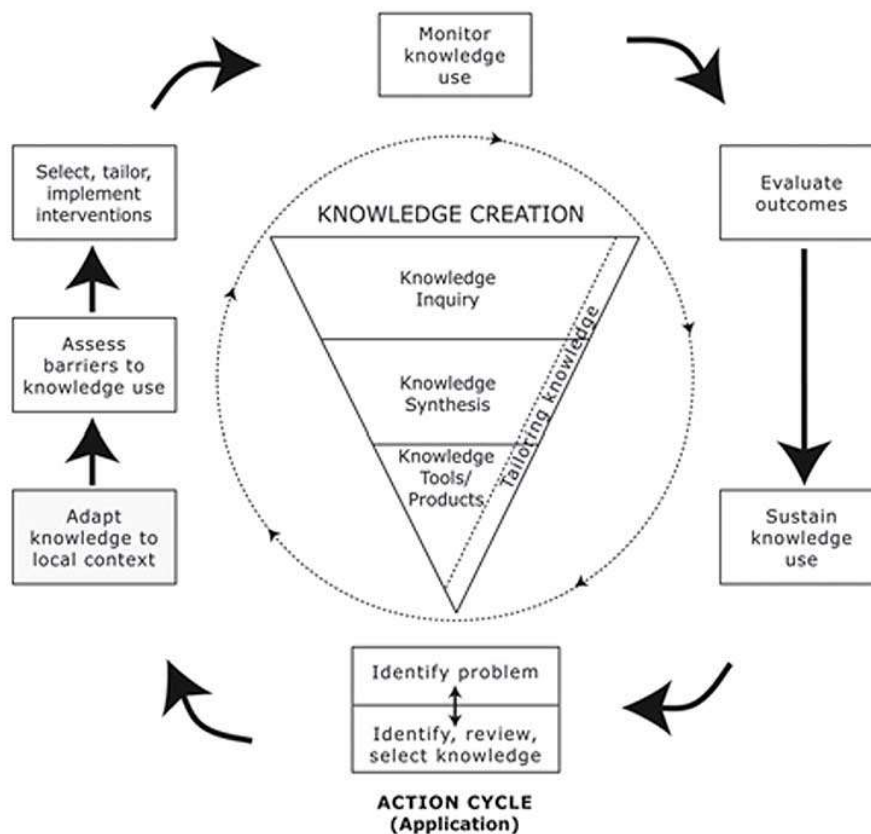
- Impact is about 'making some difference' but need to **think broadly** (& creatively) about how, acknowledging different audiences & users
- Tools like visual maps are a starting point, but need to work on **links to concepts** underpinning 'impact'
- Need to be **clear about language** & make it accessible e.g., 'impacts' vs 'outcomes'
- **Capturing** certain kinds of impact (changes in attitudes, behaviours) can be hard

## SKIM members – how can we plan/ assess impact?

- **Learn how others** measure impact, share best practice
- Value and capture ‘**relational impact**’ – relationships, shifts in understanding
- Impact planning should include (ongoing) **reflective work** within research teams
- Planning & embedding impact thinking **at the outset**, and resourcing it
- More thought about **timeframes** for impact, some comes much later
- Invest in understanding stakeholders’ priorities ‘up front’, and **maintain dialogue**
- Research **transparency** (open access, accessibility, creative formats)

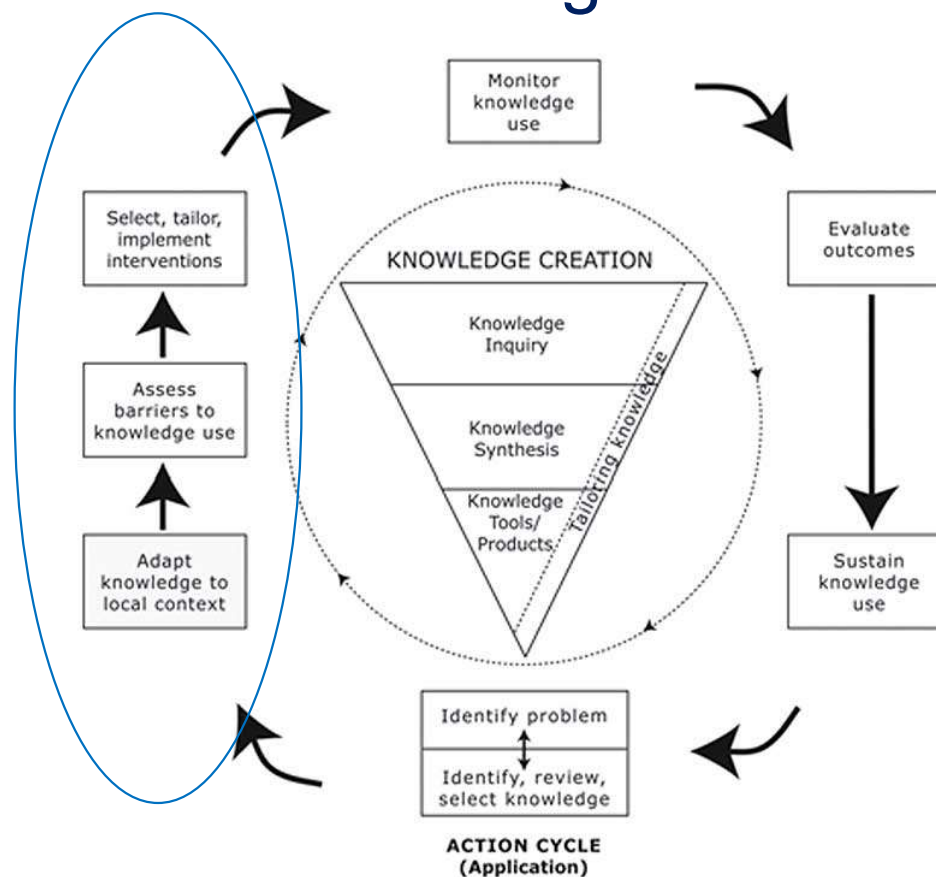
# Knowledge Mobilisation: turning research into impact

Knowledge  
to Action  
Framework  
(Graham et al.,  
2006)

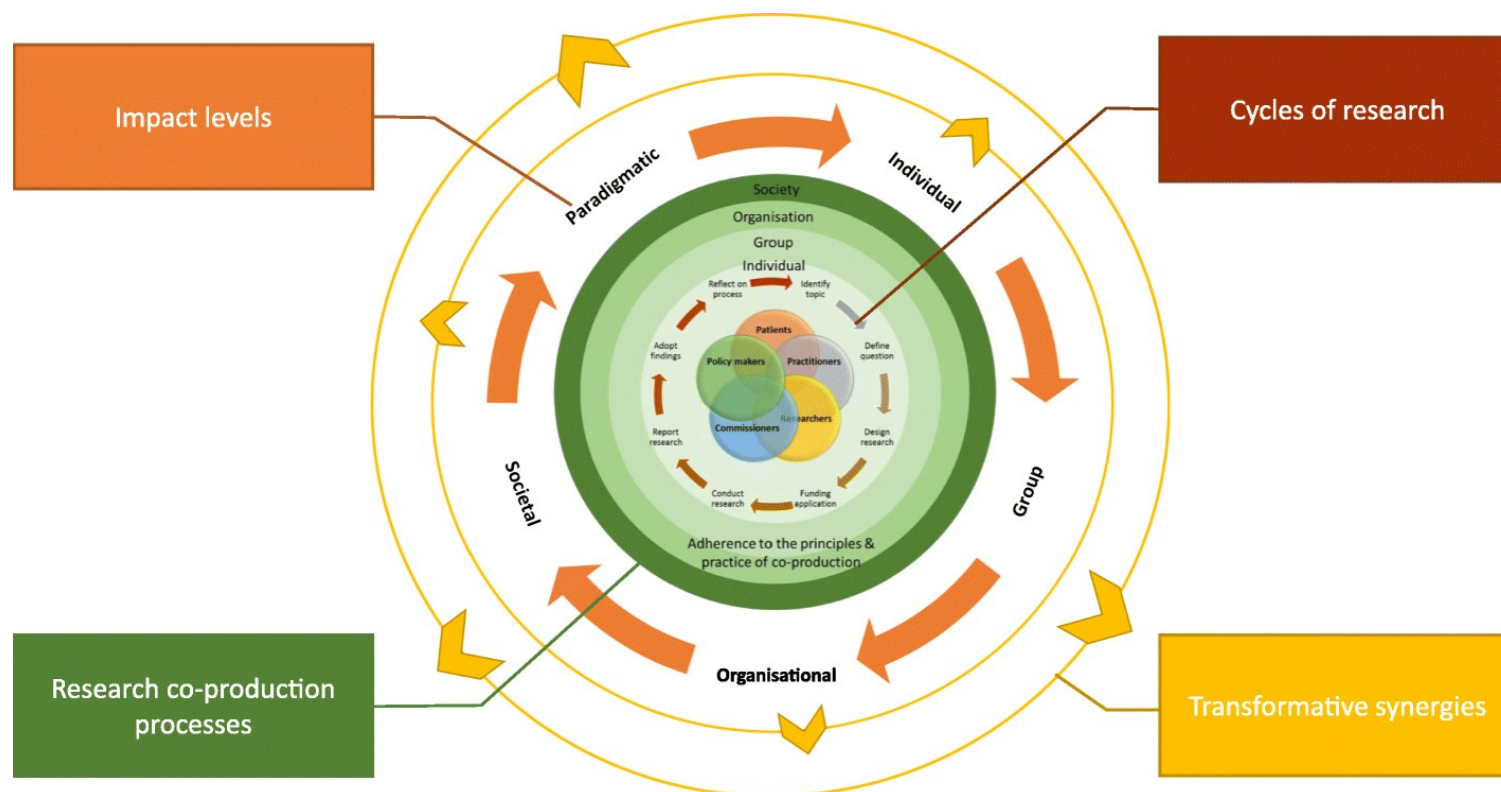


# Knowledge Mobilisation: turning research into impact

Knowledge  
to Action  
Framework  
(Graham et al.,  
2006)



# A social impact model (Beckett et al 2018)



# Fuse knowledge exchange model

- **Step 1. Awareness raising:** Communication Officer, Fuse website, newsletter, social media
- **Step 2. Knowledge sharing:** events with practice partners, policy makers and community members, (international) conferences
- **Step 3. Making evidence fit for purpose:** Knowledge Exchange Broker, AskFuse, embedded researchers
- **Step 4. Supporting uptake & implementation:** capacity building, co-production, linking knowledge exchange activities



(Van der Graaf et al. 2020)

# ARC resources

- **Step 1. Awareness raising:** Communication Manager, website, newsletter, social media
- **Step 2. Knowledge sharing:** theme members meetings & events, ARC conference
- **Step 3. Making evidence fit for purpose:** Open Funding Calls, Practitioners Fellows
- **Step 4. Supporting uptake & implementation:** capacity building (training/ implementation leads/ links), co-production principles



(Van der Graaf et al. 2020)

# What can you do?

- Complete implementation plans for each project

<b>INPUTS</b> (resources required to achieve objectives)	<b>ACTIVITIES</b> (what will do/deliver with the inputs)	<b>OUTPUTS</b> (quantifiable results of the activities)	<b>SHORT TO MEDIUM TERM GOALS</b> (short to medium term effects generated by the outputs)	<b>LONGER TERM OUTCOMES</b> (long term effects generated by the outputs)	<b>IMPACTS</b> (Intended impact of the investment)
<b>ASSUMPTIONS</b> (necessary pre-conditions for the activities to lead to the outcomes)			<b>EXTERNAL FACTORS</b> (Outside the control of the project team)		

- How to turn your logic model into an knowledge mobilisation plan?



# Six principles for knowledge exchange

**Clarify your purpose and knowledge sharing goals** - What do you want your findings to do, or to change?

**Identify knowledge users and stakeholders** - Who would be interested in this research, or need to know about it?

**Agree expectations** - How will you get a shared understanding what is expected of everyone and what can be achieved?

**Use knowledge users' expertise** - How will you design the research to benefit from their expertise and knowledge?

**Monitor, reflect and be responsive** - How will you know if your knowledge sharing activities have met your goals?

**Leave a legacy** - How can you develop, capture and sustain any benefits?

(Rushmer et al. 2018)

# Developing a Knowledge Mobilisation plan

## What?

- What knowledge are you planning to mobilize?
- What are your intended goals?
- What are your key messages?

## Why?

- Why are you interested in mobilizing this knowledge?
- Are you aiming to educate, inspire, motivate, engage?

- Why are these messages important to your audience?

## Who?

- Who is involved in sharing the knowledge?
- Who are your partners and who are your champions?
- Who are you sharing this information with?
- Who should be engaged in your KMb activities?

# Developing a Knowledge Mobilisation plan (continued)

## How?



- How will you deliver your message to your audience?
- How will you engage with your audience when developing these
- messages and during your KMb activities?

## When?



- When do you hope to mobilize this knowledge?

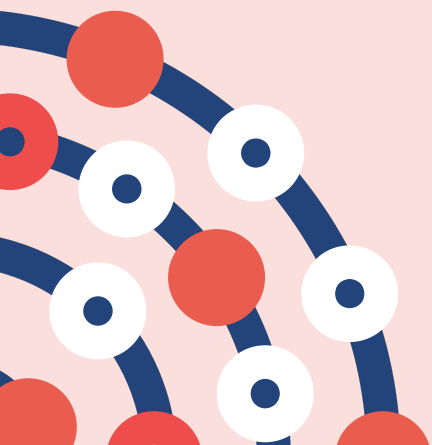
- Are there other activities taking place at this time that might influence uptake of this knowledge (conferences, awareness days, community, events)?

## Measure



- How will you know you have achieved your goals?
- What type of indicators will you use to measure efforts?
- What evaluation questions will produce meaningful findings?

# Practical exercise: developing a Knowledge Mobilisation plan



# Give it a go ...

- Work in groups at tables (8-10 participants)
- Each table to complete a KM plan for the sample project



What knowledge do you want to mobilize? What are the main messages that you want to share?

Why are these messages meaningful? Why should others see or use this product?

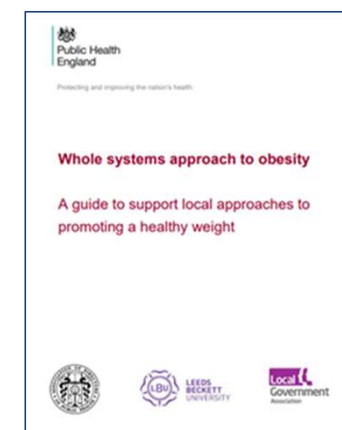
Why are you doing this? What impact are you trying to have with your KMB efforts?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> change attitudes               | <input type="checkbox"/> influence policy action                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> change behaviour or practice   | <input type="checkbox"/> share knowledge, experience or tools      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> engage stakeholders            | <input type="checkbox"/> validate, legitimize or defend a position |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fulfill funding requirements   | <input type="checkbox"/> other: <input type="text"/>               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> generate interest or awareness |  |

# Sample project



- Dundee - Scottish Government 'Early Adopter' site of a Whole Systems Approach (WSA) to Diet & Healthy Weight
- Local Child Healthy Weight Strategy was published in early 2020 to make it easier for children to eat and drink well, play and be active.
- Jan 2020 – Sept 2021: Stakeholder workshops to map the system, identify priorities, actions and set up working groups
- Jan 2021: successful application to NIHR PHIRST for evaluation of a Whole System Approach to Child Health Weight in Dundee



PHE WSA to Obesity Guide 2019

# Evaluation of 'Healthy Weight Tayside' (HWT): a whole system approach to child healthy weight in Dundee City

**RQ:** *Does the approach in Dundee support key stakeholders to recognise what they can do in relation to actions at different levels within the system?*

- **WP1:** Semi-structured **interviews** (n=9) with DHWPs members and senior leaders, framed by Jenkins et al. (2020)
- **WP2:** Members and leaders trained as **peer researchers** (n=9) to interview their wider networks about role perceptions in HWT (n=13)
- **WP3: Survey** among wider group of stakeholders to sense-check and finetune findings (n=27), modelled on *Stakeholder-driven Community Diffusion Survey for childhood obesity prevention* (Korn et al., 2021)
- **WP4: Action learning sets** (n=2) with key stakeholders across Tayside to agree recommendations for applying HWT to other local authorities



# Recommendations



## For Scottish funders and UK commissioners

- Provide funding for the further development and implementation of the approach in Dundee to be able to demonstrate change.
- Map and link WSA to CHW activities across Tayside to align priorities and identify additional resources and new funding opportunities.

## For practitioners

- Create more awareness of structures and strategies among stakeholders to support child healthy weight in Dundee.
- Increase stakeholders' confidence in feeling

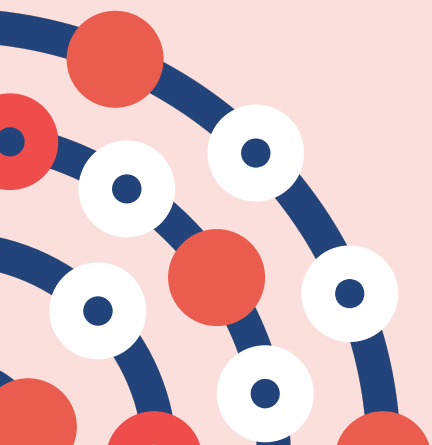
able to influence individual people and improve places.

- Raise awareness of the WSA to CHW activities and events and develop training to help members see how they fit in the approach.
- Develop clear and positive communication with communities about activities on offer that are framed in an accessible and encouraging way to involve more community members and parents.
- Facilitate ongoing targeted communication and diverse involvement opportunities for different stakeholder groups.





# Evaluating and adapting your plan



# Considerations for evaluation

- Create evaluation measures that are in line with your KM goals (Why's)
- Evaluate KMb process as well as outcomes
  - Reach
  - usefulness
  - use
  - partnership/collaboration
  - practice change
  - programme or service indicators
- policy indicators
- knowledge change
- attitude change
- systems change
- Make evaluation an integrated part of the KMb process
- Examine key KMb mechanisms: capacity- and relationship building

# Contribution analysis (Morton et. 2018)

- Contribution rather than attribution
- Develop an outcomes chain for the uptake, use and impact of research and knowledge mobilisation
- Incorporating routinely collected data with feedback and evaluation
- Collaborative process with stakeholders, following seven steps:
  1. Identify K2A activities fit for the context
  2. Identify changes in the behaviour,

Research article | [Open Access](#) | [Published: 21 February 2018](#)

## Developing a framework to evaluate knowledge into action interventions

[Sarah Morton](#) , [Suzanne Wilson](#), [Sheila Inglis](#), [Karen Ritchie](#) & [Ann Wales](#)

*BMC Health Services Research* **18**, Article number: 133 (2018) | [Cite this article](#)

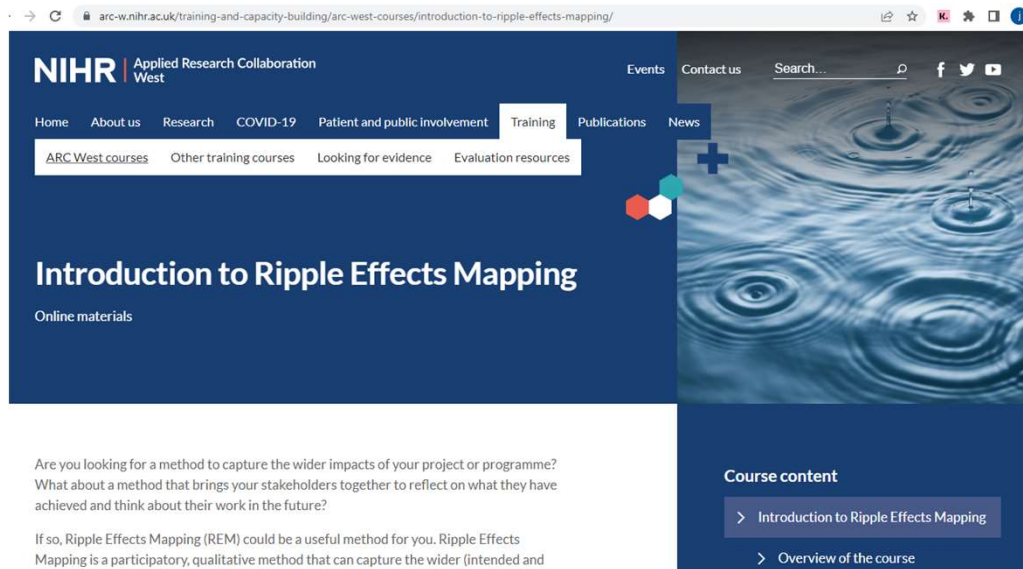
8976 Accesses | 6 Citations | 36 Altmetric | [Metrics](#)

- practices and outcomes that K2A process aims to achieve
3. Link each step from activities to outputs using the categories in the model
  4. Assess risks and assumptions
  5. Devise indicators for the outcomes chain
  6. Review the process as it develops
  7. Create a contribution report as required

# Outcomes chain development

Activity/ organisation measures	Resource	What resources will support the activities?
	Activities	What K2A activities will take place?
	Outputs	What will the products/methods/ services be?
Immediate Outcomes	Reach	Which targeted groups are been engaged at micro, meso and macro levels?
	Reactions	How do the target groups react to the service? Satisfaction/timely/ relevance/efficiency...
Intermediate outcomes	Knowledge, Attitudes, skills aspirations	What knowledge, skills, attitudes change as a result of using the activity/outputs?
	Practice, behaviour change	What practices/behaviours do you expect to change as a result of the activity/outputs?
Final Outcomes	More effective practice and wider outcomes	How will practice be more effective as a result of the activity/outputs? What outcomes will this contribute to?

# Ripple effect mapping



The screenshot shows the NIHR Applied Research Collaboration West website. The main navigation menu includes Home, About us, Research, COVID-19, Patient and public involvement, Training, Publications, and News. A search bar is located in the top right. The page title is 'Introduction to Ripple Effects Mapping' with the subtitle 'Online materials'. Below the title, there is a question: 'Are you looking for a method to capture the wider impacts of your project or programme? What about a method that brings your stakeholders together to reflect on what they have achieved and think about their work in the future?' followed by a paragraph: 'If so, Ripple Effects Mapping (REM) could be a useful method for you. Ripple Effects Mapping is a participatory, qualitative method that can capture the wider (intended and...'. A 'Course content' section is visible at the bottom right, listing 'Introduction to Ripple Effects Mapping' and 'Overview of the course'.

Dr James Nobles (University of Bristol) – now  
Leeds Beckett University

Dr Jennifer Hall (Bradford Institute for Health  
Research)

<https://arc-w.nihr.ac.uk/training-and-capacity-building/arc-west-courses/introduction-to-ripple-effects-mapping/>

Nobles et al. *BMC Medical Research Methodology* (2022) 22:72  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-022-01570-4>

BMC Medical Research  
Methodology

RESEARCH

Open Access

## Ripple effects mapping: capturing the wider impacts of systems change efforts in public health

James Nobles<sup>1,2\*</sup>, Jessica Wheeler<sup>1,2</sup>, Kirsty Dunleavy-Harris<sup>3,4</sup>, Richard Holmes<sup>5</sup>, Alan Inman-Ward<sup>3</sup>, Alexandra Potts<sup>6</sup>, Jennifer Hall<sup>7,8</sup>, Sabi Redwood<sup>1,2</sup>, Russell Jago<sup>1,9</sup> and Charlie Foster<sup>9</sup>

Article free to download at:

<https://bmcmmedresmethodol.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12874-022-01570-4>

# Traditional impact evaluation



Scenario A: Standard Impact Evaluation



# A Different way of evaluating impact



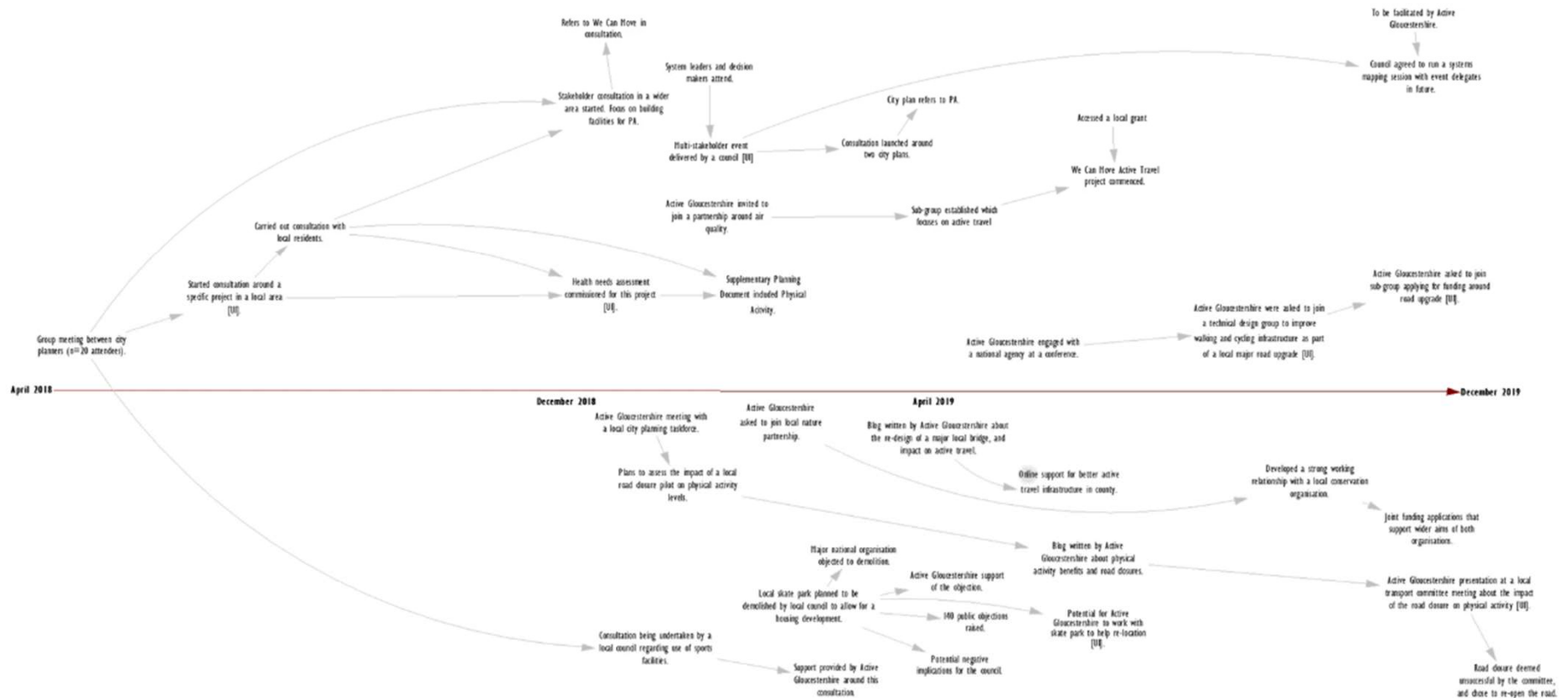
## Scenario B: Ripple Effects Mapping Evaluation

# What is Ripple Effects Mapping?

- Participatory, qualitative evaluation method
- Technique that requires the active input of programme stakeholders in data gathering workshops
- Capture the wider (intended and unintended) impacts of a project or programme
- Study of contribution; how may an intervention, action or policy contribute towards changing an outcome or a system?
- 1 – 2.5 hours long; 4-30 participants (involved in or impacted by a project)
- Requires active facilitation - in person or online
- Can take place regularly over the duration of a project (e.g. concurrently with project delivery)



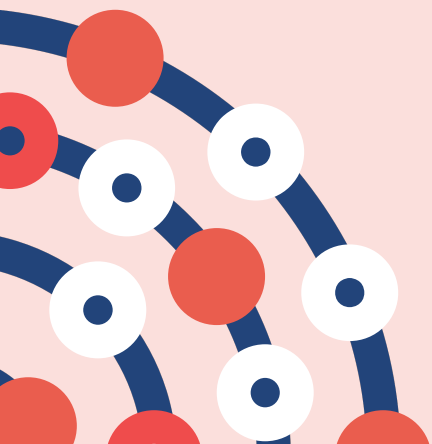
# Example of a Ripple Effects Map



An Example REM Output (Digital)



# Practical exercise: Ripple Effect Mapping



## Give it a go ...

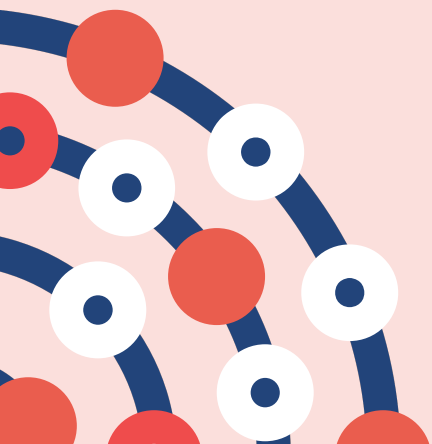
- Work in groups at tables (8-10 participants)
- Each table to draw a Ripple Effect Map for the sample project that they developed a KM plan for



**Scenario B: Ripple Effects Mapping Evaluation**



# Reflection and close



# What next?

- **Training** for research staff & all core support staff, with **dedicated time** for it
- Appropriate & efficient **system to capture impact** activity (funded)
- Some standardised **guidance** across projects on measuring impact
- Continued focus on **involving** service users, public, all stakeholders
- Develop **ARC level model for planning and evaluating impact** – and how these link to the objectives of ARC NENC (but retaining flexibility noted)
- Consider **using tools/ templates** from the literature to inform approach to planning for impact

## Additional resources

- Planning for impact – NIHR toolkit for researchers, <https://arc-nenc.nihr.ac.uk/resources/planning-for-impact-nihr-toolkit-for-researchers/>
- Plan Knowledge Mobilisation (NIHR). <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/researchers/i-need-help-designing-my-research/plan-knowledge-mobilisation.htm>
- KM Theories, models, and frameworks, <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/knowledge-mobilisation-research/22598>
- Knowledge mobilization toolkit; Doing more with what you know (Updated 2023) - Knowledge Institute on Child and Youth Mental Health and Addictions, [www.kmbtoolkit.ca](http://www.kmbtoolkit.ca)
- NIHR RDS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit <https://www.rdsresources.org.uk/edi-toolkit>
- A Field Guide to Ripple Effect Mapping, Chazdon S, Emery M, Hansen D, Higgins L, Sero R, University of Minnesota (2017), <https://conservancy.umn.edu/handle/11299/190639>
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**Thank you!**

**Any questions?**

