

Impact Evaluation of the *Opening Doors* Community Leadership Program for Social Inclusion

FINAL REPORT



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Executive Summary

Introduction

The *Opening Doors Community Leadership Program* for social inclusion (*Opening Doors*) was established in 2009 in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne, Victoria, to build leaders in local communities with the knowledge, skills, resources and networks to create more socially inclusive communities. *Opening Doors* brings together a diverse range of community members of different ages, faiths and cultural and social backgrounds to develop their leadership skills, knowledge and insights about social isolation. A key component of *Opening Doors* is support for each participant, with their newfound knowledge and skills, to work within their community to establish a local community-based project to strengthen community cohesion and connectedness. Since 2009 *Opening Doors* has supported 120 graduates to successfully complete the program and generate multiple community-based projects in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne.

Evaluation Focus

In 2015 the auspice and Steering Committee of *Opening Doors* funded the University of Melbourne to assess the impacts and benefits of *Opening Doors* on its graduates and beyond, and to identify the critical ingredients for the success of *Opening Doors*. More specifically the proposed research question was:

***How successful has the Opening Doors leadership program
been in reducing social isolation?***

The key objectives of the evaluation were:

- *To capture and describe the long term impacts of the program in reducing social isolation*
- *To capture the ways in which the program has been of benefit to the participants*
- *To identify the critical ingredients for success of the program.*

Evaluation Methodology

Evaluating changes in individuals, groups, organisations, or communities resulting from community development programs are recognised as being challenging. Traditional impact evaluation, experimental, and other quantitative methods are difficult to implement and often provide limited insight into the process that brought about change, or the context of change observed as a result of the community development program. Participatory qualitative impact evaluation methods are considered better suited to evaluate community development programs.

Given that *Opening Doors* is a *community development* leadership program (empowering community leaders, recognising and valuing diversity, and building on individual and local community strengths), to address the research question and evaluation objectives an emerging participatory qualitative impact evaluation approach was chosen: ***Ripple Effect Mapping***. Ripple Effect Mapping uses elements of appreciative inquiry, mind mapping, and qualitative open-ended group interviewing to engage program participants and other community stakeholders to reflect upon and visually map the intended and unintended changes produced by programs. Ripple Effect Mapping has been used to evaluate multiple community-based development programs designed to strengthen leadership, to reduce poverty, and to build social capital amongst youth.

Ripple Effect Mapping is traditionally conducted in five key steps:

1. Schedule a Ripple Effect Mapping workshop;
2. In workshop conduct interviews in pairs;
3. In workshop brainstorm and map using software the ripples from a program;
4. After workshop conduct follow-up interviews;
5. Clarify, code, and analyse data.

Due to resource and time constraints and to address the research question and evaluation objectives, an adapted Ripple Effect Mapping process was used, with three key steps:

Step 1: Schedule Ripple Effect Mapping workshop with:

- *Opening Doors* Steering Committee members: From Link Health and Community; Inner East Primary Care Partnership; Carrington Health; and Deakin University. This workshop served to provide contextual information for the evaluation.
- *Opening Doors* Graduates: Given that since 2009 there have been 120 *Opening Doors* graduates or approx. 20 participants annually, to capture the diversity of graduate experiences (not necessarily representativeness) a two-tier sampling framework was used. Potential *Opening Doors* graduate evaluation participants were initially clustered by *Opening Doors* Coordinator into three groups based on graduating year: 1) 2009 - 2011; 2) 2012-2013; 3) 2014 – 2015. Participants were then selected based on: their personal features (age, faith, cultural background); whether they were linked to an organisation; and the type of community project developed.

Based upon these criteria **58 *Opening Doors* graduates** were identified and invited via email by the *Opening Doors* Coordinator to participate in one Ripple Effect Mapping workshop, lasting approximately 90 minutes. Graduates were provided with 12 possible workshop sessions to choose from to optimise attendance. Upon agreement, the evaluator emailed the graduates - thanking them for agreeing to participate, confirming workshop date and time, and including a plain language statement, a consent form and a workshop outline.

Step 2: Conducted Ripple Effect Mapping Workshops with the *Opening Doors Steering Committee* and then *Opening Doors* graduates to brainstorm and map the ripple effects of '*Opening Doors*'. To set the scene, all workshops participants were initially asked to reflect upon a statement: '**Creating a Culture of Social inclusion**' using a framework: values, symbols, practices and systems. This activity was then followed using a workshop outline (**Appendix A**) that posed the following five questions:

1. What **drivers** for taking action on social inclusion exist?
2. What **actions** have *Opening Doors* graduates taken to create more socially inclusive communities?
3. What **changes** have *Opening Doors* graduates noticed specifically related to social inclusion?
4. What **enablers and barriers** exist to the *Opening Doors* program?
5. What is required to **sustain** the changes in socially inclusive communities?

Step 3: Transcribe and analyse data: After all the Ripple Effect Mapping workshops, audio-recorded discussions were sent to an independent transcribing service to be transcribed. The transcripts were then analysed using the constant comparative thematic analysis approach.

To assist in clarifying how *Opening Doors* worked and to refine the funded evaluation plan, questions and data collection methods, a program logic model (**Appendix B**) was also developed in February 2016.

The evaluation received ethics approval from The University of Melbourne Human Ethics Advisory Group.

Evaluation Findings

A summary of the evaluation findings are presented under five headings:

1. *Opening Doors* graduate evaluation participants
2. Impact of *Opening Doors*
3. Benefits to *Opening Doors* Participants
4. Critical ingredients for success
5. Reflections on evaluation methodology.

1. *Opening Doors* Graduate Evaluation Participants

A total of 58 *Opening Doors* graduates were identified and invited by the *Opening Doors* Coordinator to participate in one Ripple Effect Mapping workshop. Of these 26 (49%) participated in the workshops, or 22% of the 120 total graduates across the last seven years. Workshop participants were: predominantly female (n=17), reflecting *Opening Doors* participant profiles, from across seven year levels (2009 to 2015) - although more of the recent graduates agreed to participate. Graduates were also from a range of ages, faiths, cultural backgrounds, and predominantly not employed or formally linked to an organisation. Graduates had a broad range of drivers/motivations for taking action on social inclusion and participating in *Opening Doors* that can be summarised into: **Self-oriented drivers** (personal enhancement; career opportunities) and **Others-oriented drivers** (acting on humanitarian values; building understanding about others; developing social networks).

2. Impact of *Opening Doors*

Impact in the Community

The Ripple Effect Mapping workshops with the 26 *Opening Doors* graduates revealed that since 2009 *Opening Doors* has successfully recruited and supported a diverse group of local community leaders to transform participant's ideas into projects to create more socially inclusive communities.

Opening Doors graduates have taken multiple actions to create more socially inclusive communities that can be summarised into three levels:

- **Individual level:** established projects; championed access issues; established connections, accessed facilities; advocated for *Opening Doors*; applied for and obtained employment positions;
- **Organisational level:** established structures, committees and partnerships; contributed to strategic planning processes; took up advisory roles on disability organisations; took up leadership roles in senior citizen organisations; supported strategic plans; contributed to disability access policies; and
- **Community level:** applied for funding to conduct projects; established and facilitated support groups; developed resources (books) for communities; connected community groups.

Opening Doors has benefitted multiple individuals and communities, including: older people; Indian senior citizens; people with visual impairment; people with chronic diseases such as diabetes; parents in general; parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD); people with anxiety, depression and mental illness; newly-arrived migrants; refugee children; transgender people; parents of transgender families; people with gambling addictions; ex-offenders; people with a disability; and carers of people with health conditions or other social disadvantage.

The benefits for communities can be clustered into five categories, including:

1. Access - Increased access to technology;
2. Knowledge - increased knowledge of health conditions, local services, support systems for carers;
3. Capabilities - increased self-esteem, increased confidence;
4. Advocacy - increased spaces to be heard and have a voice for; carers, parents of children with ASD, people with anxiety and depression, and parents of transgender families;
5. Connections - increased connections between newly arrived migrants and local Australians.

Opening Doors has also benefitted health professionals (e.g. trainee doctors); health service organisations (e.g. RDNS); cultural specific organisations (e.g. Indian Senior Citizens Association); Residential Aged Care organisations (e.g. DonCare); non-government organisations (e.g. St Vincent's De Paul, Jesuit Social Services); and local government organisations (e.g. Maroondah City Council).

The benefits for those professionals and organisations can be clustered into two main categories:

1. **Knowledge:** increased knowledge of issues facing: carers; parents of children with ASD; ex-offenders; people with a mental illness, people with disabilities, and parents of transgender families;
2. **Connections & Collaborations:** increased connections and collaborations between Senior Citizen Associations; non-government organisations to support youth leadership.

Opening Doors is contributing to changes in the broader community that can be clustered into eight domains:

1. Increasing the awareness and knowledge of factors that contribute to social isolation, social exclusion and those factors that promote social inclusion;
2. Increasing the quality and number of relationships, connections, networks and collaborations;
3. Increasing ideas, viewpoints, mindsets, and ways of thinking about social inclusion using asset-based community development approaches;
4. Increasing the leadership capabilities; increased empowerment, confidence and advocacy;
5. Increasing the level of participation and engagement of marginalized local communities;
6. Increasing the level of respect and acceptance of people who are marginalised and socially excluded from society;
7. Increasing the level of belonging and decreasing the level of loneliness of marginalized communities;
8. Increasing the level of volunteering, generosity, goodwill and benevolence - giving back to others.

Overall these evaluation findings confirm previous evaluations of *Opening Doors* by Held (2011) which identified two key outcomes of *Opening Doors*, namely: increased participant's leadership knowledge, skills and confidence to engage with communities; and establishment of community-based projects to strengthen community connectedness and reduce social isolation in local neighbourhoods across the inner east catchment of Melbourne.¹

¹ Held, R. (2011). *Opening Doors: A community leadership program for social inclusion. Evaluation Report.* Inner East Primary care Partnership. http://iepcp.org.au/sites/default/files/Report%20IESII%20Evaluation%20Final_0.pdf

The Ripple Effect Mapping evaluation workshops have further revealed that *Opening Doors* is contributing to building community capacity as demonstrated by: the development local leadership; improving community participation; improving local assessment of problems and assets; improving local resource mobilization; strengthening local community connections, collaborations and partnerships; building local structures; and building local project capabilities.

The findings from the Ripple Effect Mapping workshops and the design of *Opening Doors* also resonates with the work on Community Capitals (i.e. all of the things in a community that have the potential to be a resource that can be invested, saved, or used up).

Impact on Reducing Social Isolation

Based on the collective impact of the *Opening Doors* graduates projects, actions and ripples in the community, one could surmise that *Opening Doors* is contributing to reducing social isolation. However, caution is required in making a 'cause and effect' judgement. As a community development and empowerment program, *Opening Doors* is designed to influence multiple social phenomena (social exclusion, social inclusion, social isolation, social cohesion, social capital, community participation, marginalisation, and community engagement) – all of which have conceptual, definitional and measurement issues. Multiple quantitative indicators of social isolation exist, as do multiple scales and indexes that measure issues that intersect with social isolation and social exclusion.

To provide a definitive assessment of whether *Opening Doors* is reducing social isolation, a quantitative evaluation approach using validated instruments would have been required.

Drawing upon the Ripple Effect Mapping workshops, we can speculate that *Opening Doors* is contributing to addressing proxy indicators of social isolation as suggested by Zaveleta et al (2014), namely: external social inclusion (e.g. increased the frequency of social contact; increased social network support; increased reciprocity; and volunteering) and internal social isolation (e.g. increased satisfaction with social relations; increased need for relatedness; increased feeling of belonging; decreased loneliness; and increased trust).

3. Benefits to Opening Doors Participants

The Ripple Effect Mapping workshops have confirmed previous evaluations of *Opening Doors* that it is building its participants' leadership capability as demonstrated by:

- Supporting and building its participants' leadership assets and strengths to inspire others to work with them to create a greater sense of community that is inclusive of age, ability and cultural diversity;
- Strengthening its participants' relationships, connections and networks to transform ideas and to design, plan and implement projects to increase social inclusion and address social inclusion issues in their local community;
- Supporting its participants' personal leadership knowledge, skills and resources to use and apply asset/strength-based community development approaches to address the social isolation that people experience.

The workshops have also revealed that *Opening Doors* is developing both the skills and capacity of individuals (leader or human capital development) and the collective capacity of groups and the community (leadership or social capital development).

4. Critical ingredients for success

The Ripple Effect Mapping workshops with both the graduates and Steering Committee members revealed the following key ingredients for the success of *Opening Doors*:

A Coordinator:

- Who has core relational qualities (benevolent, non-judgmental, honest, open, goodwill, reliable, accepting, and personable);
- Who has connections to multiple organisations and networks and know-how;
- Who has lived experience in relation to having been an Opening Doors participant;
- Who has experience putting into practice the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach to community development.

A Program

- that is **free** and based upon the principle of **volunteerism**, and open to local community members with a combination of *self- and other-oriented drivers* for taking action on social inclusion;
- that has a structure, including an initial live-in retreat (providing a safe environment for building relationships), followed by interactive workshops with activities and dedicated spaces and time for reflection; and ending with a graduation that showcases graduates actions and impact of their community-based projects;
- that has content that is pragmatic and practical and includes core resources for building skills and capabilities in: leadership; asset-based community development (ABCD); team building; project development; events and media management. Opening Doors graduates overwhelmingly valued and commented that the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach to community development was a key enabler to the success of Opening Doors, identifying, developing and mobilising existing strengths (assets) in the community, building community networks, and transforming ideas, mindsets, assumptions and expectations into community-based projects to address local needs;
- that is auspiced and supported by a Steering Committee comprised of a network of organisations;
- that is not project-based but designed to build community leaders and leadership;
- that is supported and authorised by a wide spectrum of health, human and social service organisations.

A Post-Program Strategy

- That supports its graduates with social and skill-based opportunities (virtual, face to face, forums) to **maintain and establish new connections, share new knowledge and ideas, and to reflect** with other graduates

5. Reflections on Evaluation Methodology

The Ripple Effect Mapping workshops generated rich evidence about the complexity of *Opening Doors* and the actions and effects resulting from its graduates. As a participatory evaluation method, the Ripple Effect Mapping workshops accentuated the graduates relationships and connections developed while participating in *Opening Doors*. The method assisted graduates to express their voice and illustrate how their ideas were transformed into community-based projects and contributed to creating more socially inclusive communities. The Ripple Effect Mapping workshops also provided graduates with further opportunities to connect with other past graduates.

More specifically the workshops contributed to building social capital among graduates - bonding capital (re-connecting with known graduates) and bridging capital (connecting with new graduates) to put ideas into action. The information from the workshops can inform future evaluations and questions to assist the work of *Opening Doors*.

While the Ripple Effect Mapping methodology has multiple benefits, we acknowledge that a limitation is the risk of bias in participant selection, resulting in selective or incomplete information about outcomes or consequences – both positive and negative. Given the rich, frank and honest views expressed by all graduates in the workshops about *Opening Doors*, we consider the methodology as successful in capturing the diversity of graduate experiences.

Key Emerging Propositions

To optimise the investment and sustainability of *Opening Doors and its ripple effects*, the following propositions could be considered:

Opening Doors Program leadership capacity

1. A shared *Opening Doors* Coordinator model could be considered to enable a shared workload, to build shared trust and a supportive platform for past and current *Opening Doors* Graduates social inclusion leadership;
2. An *Opening Doors* alumni mentoring model could be considered to formally support the Coordinator to support current participants and to reduce the current dependency upon the Coordinator for ongoing support;
3. The role of the *Opening Doors* Steering group as a formal structure to support the *Opening Doors* Coordinator and the Programs ripple effects could be further explored;
4. The role and contribution of Link Health and Community Service as a formal structure to support the *Opening Doors* Coordinator could be further explored.

Opening Doors Program Profile

5. Accrediting and aligning *Opening Doors* with other Leadership programs (e.g. Global Leadership Foundation) could be explored as a way of further providing an explicit public profile for *Opening Doors*;
6. Given that the local community-focused approach of *Opening Doors* was valued by all graduates, promoting the local ripple effects to a broader health, social and community service base could be considered.

Social Inclusion Leadership capacity

7. To sustain the momentum of *Opening Doors* graduates establishing an *Opening Doors* Alumni Community of Interest, facilitated by alumni, to provide social connection and skills-based opportunities (virtual, face to face, forums) could be explored;
8. Investing in an expanded *Opening Doors* social media platform (webpage, facebook etc) to share ideas and action of all past and present *Opening Doors* participant could be considered;
9. Given that *Opening Doors* is a free program, and reliant on volunteers, sustainable strategies to optimise the recruitment and retention of its volunteer community members need to be considered.

Opening Doors Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

10. Given that *Opening Doors* is building community capacity, future evaluations of *Opening Doors* could utilise recognized community capacity building dimensions as an ongoing monitoring and evaluation framework;
11. Given that *Opening Doors* is investing in resources and assets (Capital) the Community Capitals framework could be considered as an ongoing planning, monitoring and evaluation framework;

12. Given that the Ripple Effect Mapping methodology contributes to engaging graduates and illuminating effects, evaluating project specific changes using Ripple Effect Mapping could be considered;
13. To assess definitively whether *Opening Doors* is reducing social isolation, future evaluations of *Opening Doors* could consider utilising Zavelata's et al (2014) social isolation conceptual framework and validated instruments.²

² Zavaleta, D., Samuel, K. & Mills, C. (2014). Social isolation: A conceptual and measurement proposal. *OPHI Working Papers* 67. <http://www.ophi.org.uk/social-isolation-a-conceptual-and-measurement-proposal/>

Introduction

The *Opening Doors Community Leadership Program* for social inclusion ('*Opening Doors*') was established in 2009 in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne, Victoria, to build leaders in local communities with the knowledge, skills, resources and networks to create more socially inclusive communities. *Opening Doors* is modeled on the Leadership Victoria 'Williamson Community Leadership' model based on the notion that investing in a diverse group of community leaders will then give back through their contribution to local projects.³ *Opening Doors* is premised upon the following assumptions:⁴

- Investing in community leaders was likely to have a greater impact than funding individual community projects;
- By building leadership capacity, the program would continue to benefit the community over many years through the contribution of these leaders;
- Potentially isolated people can be hard to reach and grass roots community leaders are more likely to be able to identify and engage those people in their local communities;
- Initial research showed that while agencies were concerned about the impacts of social isolation, their response was often to refer people to other services, rather than linking with local community groups;
- Communities often have the capacity to provide solutions from within their own community, utilising the available assets (both human and physical) without necessarily requiring funding and services;
- By bringing together a diverse group, participants will gain from each other and increase their contacts and networks.

Opening Doors is underpinned by asset-based community development approaches to support community members to become change agents.^{5 6} *Opening Doors* brings together a diverse range of community members of different ages, faiths and cultural and social backgrounds to develop their leadership skills, knowledge and insights about social isolation. While the structure and content of *Opening Doors* is iterative and responsive to the particularly years graduates, it has usually included an initial two to three day live-in retreat, followed by workshops over a six month period on topics including: leadership; asset-based community development; social isolation, team building; project development; events and media management; and ending with a graduation that showcases a sample of graduates community-based projects. A key component of *Opening Doors* is supporting each participant with their newfound knowledge and skills to work within their community to establish local community-based projects to strengthen community cohesion and connectedness. Since 2009 *Opening Doors* has supported 120 graduates to successfully complete the program and generate multiple community-based projects in the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne.

³ Leadership Victoria *Williamson Community Leadership Program*. www.leadershipvictoria.org.au

⁴ Held, R. (2011). *Opening Doors: A community leadership program for social inclusion*. Evaluation Report. Inner East Primary care Partnership. http://iepcp.org.au/sites/default/files/Report%20IESII%20Evaluation%20Final_0.pdf

⁵ Kretzmann, J. P., & McKnight, J. L. (1993). *Building communities from the inside out: a path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets*. Evanston, Ill.: Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research, Northwestern University. <http://www.abcdinstitute.org/publications/basicmanual/>.

⁶ Kretzmann, J. P. (2010). *Asset-based strategies for building resilient communities*. In J. W. Reich, A. Zautra & J. S. Hall (Eds.), *Handbook of adult resilience*. New York: Guilford Press

In 2015 the auspice and Steering Committee of *Opening Doors* funded the University of Melbourne to assess the impacts and benefits of *Opening Doors* to its graduates and beyond, and to identify the critical ingredients for the success of *Opening Doors*. More specifically, the proposed research question was:

***How successful has the Opening Doors leadership program
been in reducing social isolation?***

The key objectives of the evaluation included:

- *To capture and describe the long term impacts of the program in reducing social isolation;*
- *To capture the ways in which the program has been of benefit to the participants;*
- *To identify the critical ingredients for success of the program;*

To ensure that the evaluation methodology and findings are contextualised this next section presents a brief overview of impact evaluation approaches appropriate for evaluating community development program such as *Opening Doors*.

Evaluating changes in individuals, groups, organisations, or communities resulting from community development programs are recognised as being challenging, yet demonstrating impacts is critical for continued investment.⁷ Community development programs traditionally seek to empower the community, recognising and valuing diversity, and build upon the individual and local community strengths. Adhering to the interdependence principle of systems theory and ecological theory, planned multilevel community interventions often create unanticipated ripples in the community; which either go unobserved, unappreciated, or simply undocumented.⁸ Traditional impact evaluation, experimental, and other quantitative methods are difficult to implement in efforts to document the effectiveness and outcomes of community-based development programs. Furthermore, experimental and other quantitative methods often provide limited insights into the process that brought about change or the context of change observed as a result of the community development programs.

Other approaches to impact evaluation exist including:

- **Objectives-based evaluation:** Investigating whether the stated objectives of the program have been achieved;
- **Needs-based evaluation:** Identifying the needs which the program responded to and investigate to what extent those needs have been met;
- **Goal-free evaluation:** Taking an arms-length 'open' approach, considering any effects;
- **Theory-based evaluation:** Using program logic to establish expected outcomes and investigate to what extent those outcomes have been achieved;
- **Participatory evaluation:** Participatory approaches are intended to empower beneficiaries by enabling them to shape decisions which affect their lives;
- **Counterfactual impact evaluation:** Comparing the difference between what happens in the presence of the program with what occurs in the absence of the program.

There is no one right way to conduct an impact evaluation. What is needed is a combination of methods and designs that suits the particular situation. When choosing these methods and designs,

⁷ Rennekamp, R. A., & Arnold, M. E. (2009). What progress, program evaluation? Reflections on a quarter-century of Extension evaluation practice. *Journal of Extension*, 47(3): <http://www.joe.org/joe/2009june/comm1.php>

⁸ Trickett, EJ (2009). Multilevel Community-Based Culturally Situated Interventions and Community Impact: An Ecological Perspective. *American Journal of Psychology*. 43:257-266.

three issues need to be taken into account: the available resources and constraints; the nature of what is being evaluated; and the intended use of the evaluation. Appropriate impact evaluation design requires situational responsiveness – matching the design to the needs, constraints, and opportunities of the particular case.⁹ Patton (2006) has argued that it is important to maximize community engagement by involving communities in evaluation methods that inform and motivate them.¹⁰ Ripple Effect Mapping has recently emerged as a participatory qualitative impact evaluation method suited for the evaluation of community development programs.¹¹

Evaluation Methodology

Given that *Opening Doors* is a *community development* leadership program, empowering community leaders, recognising and valuing diversity, and building on individual and local community strengths, to address the research question and evaluation objectives, **Ripple Effect Mapping** was chosen as the participatory qualitative impact evaluation approach.

Ripple Effect Mapping (REM) uses elements of appreciative inquiry, mind mapping, and qualitative open-ended group interviewing to engage program participants and other community stakeholders to reflect upon and visually map the intended and unintended changes produced by programs.¹² REM is not only a powerful technique to document impacts, but a way to engage and re-energize program participants, increasing the likelihood of future collective action.¹³

Three approaches to Ripple Effect Mapping exist:

1. 'Web mapping' where the group session examines short-term, medium-term, and long-term impacts and maps them directly onto a mind map;
2. 'In-depth rippling' where the group session focuses on the deepest and most impactful chains of events; and
3. 'Theming and rippling' where the group session captures the breadth of reporting impacts from all participants, generates impact themes, and examines ripples once themes are generated.

Ripple Effect Mapping is traditionally conducted in five key steps:

1. **Schedule a Ripple Effect Mapping Workshop** involving participants from the program. A group of 8-15 is recommended.
2. **In the Ripple Effect Mapping workshop** conduct interviews using Appreciative Inquiry questions to start the conversation. Appreciative Inquiry is a group facilitation method that invites people to reflect on the most positive aspects of a situation. At the start of a ripple effect mapping session, participants pair up and interview each other about ways they or their organisation were positively affected by the leadership course. The interviews serve as an ice-breaker to prepare participants for the group mapping session.

⁹ Rogers, PJ (2009). Matching impact evaluation design to the nature of the intervention and the purpose of the evaluation. *Journal of Development Effectiveness*. 1(3): 217–226

¹⁰ Patton, M.Q. (2006) Evaluation for the Way We Work. *The Nonprofit Quarterly*. Vol. 13 (1): 28-33.

¹¹ Kollock, DA (2011). *Ripple effects mapping for evaluation*. Washington State University Curriculum. Pullman, WA

¹² Kollock, DA (2011). *Ripple effects mapping for evaluation*. Washington State University Curriculum. Pullman, WA.

¹³ Baker, B., Calvert, M., & Emery, M. (2011). Mapping your impact in the community. *National 4-H Council Engaging Youth Serving Community: Tools for Evaluation of Your EYSC Project*. Retrieved from <http://fyi.uwex.edu/youthadulthoodpartnership/2012/05/30/tool-for-mapping-community-impac> Nathaniel, K., & Kinsey, S. (2013). Contributions of youth engagement to the development of social capital through community mapping. *Journal of Extension*, 51, 1.

3. **In the Ripple Effect Mapping workshop hold a group mapping session.** The core of a Ripple Effect Mapping session involves group mapping – a process of brainstorming and recording the effects (the ‘ripples’) of an initiative – either through mind mapping software or notes taped to a wall. This process engages the entire group and enables participants to see the connections among project or program effects (as well as to continue building personal relationships). Ideally a facilitator and a mapper co-lead the mapping session, which lasts from one to two hours. The resulting ‘map’ visually depicts the ripple effects of the initiative.
4. **After workshop conduct follow-up interviews** with course participants, executive sponsors or key organisation members to supplement ripple effect map (e.g. enablers and barriers, what else require to sustain changes etc).
5. **Clarify, code, and analyse data.** After the session, the evaluator codes and analyses data into short-term, medium-term or longer-term changes drawing upon the visual ripple effects map.

Ripple Effect Mapping has been used to evaluate multiple community development programs. For example, Ripple Effect Mapping was used to conduct an impact evaluation of the Horizons program, an 18-month community-based program delivered to strengthen leadership to reduce poverty.¹⁴ Ripple Effect Mapping has also been used to evaluate the impacts of youth programs on building social capital.¹⁵ Ripple Effect Mapping enabled the youth program participants to describe the connections they've built, as well as what these connections led to. The limitations of Ripple Effect Mapping are the risk of bias in participant selection and in data collection. The assembled participants may also not have complete information about all the outcomes of a program and may not provide examples of negative consequences.

Due to resource and time constraints an adapted Ripple Effect Mapping process was used, with three key steps:

Step 1: Schedule Ripple Effect Mapping workshop with:

- *Opening Doors* Steering Committee members from: Link Health and Community; Inner East Primary Care Partnership; Carrington Health; and Deakin University. This workshop served to provide contextual information for the evaluation.
- *Opening Doors* Graduates. Given that since 2009 there have been 120 *Opening Doors* graduates, approximately 20 participants annually, to capture the diversity in graduate experiences (not necessarily representativeness) a two-tier sampling framework was used. Potential *Opening Doors* graduate evaluation participants were initially clustered by *Opening Doors* Coordinator into three groups upon graduation year: 1) 2009 - 2011; 2) 2012 - 2013; 3) 2014 - 2015, and then selected based on their; personal features (age, faith, cultural background), whether they were linked to an organisation, and the type of community project developed. Based upon these criteria 58 *Opening Doors* graduates were identified and invited via email by the *Opening Doors* Coordinator to participate in one Ripple Effect Mapping workshop, lasting approximately 90 minutes. Graduates were provided with 12 possible workshop sessions to choose from to optimise attendance. Upon agreement, the evaluator emailed the graduates - thanking them for agreeing to participate, confirming

¹⁴ Welborn et al (2016) Turning the Tide on Poverty: Documenting impacts through Ripple Effect Mapping, *Community Development*, 47:3, 385-402, DOI:10.1080/15575330.2016.1167099

¹⁵ Baker, B and Johannes (2013). Measuring social capital using ripple mapping. *New Directions for Youth Development*. 138: 31-47; Welborn et al (2016). Turning the tide on poverty: Documenting impacts through ripple effect mapping. *Community Development*. 47:3, 385-402

workshop date and time, and including a plain language statement, a consent form and a workshop outline.

Step 2: Conducted Ripple Effect Mapping Workshops with the *Opening Doors* Steering Committee and then *Opening Doors* graduates to brainstorm and map the ripple effects of *Opening Doors*. To set the scene, all workshops participants were initially asked to reflect upon a statement: '**Creating a Culture of Social Inclusion**' using a framework: values, symbols, practices and systems. This activity was then followed using a workshop outline (**Appendix A**) that posed the following five questions:

1. What **drivers** for taking action on social inclusion exist?
2. What **actions** have *Opening Doors* graduates taken to create more socially inclusive communities?
3. What **changes** have *Opening Doors* graduates noticed specifically related to social inclusion?
4. What **enablers and barriers** exist to the *Opening Doors* program?
5. What is required to **sustain the changes** in socially inclusive communities?

Step 3: Transcribe and analyse data: After all the Ripple Effect Mapping workshops, audio-recorded discussions were sent to an independent transcribing service to be transcribed. The transcripts were then analysed using the constant comparative thematic analysis approach.¹⁶

The evaluation received ethics approval from The University of Melbourne Human Ethics Advisory Group.

Opening Doors Program Logic Model

To assist in clarifying how *Opening Doors* worked and refining the funded evaluation plan, questions and data collection methods, a program logic model (**Appendix B**) was developed in February 2016. Program logic models provide visual representation of the assumptions about how a program is supposed to work, and the causal linkages between context, inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes.¹⁷

¹⁶ Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of Qualitative Research. Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. London

¹⁷ Funnell S. (1997). Program logic: An adaptable tool for designing and evaluating programs, *Evaluation News and Comment*; 6 (1)

Evaluation Findings

This section presents the evaluation findings, organised into three sections:

1. *Opening Doors* graduate evaluation participants
2. Impact of *Opening Doors* in the community
3. *Opening Doors* contextual factors (enablers and barriers).

Opening Doors Graduates Evaluation Participants

A total of 58 *Opening Doors* graduates were identified and invited by the *Opening Doors* Coordinator to participate in the Ripple Effect Mapping workshops. Of these 26 (49%) actually participated in the workshops, or 22% of the 120 total graduates across the last six years. As can be seen from **Table 1**, the individual workshops were small in size and had a diverse composition in terms of year graduated and gender.

Graduate evaluation participants were: predominantly female (n=17), reflecting *Opening Doors* participant profiles; from across all seven year levels (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015) - although more of the recent graduates agreed to participate in the workshops. While this is not shown in **Table 1**, graduates were also from a range of ages, faiths, cultural backgrounds, and were predominantly not employed or formally linked to an organisation.

(Please note: the size and composition of the Ripple Effect Mapping workshops, were beyond the sphere of control of the evaluator and reflects the availability of graduates to participate in the scheduled workshops)

Table 1: Opening Doors Graduate Evaluation Participant Profile

Workshop Group Participants (n=26) Year and Gender	Female (F) (n=17)	Male (M) (n=9)	Key drivers for taking action on social inclusion exist and participating in <i>Opening Doors</i> ?	Illustrative Quotes
Group 1: N=4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009 - M • 2011 - F • 2013 - M • 2015 – M 	1	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wanted to act on human rights issues • Wanted to learn • We can act on social isolation • Increasing accessibility is an issue • Want to learn about community developments approaches 	<p><i>...I stopped thinking about myself. I thought what I can do for others? And that's where all my projects started coming out.</i> Male Graduate 2013</p> <p><i>My only reason for doing [Opening Doors] was that I was angry when I read the leaflet, that people weren't included. They were excluded. That people were left out.</i> Female Graduate 2014</p> <p><i>My motivation was that I had personally experienced depression and I have found a mentor who helped me with that.</i> Female Graduate 2015</p> <p><i>I felt a strong desire to support her in her work. Then Opening Doors was an extension of wanting to do that. I've definitely been able to support her and the whole organisation and myself.</i> Female Graduate 2015</p>
Group 2: N=3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2014 - F • 2015 x 2 F, F 	3	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having personal depression • Having a passion for people and food • Wanted to connect • Wanted to volunteer • Being angry and want to act 	
Group 3: N=3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2012 x 2 - F, F • 2015 – F 	3	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build my network • Wanted to learn what is in my community • Wanted to provide opportunities for others • Want to do community-based projects 	
Group 4: N=3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2014 - M • 2015 x 2 - F, F 	2	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to seniors and young people • Personal family issues – disability • Already volunteers • Wanted to give back 	
Group 5: N=6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2011 - F • 2012 - M • 2013 x 3 - M,M,M • 2015 – F 	2	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create happiness amongst people, to join them together and fill the gap in their life • Personal and life experiences • Wanted to network • Wanted to give back 	
Group 6: N=4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2010 - F • 2015x3 - F,F,M 	3	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wanted to learn the ABCD community development approach • Want to use psychological skills more • Wanted to increase awareness about social inclusion • Wanted to move ideas into projects • Wanted to address stigmas 	
Group 7: N=3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2011 - F • 2012 - F • 2013 - F 	3	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal experiences • Wanted to improve my leadership skills • Wanted to make ideas happen • Wanted to give back • Wanted to learn the ABCD approach • Wanted to make a difference and to socialise 	

Graduates also had a broad range of motivations for taking action on social inclusion and participating in *Opening Doors*. As can be seen in Table 1, graduates had in-depth personal life stories and journeys that led them to become receptive and ready for *Opening Doors*. Key drivers for taking action can be summarised into self- or other-oriented drivers, within which there are five domains.

Self-oriented drivers

1. **Enhancement** – seeking to feel needed and good about themselves (*giving back; want to lead a valued life; have anger but want to act; want to do*);
2. **Career** – seek to obtain benefits to assist them with employment opportunities (*with new networks new employment opportunities exist*).

Others oriented drivers

3. **Values** – seeking to express humanitarian values through actions (*act on rights issues – human, disability, abuse; want to increase access; recognise diversity of community – young, old*);
4. **Understanding** – seeking to learn more about the world, other people and develop their own skills (*desire to learn what is in the community; family situation- social role valorisation – disability; want to learn; learn about new roles*);
5. **Social** – seeking to build or reinforce bonds with others (*social isolation – empathy; develop local community-based networks*).

The Ripple Effect Mapping workshop with the *Opening Doors* Steering Committee revealed a similar array of self- and other-oriented drivers/motivations for taking action on social inclusion and participating in *Opening Doors*, including:

- Self-oriented: (for personal growth; to build and enable capability building to transform ideas into reality)
- Others oriented: (to innovate in a flexible supportive environment; to match ideas with resources; to belong; to do justice; to support those with ideas, money and resources; to put social inclusion in action; to put strength-based approaches supporting change into practice).

Impact of Opening Doors

This section provides findings from the Ripple Effect Mapping workshops, firstly from *Opening Doors* graduates and then from the *Opening Doors* Steering Committee.

Opening Doors Graduates perspectives

The seven Ripple Effect Mapping workshops with the 26 *Opening Doors* graduates generated extensive insights into the multiple impacts of participating in *Opening Doors*. **Table 3 - Table 9** provides a summary of the self-reported impacts within each workshop at three levels:

- Ripple 1: (Specific actions taken by Graduates);
- Ripple 2 (Who benefitted and how?);
- Ripple 3 (How has the community changed?).

This template (i.e. table structure) for reporting Ripple Effect Mapping is based upon previous evaluations of community development programs that have used the Ripple Effect Mapping methodology.¹⁸ **Appendix C** provides an example of a Ripple Effect Mapping report table.

Please note: given that only 26 graduates (22% of all graduates) participated in the REM workshops, the actions and ripples are not an exhaustive list but illustrative of the spectrum of ripples or impacts and value of *Opening Doors*.

Please note: when graduates were asked about specific actions they had taken, most graduates mentioned their specific project (e.g. Parent support Groups; Welcome Dinners project; Black dog project; GROWSAIL, U3A, Transfamily, Teen Dinners, WALKs; Monash Men's Shed etc). However, several graduates commented that even though their 'idea' had not developed into a 'Project' worthwhile actions still occurred.

Please note: Ripple Effect Mapping workshops were not project specific, but designed to capture the diversity of graduate experiences and effects of participating in *Opening Doors*.

¹⁸ Welborn et al (2016) Turning the Tide on Poverty: Documenting impacts through Ripple Effect Mapping, *Community Development*, 47:3, 385-402, DOI:10.1080/15575330.2016.1167099

Table 3: REM Workshop 1: Self-reported Impacts of Opening Doors (n=4):

Ripple 1 (Specific actions taken by Graduates)	Ripple 2 (Who benefitted and how?)	Ripple 3 (How has the community changed?)	Illustrative Quotes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Championed Broadband access for Seniors Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved access to computers for older residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased respect for elders 	<p><i>The biggest action which I did - I stopped thinking about myself. I thought what I can do for others?</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chaired RDNS Community Participant Advisory Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocated for greater community participant involvement to RDNS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased confidence of community members 	<p>Male Graduate 2013</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approached Vision Australia for keyboard enlargements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved access to computers for visually impaired residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared stories Increased networks and connections to address social isolation 	<p><i>It gave them somewhere to share their stories. It gave them somewhere to feel non-judged, supported...it was very respectful - everyone's got their own experience and everyone has got an equal right to share their experience, or not share if they choose not to.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gave presentations on diabetes self-management for Diabetes Australia Victoria Branch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved knowledge about diabetes self-management amongst local church group members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broadened viewpoints in the community about social exclusion Increased participation in volunteering 	<p>Female Graduate 2011</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established parent support groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased connections amongst parents who may be at risk of social isolation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased lateral thinking about acting on social inclusion 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended other community members to apply for <i>Opening Doors</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased opportunities for community members to reduce social isolation 		

Table 4: REM Workshop 2: Self-reported Impacts of Opening Doors (n=3)

Ripple 1 (Specific actions taken by Graduates)	Ripple 2 (Who benefitted and how?)	Ripple 3 (How has the community changed?)	Illustrative Quotes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established a committee to support the delivery of the Black Dog Community Art Exhibition; supporting people with mental ill-health (anxiety and depression) Inspired artists who participated in The Black Dog to develop an Arts and Culture Collective Created a questionnaire asking the community about peoples’ reactions to anxiety and depression; generating statements to produce a book for the broader community, schools and nursing homes Applied for a community development position in a health organisation to support people with chronic mental illness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empowered and increased self-esteem of people with anxiety and depression to be heard, informed and have a voice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empowered and inspired people with anxiety and depression through art Reduced stigma for people with mental ill-health Built leadership capacity, empowering people living with anxiety and depression Increased opportunities to employment for people living with anxiety and depression 	<p><i>Opening Doors was a safe environment. They nurtured my confidence and my strengths. The strengths-based teaching was really significant for me and I've used that with my clients. I do work on that way. It's had a real ripple effect on my clients. So it's built their confidence. I didn't know I could publicly speak until I... was on the course.</i> Female Graduate 2015</p> <p><i>The idea of the welcome dinner project is to bring people together...a lot of people to Australia, migrants, refugees, anyone who comes, and to connect them with established Australians over a dinner in local homes.</i> Female Graduate 2015</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established connections with the existing Welcome Dinner Project Organised a Welcome Dinner in Narre Warren for 25 migrants and refugees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connected newly arrived migrants and refugees with established Australians 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased connections between migrants and refugees and Australians in the local community Increased awareness of local community leaders about the value of Welcome Dinners as a way to promote social inclusion 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established partnership between Women’s Health, Benevolence Australia and Migrant Information Centre to understand what 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness of health services about Muslim women’s experiences of care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Built knowledge about social inclusion at a local level and developed practical skills to apply in promoting social inclusion 	

Muslim women experienced when engaging with health services			
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Table 5: REM Workshop 3: Self-reported Impacts of *Opening Doors* (n=3)

Ripple 1 (Specific actions taken by Graduates)	Ripple 2 (Who benefitted and how?)	Ripple 3 (How has the community changed?)	Illustrative Quotes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported the development of a three year plan for Benevolence Australia, including the creation of an outdoor garden space for the whole community Applied for funding to grow fresh produce in outdoor garden at Benevolence Australia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Built self-esteem of <i>Opening Doors</i> participants to establish new connections with Benevolence and the broader Muslim community Supported <i>Opening Doors</i> graduates to volunteer at Benevolence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brought people together through outdoor garden Increased volunteering Supported the advocacy work of Benevolence Australia to increase social inclusion amongst members of the Muslim community 	<p><i>I basically had quite clear project ideas. So the project was really about creating a three year plan for Benevolence in terms of the garden space out the back and really making it more inviting.</i> Female Graduate 2015</p> <p><i>Opening Doors really helped me to build my self-esteem, because my self-esteem had gone really - become really low... It really helped me to just know that there were other people who were like me. I wasn't on my own and they were really, really kind, gentle people who were willing to nurture me.</i> Female Graduate 2015</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created a neighbourhood information resource about local services and businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased knowledge of new families about how to access local services and businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing local community know-how about access local community services and businesses Increased feeling of belonging in the local community 	<p><i>I have no doubt that the increase in self-esteem and confidence is absolutely a take home on an individual level. Opening Doors is very, very powerful for that. Also in terms of, not so much confidence, but having to harness your motivation to then go on and do something with it.</i> Female Graduate 2015</p>

Table 6: REM Workshop 4: Self-reported Impacts of Opening Doors (n=3)

Ripple 1 (Specific actions taken by Graduates)	Ripple 2 (Who benefitted and how?)	Ripple 3 (How has the community changed?)	Illustrative Quotes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitated Indian Senior Citizens Association to connect and work more collaboratively to promote social inclusion • Applied for and was elected President of the Indian Senior Citizens Association • Identified and accessed facilities within the local community for project work • Established ‘MyStory’ in the Indian Senior Citizens Association – sharing the most memorable part of our lives • Connecting with other Seniors Organisations – Chinese, Greek, African • Connecting with the Aboriginal Community to involve them in the annual Indian Senior Citizens Association multicultural day celebration • Participated in fellow graduate’s program RightClick- a program to bring seniors and school children together to teach seniors how to be technology savvy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness amongst Indian Senior Citizens about social isolation and ways to promote social inclusion • Increased knowledge and connections between the Indian Senior Citizens Association and other senior organisations from other cultures • Built connections amongst a community of like-minded people who are passionate about social inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built networks and connections between local community organisations • Creating opportunities to connect Senior organisations from all cultures • Increased knowledge and skills 	<p><i>Opening Doors gave me a platform to work towards the goals that I wanted to achieve in my life. That was to create happiness amongst people, to join them together and probably fill the gap in their life that they had formed as a result of either isolation or their circumstances they were in...’</i></p> <p>Male Graduate 2015</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided on-sea experiences in leadership and team-building through the Grow Sail Project • Worked with refugees, asylum seekers and other at risk groups through the Grow Sail Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased self-esteem and confidence within refugee, asylum seeker and other at risk groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refugees and asylum seekers are now better connected to their communities, and have a deeper understanding of their leadership and collaborative abilities 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established the Stop, Unwind Sing program (an unstructured community choir with a focus on social connection and fun) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased local community health, well-being and connections through singing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leading and creating change within local communities through singing (choirs) 	
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Table 7: REM Workshop 5: Self-reported Impacts of Opening Doors acts of Opening Doors (n=6)

Ripple 1 (Specific actions taken by Graduates)	Ripple 2 (Who benefitted and how?)	Ripple 3 (How has the community changed?)	Illustrative Quotes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed a community-based program to help ex-offenders navigate their return into the community after jail Built platform to view life through an asset-based community development approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided a platform for a disadvantaged community to have a voice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased volunteering Increased local connections Increased awareness about how stigma effects recidivism rates amongst ex-offenders 	<p><i>...the project was basically around creating more awareness for the general community around disability issues. I would go and talk to different groups, different demographics, different ethnicities, the whole lot, kids, adults, whoever would listen basically about my life story, and how to be an inclusive group rather than a segregated group... I think a sense of respect and appreciation of what each person brings and looking at what is possible, that there is a lot of potential in your ideas and what can be made to happen.</i> Female Graduate 2012</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created awareness in the community around disability issues via giving talks and involvement in public relations Running public campaigns and testing public transport for accessibility issues Contributed to formulation of Doncaster Public Transport Policy re; access and equity issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocated for access and equity for people with disability Improved access to public transport and provided a voice for those who have experienced accessibility challenges Increased awareness about disability access and equity issue amongst local organisations (local government, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness about disability access and equity issue amongst the general community 	

Table 8: REM Workshop 6: Self-reported Impacts of Opening Doors (n=4)

Ripple 1 (Specific actions taken by Graduates)	Ripple 2 (Who benefitted and how?)	Ripple 3 (How has the community changed?)	Illustrative Quotes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitated the running of a depression and anxiety support group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of group felt better supported and understood, with particular reference to their mental health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of group feel more empowered in the community, and community organisations have a deeper understanding of mental illness 	<p><i>Some of the ripple effects have been about educating the other people in the community. We've got parents in tears. Parents have been crying. Because there's finally somewhere safe for them to go...So the parents are happy and now we've got funding so we've prevented some of the financial barriers. But the flow on effects, the staff are all vying to actually work for the event [TeenDinners] because they're all seeing that it's quite a powerful event to be a part of.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established the 'Pathways for Carers' project in Maroondah, The Yarra Ranges and Manningham Participated on Boards in a voluntary capacity (Association for Children with Disabilities; Interchange Outer East; Maroondah Disability Advisory Committee) Established Parent support Group for parents of children with autism at schools Established TeenDinners for parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created a space (via TeenDinners) for parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) to feel safe, be heard, become informed and have a voice Created an opportunity (via WALKS) for carers, service providers to learn about support and services available Carers with anxiety and depression feeling more comfortable to see service providers Increased knowledge and connections (via TeenDinners) between service providers and parent of children with ASD and carer issues Informed key Disability organisations about the needs of parents of children with (ASD) and carers in general Learned how to write business plans to obtain sponsorships / grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased knowledge, understanding and acceptance of parent of children with ASD and carer issues Empowered parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and carers Gave parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) hope Increased volunteering in the community Existing and emerging community leaders feel empowered, educated and connected 	<p><i>Female Graduate 2015</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established The Youth Collaboration Network, enabling the largest and most active organisations who engage with youth to share their learnings and experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitated non-government organisations (St Vincent De Paul Society, Salvation Army and Jesuit Social Services) to collaborate to support youth leaders to work together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created a culture of leadership which encourages youth to participate Increased collaboration amongst organisation to support youth leaders 	

Table 9: REM Workshop 6: Self-reported Impacts of Opening Doors (n=3)

Ripple 1 (Specific actions taken by Graduates)	Ripple 2 (Who benefitted and how?)	Ripple 3 (How has the community changed?)	Illustrative Quotes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established a support group (Transfamily) for parents of transgender people and other family members Wrote book for parents of transgender people and other family members Spoke to Monash University trainee Doctors about Transfamily and the issues facing parents of trans children Connected to Benevolence Australia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved awareness and advocated for parents of transgender people and other family members Helped to remove stigma among people with mental ill-health Helped clients to better recognise the own needs Increased knowledge and acceptance about transgender people among next generation of doctors Improved awareness and understanding about transgender people in organisations (eg DonCare, Benevolence Australia) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness and contributed to building a culture of acceptance among the general community for transgender people Increased advocacy for the rights of transgender people Empowering others to become advocates in their world Increased connections amongst and between communities 	<p><i>I found that those young trainee doctors had very little knowledge about transgender people and how they might treat them if they came into their office...I believe this is a ripple effect. Those young doctors will now go out into their world as they're educated and ... they're certainly more aware and they knew nothing. They knew nothing about the families.</i></p> <p>Female 2012 Graduate</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established 'Pleasures of the pen' project to connect older people Established 'Poetry at the lodge' (Aged Care Facility) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved written communication skills of older people in Aged care Facilities Connected community members at risk of isolation via a shared love of the written word 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased communication amongst older people 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established a storytelling workshop for people who have experienced harm from gambling addiction Produced a book which shares the stories of people who have experienced harm from gambling addiction / problem gambling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empowering people struggling with gambling addiction to find their voice on the journey to recovery and to become advocates for change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increase in the depth of understanding of the risks of gambling, as well as the challenges and stigmas faced by those who have experienced harm from pokies (EGMs) 	

Opening Doors Steering Committee perspectives

The Ripple Effect Mapping workshop with the *Opening Doors* Steering Committee also revealed insights into the impacts of *Opening Doors*. **Table 10** provides a summary of comments made by Steering Committee members when asked about the impacts of *Opening Doors*.

Table 10: Summary of *Opening Doors* Steering Committee Members Reported Impacts of *Opening Doors*

- Increased general awareness about *Opening Doors* in the sector via greater recognition and media
- Unintended consequences – e.g. an *Opening Doors* graduate got married, and she started teaching
- *Opening Doors* is broader than projects – i.e. projects are a bi-product and part of the process
- *Opening Doors* is a learning program
- Broader support for *Opening Doors* e.g. police officer attended graduation
- *Opening Doors* Project are what we see - just tip of the iceberg - ripple effects are invisible intangible - changing relationships and perceptions
- *Opening Doors* has provided opportunities for community members to embrace
- *Opening Doors* involves a long term commitment, as often graduates do things after the program. i.e. the trajectory of change or what *Opening Doors* leads to/facilitates or effects - is not linear

Opening Doors Contextual Factors: Enablers/barriers

This section provides findings from the Ripple Effect Mapping workshops, with regard to the enablers and barriers facing *Opening Doors* and its impacts; firstly from the *Opening Doors* graduates, and then the Steering Committee.

Opening Doors Graduates perspectives

Opening Doors graduates reported multiple **enablers (Table 11)** and **barriers (Table 12)** facing *Opening Doors* and its impacts that can be summarised at an: individual, program, organisational, and systems level.

Table 11: Summary of Enablers facing *Opening Doors*

Level	Enablers	Illustrative Quotes
Individual	The Coordinator qualities, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competent; benevolent; non-judgmental; networker; honest; open; goodwill; reliable; accepting; personable • Having lived experience • Having been an <i>Opening Doors</i> participant 	<i>I think credit where credit is due. The Coordinator has been quite outstanding in terms of being very responsive to everyone's differences and what they're bringing to the table. He's been very understanding... I think that he does exude the fact that he's a warm, open, engaging person. He does want people to flourish. He does want to motivate people. They're things that are definitely good.</i> <p>Female Graduate 2012</p>
Organisational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Opening Doors</i> structure (Live-in retreat, followed by workshops); Content – Global Leadership Foundation Speaker; • The ABCD community development approach; • Auspiced and supported by a Steering Committee with committed members and not only one organisation 	<p><i>... the asset-based community development approach. For me, it was something that changed my opinion about lots of things in my life.</i></p> <p>Female Graduate 2015</p>
Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Opening Doors</i> connected to multiple organisations and networks 	

Table 12: Summary of Barriers facing *Opening Doors*

Level	Barriers	Illustrative Quotes
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time limitations, limited Coordinator capacity to support all past & present graduates Dependency on Coordinator for graduates knowledge, transfer and exchange; volunteer fatigue Ripples are often not visible 	<p><i>People do become very dependent on [the Coordinator] and the boundaries between doing your job and being a personal friend and if he becomes a personal friend of 30 people per year, so what's that since 2012 to '16? As much as he's a warm and generous person, he probably doesn't have quite enough room for everyone in his life. I think that because everything is put out on the table you think that you have that bond is to some degree created.</i></p> <p>Female Graduate 2012</p> <p><i>The barrier I'm thinking of is for people who work full time whose work wouldn't support it.</i></p> <p>Female Graduate 2015</p> <p><i>We know Opening Doors is fantastic and we know it makes a huge difference, but if maybe business understand the value that they could get from it as a reciprocal relationship they probably would jump all over it.</i></p> <p>Female Graduate 2012</p>
Organisational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Opening Doors</i> needs to have a balance between structure, activities and reflections Variable organisational support for participants who work full-time 	
Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited evidence of the explicit monetary value of <i>Opening Doors</i> exists <i>Opening Doors</i> is not accredited nor aligned with other Leadership programs 	

Opening Doors graduates also made multiple suggestions to sustain *Opening Doors* and its effects that can be summarised into two levels:

Table 13: Summary of Graduates Strategies to Sustain *Opening Doors* and its effects

Level	Illustrative Quotes
<p>Individual level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to have a shared Coordinator position Need to provide social and skill-based opportunities for graduates (virtual or face to face) for graduates to get together Need to provide a follow-up one year after the program for graduates Need to have structured feedback opportunities for graduates <i>Opening Doors</i> alumni could support more current participants 	<p><i>Keeping people engaged with it.</i></p> <p>Female Graduate 2015</p> <p><i>There's almost room for a mentoring role to some degree... that would work really well actually: someone from a past previous year, because you have an inkling of what participants would be thinking.</i></p> <p>Female Graduate 2015</p>
<p>Program level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need funding to support graduates to get together Need to provide opportunities (via website or face to face) for graduates to share ideas of all past and present <i>Opening Doors</i> participants need to establish networking opportunities to sustain momentum 	<p><i>Share the growth and keep the motivation because even today simply being in the same room as [Graduate] I've gone oh yeah I remember that feeling. Oh yeah, yeah, yeah</i></p> <p>Female Graduate 2012</p> <p><i>I think ongoing networking opportunities would be brilliant. Maybe quarterly events, dinners or having a guest speaker or something for everybody who's done Opening Doors</i></p>

- need to provide evaluative and reflective spaces for graduates

Female Graduate 2012

This is where the Coordinator needs more support I think. You could almost have a Facebook group that supports each other, like an alumni group. Social media. It would be great to have more contact with people. As [Graduate] said, just us being in the room together is - I'm feeling really inspired and enthusiastic and it's just one person. Imagine if we had 10 people.

Female Graduate 2015

Opening Doors Steering Committee perspectives

The *Opening Doors* Steering committee members mentioned the following enablers and barriers facing *Opening Doors* and its effects:

Table 14: Summary of Enablers and Barriers facing *Opening Doors* from Committee Members

Enablers	Barriers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Opening Doors</i> is a communal investment • <i>Opening Doors</i> is designed as leadership program, not project-based –i.e. it does not matter if the project does not get off ground – it is the lived experience of <i>Opening Doors</i> that matters • The people and their passion • The community development frame • <i>Opening Doors</i> committee is resilient i.e. responsive to almost going under • <i>Opening Doors</i> is not in a box • <i>Opening Doors</i> is targeted - it is not just aimed at vulnerable people, but to all who are dedicated to increasing social inclusion • Peer support for <i>Opening Doors</i> program Senior (e.g. Police officer who came to support his officer who did the <i>Opening Doors</i> program) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Opening Doors</i> is not their (e.g. local government) idea • <i>Opening Doors</i> has no official status nor ongoing funding • <i>Opening Doors</i> does not fit in a box –thus hard to secure funding - a paradox • Need engagement strategies to create a wider net out there to inform people and organisations about <i>Opening Doors</i> • Need to resource <i>Opening Doors</i> graduate voices • Need to explore Social Inclusion Committee providing a structure for <i>Opening Doors</i> • Need authorising environment for <i>Opening Doors</i> to demonstrate its value

Opening Doors Steering committee members also mentioned multiple strategies that are key to sustaining *Opening Doors* and its effects, including that *Opening Doors* requires:

- a dedicated, committed ongoing Coordinator to inspire and support participants and graduates
- a Steering Committee that auspices it as a network (not one organisation owning it) and supports its members coming and going – as ongoing commitment
- the Program to be seen as a vocation and not a job
- a high profile
- graduates lived experiences and go-get nature
- sustainability is about the values, the people, the resources and the outcomes of *Opening Doors*.

Synthesis and Discussion of Evaluation Findings

This section synthesises and discusses the evaluation under four headings:

1. Impact of *Opening Doors*;
2. Benefits to *Opening Doors* Participants;
3. Critical ingredients for success;
4. Reflections on evaluation methodology.

Impact of Opening Doors

This section initially synthesises evaluation findings in relation to the impact of *Opening Doors* in the community and then on reducing social isolation.

Please note: given that only 26 graduates (22% of all graduates) participated in the REM workshops, the actions and ripples are not an exhaustive list but illustrative of the spectrum of ripples or impacts and value of *Opening Doors*.

Please note: the Ripple Effect Mapping workshops were not project specific, but designed to capture the diversity of graduate experiences and effects of participating in *Opening Doors*.

Impact in the Community

The Ripple Effect Mapping workshops with the 26 *Opening Doors* graduates reveal that since 2009 *Opening Doors* has successfully recruited and supported a diverse group of local community leaders to transform participants' ideas into projects to create more socially inclusive communities.

Opening Doors graduates have taken multiple actions to create more socially inclusive communities that can be summarised into three levels:

- **Individual level:** established multiple projects; championed access issues; established connections, accessed facilities; advocated for *Opening Doors*; applied for and obtained employment positions;
- **Organisational level:** established structures, committees and partnerships; contributed to strategic planning processes; took up advisory roles on disability organisations; took up leadership roles in senior citizen organisations; supported strategic plans; contributed to disability access policies; and
- **Community level:** applied for funding to conduct projects; established and facilitated support groups; developed resources (books) for communities; connected community groups.

Opening Doors has benefitted multiple individuals and communities, including: older people; Indian senior citizens; people with visual impairment; people with chronic disease such as diabetes; parents in general; parents with children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD); people with anxiety, depression and mental illness; newly arrived migrants; refugee children; transgender people; parents of transgender families; people with gambling addictions; ex-offenders; people with a disability; and carers of people with health conditions or other social disadvantage.

The benefits for communities can be clustered into five categories, including:

- Access - Increased access to technology ;
- Knowledge- increased knowledge of health conditions, local services; support systems for carers;
- Capabilities - increased self-esteem; increased confidence;

- Advocacy - increased spaces to be heard and have a voice for carers, parents of children with ASD, people with anxiety and depression, parents of transgender families;
- Connections - increased connections between newly arrived migrants and local Australians.

Opening Doors has also benefitted health professionals (e.g. trainee doctors); health service organisations (e.g. RDNS); cultural specific organisations (e.g. Indian Senior Citizens Association); Residential Aged Care organisations (e.g. DonCare); non-government organisations (e.g. St Vincent's De Paul; Jesuit Social Services); local government organisations (e.g. Maroondah City Council).

The benefits for those professionals and organisations can be clustered into two main categories:

- Knowledge – increased knowledge of issues facing: carers; parents of children with ASD; ex-offenders; people with a mental illness, people with disabilities, and parents of transgender families.
- Connections & Collaborations - increased connections and collaborations between Senior Citizen Associations; non-government organisations to support youth leadership.

Opening Doors is contributing to changes in the broader community that can be clustered into eight domains:

1. Increasing the awareness and knowledge of factors that contribute to social isolation, social exclusion and those factors that promote social inclusion
2. Increasing the quality and number of relationships, connections, networks and collaborations
3. Increasing ideas, viewpoints, mindsets, and ways of thinking about social inclusion using asset-based community development approaches
4. Increasing the leadership capabilities - increased empowerment, confidence and advocacy
5. Increasing the level of participation and engagement of marginalized local communities
6. Increasing the level of respect and acceptance of people who are marginalised and socially excluded from society
7. Increasing the level of belonging and decreasing the level of loneliness of marginalized communities
8. Increasing the level of volunteering, generosity, goodwill and benevolence - giving back to others

Overall these evaluation findings confirm previous evaluations of *Opening Doors* by Held (2011) which identified two key outcomes of *Opening Doors*, namely: increased participant's leadership knowledge, skills and confidence to engage with communities; and establishment of community-based projects to strengthen community connectedness and reduce social isolation in local neighbourhoods across the inner east catchment of Melbourne.¹⁹

The Ripple Effect Mapping evaluation workshops further revealed that *Opening Doors* is contributing to building community capacity as demonstrated by:

- development local leadership; improving community participation; improving local assessment of problems and assets; improving local resource mobilization; strengthening local community connections/collaborations/partnerships; building local structures; and building local project capabilities.

¹⁹ Held, R. (2011). *Opening Doors: A community leadership program for social inclusion*. Evaluation Report. Inner East Primary care Partnership. http://iepcp.org.au/sites/default/files/Report%20IESII%20Evaluation%20Final_0.pdf

The Ripple Effect Mapping evaluation workshops have further revealed that *Opening Doors* is contributing to building community capacity (defined as the *community groups ability to define, assess, analyse and act on health (or any other) concern of importance to their members*) as demonstrated by:

- development of local leadership;
- improving community participation
- improving local assessment of problems and assets;
- improving local resource mobilization
- strengthening local community connections/collaborations/partnerships
- building local structures
- building local project capabilities.²⁰

Future evaluations of *Opening Doors* could utilise recognized community capacity building dimensions as an ongoing monitoring and evaluation framework.

The Ripple Effect Mapping workshops also demonstrated that *Opening Doors* is building social capital, by building trust amongst its participants and enhancing their willingness to act upon ideas, and by increasing their self-empowerment to then do for others. Putnam (1995) defined social capital as - features of social life – networks, norms and trust – that enable participants to act more effectively to pursue shared objectives.²¹ Social capital as ‘collective action’ has three major components or pre-conditions: trust, social networks and civic engagement. The workshops also demonstrated how the *Opening Doors* model and approach builds multiple types of trust between its participants and the Coordinator. *Opening Doors* utilises horizontal networks as a vehicle for trust, as information about the trustworthiness of other people becomes spread.

The findings from the Ripple Effect Mapping workshops and the design of *Opening Doors* (i.e. to build leaders in local communities with the knowledge, skills, resources and networks) also resonate with the work on Community Capitals.²² Capital has been described as any type of resource capable of producing additional resources. When those resources or assets are invested, they become capital. Community capitals are all of the things in a community that have the potential to be a resource that can be invested, saved, or used up.²³ Seven types of community capital have been identified that can be used to gauge how community resources are being used: Natural Capital; Cultural Capital; Human Capital; Social Capital; Political Capital; Built Capital; and Financial Capital. **Figure 1** provides a visual representation and **Appendix D** provides further details. The Community Capitals framework has been used as a framework to plan, implement and evaluate community development programs, while also using Ripple Effect Mapping to capture the voices of community members.

Future evaluations of *Opening Doors* could utilise the Community Capitals framework as an ongoing planning, monitoring and evaluation framework.

²⁰ Gibbon, M; Labonte, R and Laverick, G. (2002). Evaluating community capacity. *Health and Social Care in the Community*. 10(6):485-491.

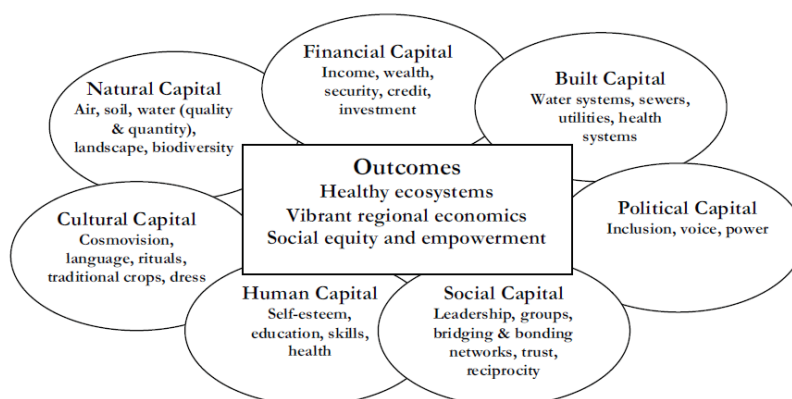
²¹ Putnam, RD . (1995). Bowling alone: America's declining social capital. *Journal of Democracy*, 1: 65-78.

²² Jacobs, C. (2011). Measuring success in communities: Understanding the Community Capitals Framework. *Extension Extra*, 16005. Retrieved from <http://agron-www.agron.iastate.edu/Courses/agron515/CapitalsExtension%20Extra.pdf>

²³ Emery, M., S. Fey, C. Flora. 2005, Using Community Capitals to Develop Assets for Positive Community Change. Community Capitals Framework: Research, Evaluation and Practice Conference, Ames, Iowa.

Figure 1: Visual Representation of the Seven Types of Community Capital²⁴

The seven types of community capital can also be depicted by the following model:



Impact on Reducing Social Isolation

Based on the collective impact of the *Opening Doors* graduates projects, actions and ripples in the community, one could surmise that *Opening Doors* is contributing to reducing social isolation. However, caution is required if making a 'cause and effect' judgment. As a community development and empowerment program, *Opening Doors* is designed to influence multiple social phenomena - social exclusion; social inclusion; social isolation; social cohesion; social capital; community participation; marginalisation and community engagement - all of which have conceptual, definitional and measurement issues.

In the next section we reflect briefly upon the concepts and definitions of social isolation; social capital; social exclusion and social inclusion, and then the challenges in measuring social isolation.

While **social isolation** is described as a deprivation of social connectedness, numerous definitions of social isolation exist due to diverse sociological and psychological theories. Social isolation definitions have been categorised into those that seek to employ objective measures (number of relationships, social interactions, extent of networks) and subjective measures (quality of interactions, feelings of loneliness).^{25 26} Zavaleta et al's definition of social isolation reflects the multi-dimensional nature of social isolation: '*the inadequate quality and quantity of social relations with other people at the different levels where human interaction takes place (individual, group, community and larger social environment)*'.²⁷

Social capital is also a key *Opening Doors* concept which has multiple definitions. Social capital refers to social networks that are based on trust and reciprocity that enable people to collectively resolve

²⁴ Jacobs, C. (2011). Measuring success in communities: Understanding the Community Capitals. Framework. *Extension Extra*, 16005. Retrieved from <http://agron-www.agron.iastate.edu/Courses/agron515/CapitalsExtension%20Extra.pdf>

²⁵ Cattan, M., White, M., Bond, J., & Learmouth, A. (2005). Preventing social isolation and loneliness among older people: A systematic review of health promotion interventions. *Ageing & Society*, 25, 41–67.

²⁶ Findlay, R., & Cartwright, C. (2002). Social isolation and older people: A literature review. Brisbane: Australasian Centre on Ageing, University of Queensland.

²⁷ Zavaleta, D., Samuel, K. & Mills, C. (2014). Social isolation: A conceptual and measurement proposal. *OPHI Working Papers* 67. <http://www.ophi.org.uk/social-isolation-a-conceptual-and-measurement-proposal/>

common problems and achieve common goals.²⁸ Social capital is also usually described as having three key components; bonding social capital (refers to trusting social connections between members of a network that build on commonalities and homogeneity in terms of their shared social identity); bridging social capital (refers to relations of respect across diverse social groups); and linking social capital (refers to alliances between communities and individuals or groups who are interacting across explicit, formal or institutionalised authority).²⁹

Social exclusion and inclusion relate to patterns of social integration, one's living situation and patterns of everyday social contact, and on well-being and feelings of loneliness. **Social exclusion** has also been defined in a multitude of ways. For example, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions defined social exclusion as *'the process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from full participation in the society within which they live'*.³⁰ While theories of social exclusion provide insights for understanding the level of connectivity of a person, Silver (2007) argues that one cannot separate the exclusion of a group from the evaluation of the quality of social relationships.³¹ Social Inclusion is also a complex, dynamic and multidimensional process about participation, equal opportunity, and empowerment and has been defined as having the resources, opportunities and capabilities to learn, work, engage and have a voice.^{32 33 34}

Challenges with defining social isolation, social exclusion, social inclusion, and social capital has led to the wide use of multiple indicators and proxies for their measurement. Furthermore, while many interventions seeking to reduce social isolation have been implemented, few evaluations of the effectiveness, sustainability and long term benefits of interventions exist. Zavaleta et al's review identified fifty potential indicators to provide data on social isolation.³⁵ In the literature there are also multiple measures or indicators of social isolation including: feelings of loneliness; low level of social contacts; gender; and mobility restrictions. Multiple scales and indexes that measure issues that intersect with social isolation and social exclusion also exist, that draw from loneliness scales; social capital indicators; well-being indicators; quality of life indicators and social isolation indicators.

²⁸ Stone, W. (2001). *Measuring social capital: Towards a theoretically informed measurement framework for researching social capital in family and community life Melbourne* (Research Paper No. 24). Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies.

²⁹ Putnam, R. D. (2001). Social capital: Measurement and consequences. *Isuma: Canadian Journal of Policy Research*, 2, 41–51

³⁰ Deakin, N., Davis, A., & Thomas, N. (1995). *Public welfare services and social exclusion: The development of consumer oriented initiatives in the European Union*. Dublin: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

³¹ Silver, H. (2007). *The process of social exclusion: the dynamics of an evolving concept*. Rhode Island, Chronic Poverty Research Centre, Brown University

³² Symth, P. (2010). *In or out? Building an Inclusive Nation*. www.australiancollaboration.com.au

³³ Morrison, Z (2010). *On dignity Social inclusion and the politics of recognition*. www.public-policy.unimelb.edu.au

³⁴ Australian Social Inclusion Board (2013). *Social inclusion in Australia: How Australia is faring*. At <http://www.socialinclusion.gov.au/resources/how-australia-is-faring>

³⁵ Zavaleta, D., Samuel, K. & Mills, C. (2014). Social isolation: A conceptual and measurement proposal. *OPHI Working Papers* 67. <http://www.ophi.org.uk/social-isolation-a-conceptual-and-measurement-proposal/>

Zavaleta et al's review proposed a conceptual framework (two domains: external and internal social isolation), proxy indicators, and instruments for measuring social isolation:

1. **External social isolation:**

- Frequency of social contact
- Social network support
- Reciprocity and volunteering

2. **Internal social isolation**

- Satisfaction with social relations
- Need for relatedness
- Feeling of belonging to one's own neighbourhood
- Loneliness
- Trust.³⁶

To provide a definitive assessment of whether *Opening Doors* is reducing social isolation, a quantitative evaluation approach using validated instruments would have been required.

Drawing upon the Ripple Effect Mapping workshops, we can speculate that *Opening Doors* is contributing to addressing proxy indicators of social isolation as suggested by Zavaleta et al, namely: external social inclusion (e.g. increasing the frequency of social contact; increasing social network support; increasing reciprocity and volunteering) and internal social isolation (e.g. increasing satisfaction with social relations; increased need for relatedness; increased feeling of belonging; decreased loneliness and increased trust).

Future evaluations of *Opening Doors* could consider utilising Zavelata et al's social isolation conceptual framework and validated instruments to assess whether *Opening Doors* is reducing social isolation.

The complexity of the concepts and evaluation task was also evident right from the beginning of the Ripple Effect Mapping workshops. As mentioned previously the Ripple Effect Mapping methodology was designed to capture not only the 'effects/ripples' but the experiences of graduates, which the evaluator explored at the start of both the Graduates and Committee Members Workshops by providing a scene setting statement (***Creating a Culture of Social Inclusion***) and a framework: values, symbols, practices and systems, and asking for reflections. As can be seen in **Appendix F**, overall, the scene setting activity worked well - with participants providing multiple insights into what a 'Culture of Social Inclusion' looked like and encompassed.

Benefits to Opening Doors Participants

The Ripple Effect Mapping workshops have confirmed previous evaluations of *Opening Doors* that *Opening Doors* is building its participants' leadership capability as demonstrated by:

- Supporting and building its participants' leadership assets and strengths to inspire others to work with them to create a greater sense of community that is inclusive of age, ability and cultural diversity;

³⁶ Zavaleta, D., Samuel, K. & Mills, C. (2014). Social isolation: A conceptual and measurement proposal. *OPHI Working Papers* 67. <http://www.ophi.org.uk/social-isolation-a-conceptual-and-measurement-proposal/>

- Strengthening its participants' relationships, connections and networks to transform ideas and design, plan and implement projects to increase social inclusion and address social inclusion issues in their local community;
- Supporting its participants' personal leadership knowledge, skills and resources to use and apply asset/strength-based community development approaches to address social isolation that people experience.

Given that considerable time, money and resources has been invested into *Opening Doors* as a Community Leadership Program for social inclusion, a brief reflection with regard to the conceptualisation of leadership development programs and the link to social capital and community leadership is appropriate here. *Opening Doors* is a community leadership program currently targeted at community leaders. However, differing types of leadership development programs exist, due to differences between a 'leader' and 'leadership development'. Traditional conceptualisations of leadership (e.g. transformational leadership) emphasise individual leaders – therefore, training programs that seek to improve individual skills and abilities are referred to **leader development or human capital development**. Whereas, programs that develop collective leadership capacity of groups, organisations or community should be referred to as **leadership development programs or Social Capital development**.³⁷

The workshops have revealed that *Opening Doors* is developing both the skills and capacity of **individuals (leader or human capital development)** and the collective capacity of groups and the **community (leadership or social capital development)**. To further develop and sustain the capacity of *Opening Doors* to create more socially inclusive communities, a continued focus upon leader/human capital and community/social capital development is required.

The Ripple Effect Mapping workshops also revealed that *Opening Doors* is facilitating and inspiring **volunteerism** among its graduates and beyond - as it has produced benefits for the volunteers themselves, the recipients of their services, the organisations for which they work or engage with, the community, and the broader society.³⁸ Given that *Opening Doors* is a free program, the reliance on volunteers is increasing, the recruitment and retention of volunteers is a continual challenge, and there is a steady decrease in weekly voluntary contributions of time and efforts. *Opening Doors* needs to reflect upon strategies to optimising the recruitment and retention of its volunteer community members.

³⁷ Day, D. V. (2000). Leadership development: A review in context. *Leadership Quarterly*, 11(4), 581(33).

³⁸ Stukas, AA; Hoye, R; Nicholson, M; Brwon, KM; Aisbett, L (2016). Motivations to volunteer and their associations with volunteers well-being. *Non-profit and voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 45(1): 112-132.

Critical ingredients for success

The Ripple Effect Mapping workshops with both the graduates and Steering Committee members revealed the following key ingredients for the success of *Opening Doors*:

A Coordinator:

- Who has core relational qualities (benevolent; non-judgmental; honest; open; goodwill; reliable; accepting and personable)
- Who has connections to multiple organisations and networks and know-how
- Who has lived experiences in relation to having been an *Opening Doors* participant
- Who has experience putting into practice the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach to community development

A Program:

- that is **free** and based upon the principle of **volunteerism**, and open to local community members with a combination of *self- and other-oriented drivers* for taking action on social inclusion
- that has a **structure**, that includes an initial live-in retreat (providing a safe environment for building relationships), followed by interactive workshops with activities and dedicated spaces and time for reflection; and ending with a graduation that showcases a graduates actions and impact of their community-based projects
- that has **content** that is pragmatic and practical and includes core resources for building skills and capabilities in: leadership; asset-based community development (ABCD); appreciative enquiry; team building; project development; events and media management. *Opening Doors* graduates overwhelmingly valued and commented that the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach to community development was a key enabler to the success of *Opening Doors*, identifying, developing and mobilising existing strengths (assets) in the community, building community networks, and transforming ideas, mindsets, assumptions and expectations into community-based projects to address local needs.
- that is **auspiced and supported** by a Steering Committee comprised of a network of organisations
- that is not project-based but designed to **build community leaders and leadership**
- that is **supported and authorised** by a wide spectrum of health, human and social service organisations

A Post-Program Strategy:

- that supports its graduates with social and skill-based opportunities (virtual, face to face, forums) to **maintain and establish new connections, share new knowledge and ideas, and to reflect** with other graduates.

Reflections on Evaluation Methodology

This section briefly reflects upon the Ripple Effect Mapping evaluation methodology, and the *Opening Doors* Program Logic Model developed in February 2016.

Ripple Effect Mapping

The Ripple Effect Mapping workshops have generated rich qualitative evidence about the complexity of *Opening Doors* and the actions and effects resulting from its graduates. The workshops revealed how the evaluation methodology has an effect on the group dynamics. Graduates generated energy as they participated in the workshops - often assisting them envisioning their personal and community impact, while sharing and collecting words and relationships for sharing the self-

reported impacts of their *Opening Doors* projects. The Ripple Effect Mapping workshop accentuated the graduates relationships and connections developed while participating in the *Opening Doors*. As a participatory evaluation method, the Ripple Effect Mapping workshops assisted the graduates to express their voices and show how their ideas were transformed into community-based projects that contribute to creating more socially inclusive communities. The workshops expanded graduates range of thinking about how far their impact was reaching and the difference they were making. Ripple Effect Mapping workshops also provided graduates with further opportunities to connect with other past graduates. More specifically the workshops contributed to building social capital among *Opening Doors* graduates - bonding capital (re-connecting with known graduates) and bridging capital (connecting with new graduates) to put ideas into action.

An initial Ripple Effect Map was produced in May 2015 based upon a preliminary analysis of the workshop transcripts (**Appendix E**). However, given the complexity of *Opening Doors* the draft Ripple Effect Map has not been used formally to illustrate the *Opening Doors* Ripple effects – rather, the Ripple Effect Mapping Template (**Table 3 - Table 9**) have been used. While the Ripple Effect Mapping workshops have not generated individual, community or project specific *Visual Ripple Maps*, the information generated from the workshops can inform future evaluations and questions to further the work of *Opening Doors* to create more socially inclusive communities.

While the Ripple Effect Mapping methodology has multiple benefits, we acknowledge that a limitation is the risk of bias in participant selection, resulting in selective or incomplete information about outcomes or consequences - both positive or negative. Given the rich, frank and honest views expressed by all graduates in the workshops about *Opening Doors*, we consider the methodology as successful in capturing the diversity in graduate experiences. We also acknowledge that given that the size and composition of the graduate workshops were beyond the sphere of control of the evaluator, year specific or project-specific Ripple Effect Mapping workshops may have generated more in-depth information about the specific actions and impacts resulting from the projects.

Opening Doors Program Logic Model

Reflecting upon the *Opening Doors* Program Logic Model developed in February 2016 (**Appendix B**), the Ripple Effect Mapping workshops reveals and provides evidence that:

- The hypothesised program logic underpinning *Opening Doors* is confirmed. The hypothesised **contextual factors** were confirmed, and expanded upon and remain key issues needing to be recognised including: the importance of the Coordinator core qualities (has lived experience, competent, benevolent, non-judgemental, honest, trustworthy; personable); the networked-based nature of *Opening Doors*; the dependency by graduates upon the Coordinator; limited monetary value of *Opening Doors*; and lack of accreditation and/or alignment to other leadership programs.
- The hypothesised **project inputs** necessary for *Opening Doors* to be implemented were also confirmed and expanded including: asset-based community development approach; importance of Steering Committee leadership and commitment; Coordinator with lived experience, commitment and core qualities; and the endorsement by the social, health and community services sectors and agencies.
- The hypothesised **activities** were also reinforced. The Ripple Effect Mapping workshops revealed how the activities were interdependent (i.e. not mutually exclusive) in other words - it is difficult to identify any causal or direct/linear links between activities (program balanced with structure, activities and reflection space; program links to social, health and community service networks; and the importance of having an asset-based community

development program) and actual outputs. It is the cumulative impact of the activities that initially creates the **SPLASH (outputs)** and then the **RIPPLE effects (outcomes)**.

- *Opening Doors* has created a **SPLASH**; i.e. outputs/actions at three levels: **individual** (established connections, accessed facilities; advocated for *Opening Doors*; applied for/obtained jobs); **organisational** (established structures; contributed to strategic planning processes; taken up advisory roles); and **community** (taken up leadership roles; developed resources, e.g. books, Transfamily, gambling) level.
- The short evaluation time frame limits our ability to comment on intermediate and long-term **Outcomes** achieved so far. However, the workshops revealed that *Opening Doors* is creating **multiple transformative and incremental ripples** that can be summarised into **self-oriented ripples** (increased awareness, ideas, opportunities, networks, confidence, self-esteem, empowerment, knowledge, skills; voice, community connections; shift to asset/strength-based thinking, being, and doing) and **others-oriented ripples** (increased doing for others, awareness of marginalised communities; supported others to share stories; developed/supported/stimulated others to participate social inclusion initiatives (e.g. Teen Dinners; Transfamily, U3A); empowered staff, parents, carers, clients etc; created authorising environment within organisations for social inclusion).

Key Emerging Propositions

To optimise the investment and sustainability of *Opening Doors* and its ripple effects, the following propositions could be considered:

Opening Doors Program leadership capacity

1. A shared *Opening Doors* Coordinator model could be considered to enable a shared workload, to build shared trust and a supportive platform to support past and current *Opening Doors* Graduates social inclusion leadership;
2. An *Opening Doors* alumni mentoring model could be considered to formally support the Coordinator to support current participants and to reduce the current dependency upon the Coordinators for ongoing support;
3. The role of the *Opening Doors* Steering group as a formal structure to support the *Opening Doors* Coordinator and the program's ripple effects could be further explored;
4. The role and contribution of Link Health and Community Service as a formal structure to support the *Opening Doors* Coordinator could be further explored.

Opening Doors Program Profile

5. Accrediting and aligning *Opening Doors* with other Leadership programs (e.g. Global Leadership Foundation) could be explored as a way of further providing an explicit public profile for *Opening Doors*;
6. Given that the local community focused approach of *Opening Doors* was valued by all graduates, promoting the local ripple effects to a broader health, social and community service base could be considered.

Social Inclusion Leadership capacity

7. To sustain the momentum of *Opening Doors* graduates establishing an *Opening Doors* Alumni Community of Interest, facilitated by alumni to provide social connection and skill-based opportunities (virtual, Face to face, forums) could be explored;

8. Investing in an expanded *Opening Doors* social media platform (webpage, facebook, etc) to share ideas into action of all past and present *Opening Doors* participant could be considered;
9. Given that *Opening Doors* is a free program relying on volunteers, sustainable strategies to optimise the recruitment and retention of its volunteer community members need to be considered.

Opening Doors Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

10. Given that *Opening Doors* is building community capacity, future evaluations of *Opening Doors* could utilise recognized community capacity building dimensions as an ongoing monitoring and evaluation framework;
11. Given that *Opening Doors* is investing in resources and assets (Capital) the Community Capitals framework could be considered as an ongoing planning, monitoring and evaluation framework;
12. Given that the Ripple Effect Mapping methodology contributes to engaging graduates and illuminating effects, evaluating project specific changes using Ripple Effect Mapping could be considered;
13. To assess definitively whether *Opening Doors* is reducing social isolation, future evaluations of *Opening Doors* could consider utilising Zavelata et al's (2014) social isolation conceptual framework and validated instruments.³⁹

³⁹ Zavaleta, D., Samuel, K. & Mills, C. (2014). Social isolation: A conceptual and measurement proposal. *OPHI Working Papers* 67. <http://www.ophi.org.uk/social-isolation-a-conceptual-and-measurement-proposal/>



Appendix A: Ripple Effect Mapping Workshop

Opening Doors Ripple Effect Mapping Workshop Outline (90 mins)

Facilitator: Dr Lucio Naccarella, PhD, The University of Melbourne

1. Introductions (10 mins) (All)

2. Overview of workshop: purpose of the mapping and objectives (5 mins- Lucio)

The University is leading an impact mapping evaluation project to better understand the ripple effects of the *Opening Doors* Program upon its participants and beyond.

3. Drivers for Taking Action on Social Inclusion (15 mins) (All)

What were the main reasons for enrolling in *Opening Doors*?

4. Actions taken to support social inclusions (15 mins) (All)

What actions, if any, have you taken to create more socially inclusive communities

5. *Opening Doors* Ripple Effects (20 mins) (All)

What changes, if any, have you noticed specifically related to social inclusion?

6. Contextual factors influencing Ripple Effects (20 mins) (All)

What enablers and barriers exist to the *Opening Doors* program?

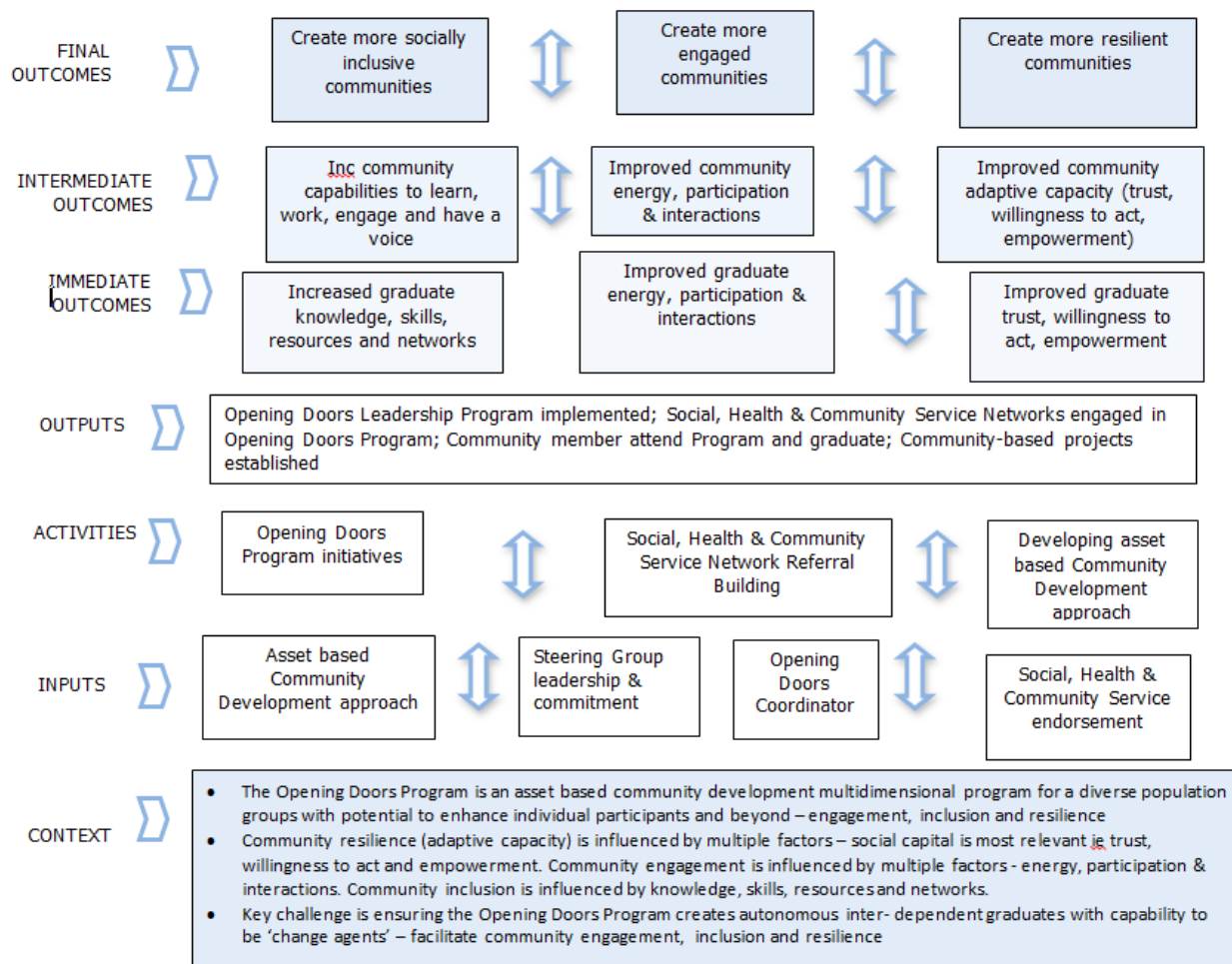
What is required to sustain the changes in socially inclusive communities

7. Close: Reflections & Thank you (10 mins) (All)

Thank you for your time and commitment.

For further information please contact: Lucio Naccarella l.naccarella@unimelb.edu.au

Appendix B: Opening Doors Program Logic Model



Evaluative Questions

Primary

- What makes the Opening Doors Programs work for whom and in what circumstances?
- To what extent is *Opening Doors* creating a ripple effect within and beyond the Program graduates?

Secondary

- What **drivers** for taking action on community engagement, social inclusion & resilience?
- What **actions** have *Opening Doors* graduates taken to create more engaged, socially inclusive & resilient communities?
- What **changes** have *Opening Doors* graduates noticed related to community engagement, social inclusion & resilience?
- What **enablers and barriers** exist to the *Opening Doors* program?
- What is required to **sustain the changes** in community engagement, social inclusion & resilience?

Appendix C: Ripple Effect Mapping Reporting Template - Examples Only

From: Welborn et al (2016) Turning the Tide on Poverty: Documenting impacts through Ripple Effect Mapping, *Community Development*, 47:3, 385-402, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15575330.2016.1167099>

Table 2. Self-identified greatest accomplishments by community through the Ripple Effect Mapping process conducted for Turning the Tide on Poverty.

Location	Ripple 1 – Specific actions taken	Ripple 2 – Who benefited and how?	Ripple 3 – “Big picture” community change
Mississippi 3	C Increased volunteerism	<u>S Learned what other agencies do</u>	S Built trust
	<i>B Built walking trails</i>		<u>S Fostered an attitude of people helping people</u>
	<u>S Came together to solve a problem</u> P Built an awareness of poverty and interest in change		
Alabama 2	<i>F Established the Alabama 2 Community Development Corp</i>		<u>S Increased communications and partnerships</u>
	<i>B Created a health and fitness trail</i>		H Helped us understand the process of improvement
	N Coordinated a community cleanup		
	H Began an education program for youth		
Mississippi 1	<i>H Expanded a food pantry</i>	S Increased youth involvement and leadership	<u>S Increased collaboration/ reduced overlap of services</u>
	<i>F Retained Walmart resources in community</i>	F Secured school uniforms for children	
	<i>S Created a resource guide</i>		
Florida 1	S Established a youth coalition	<u>S Discovered what everyone brings to the table</u>	
	H Empowered Spanish speakers to take part in community dialog	C Worked together	
	H Trained emerging leaders		
Mississippi 5	H Learned to voice opinions	<u>S Fostered better communication</u>	
	<i>S Generated a resource guide</i>		
Louisiana 2	S Established community social media channels	<u>S Enhanced connections and opportunities through partnerships</u>	C Generated a culture of “We are in it for everyone”
	<i>F Provided scholarships for youth</i>		C Opened eyes to new ideas
	H Mentored youth with Walmart and in schools		B Put Louisiana 2 on the map
	<i>B Began work on converting church building to an art gallery</i>		
			F Established sustainable structure

Notes: Each unique site in the Tide initiative was assigned a number to protect confidentiality. Thus “Mississippi 1” is a unique location from “Mississippi 3,” for example. Letter to the left of items designates the capital to which it was attributed (B = Built, C = Cultural, F = Financial, H = Human, N = Natural, P = Political, S = Social). Italicized text indicates concrete actions taken as a result of Tide. Underlined text indicates evidence of increased connections among people and organizations.

From: Baker B & Johannes EM (2013) Measuring Social Capital Change using Ripple Mapping, in Calvert M, Emery M, & Kinsey S (eds), *New Directions for Youth Development: Youth Programs as Builders of Social Capital*, New Directions for Youth Development, no. 138.

Figure 2.4. Reporting template

Name of group: “Respect Team”

Location (town/city and state): Small Town, Maine

Facilitator (name): Extension Educator

Number of participants: youth: 1, adults: 1

Notes about group members: Respect Team Youth Leader and the Respect Team Adult Leader were present.

Notes about activity(s): Camp Weekend issue ID and planning; bullying prevention; substance abuse speaker and mock crash; Wellness Day

After the mapping activity was over, the youth leader said about the mapping: “Being part of Respect Team helped me learn skills and develop traits. But the most important thing I learned was the power an individual student can have and the changes he or she can make. When a promise is made, Respect Team does it 100% with a feeling of empowerment, accomplishment, and success. One feels comfortable stepping into the community of CEO’s, Superintendents, and Legislators and being the person leading the Summit.” In reply, the adult leader said, “And his statement is exactly why I do it!”

Short-term change: How have you changed the community?	Who benefits and how?	Systems and long-term changes in the way community groups and institutions do things	Types of people connected
(N, H) State 4-H Camp Weekend Team Leadership Building: We changed ourselves to be ready to change the community.	(N, H) Our team developed confidence and leadership	Circle for bonding social capital	Respect Team; youth-adult partnership
(C) Bullying prevention: Programs at elementary schools with puppets	(C) Positively affected kids in schools with positive behavior changes. One bully’s actions stopped after two teens talked to him. It was “painful.”	(C) Created a younger Respect Team to carry on the same type of work: “Stopping it where it starts, when it’s young—prevent” △ Triangle for new relationships; ☆ Star for most significant change	Respect Team, younger Respect Teams, students in classrooms, whole school community
(H, S, P) Substance abuse and mock crash: Attended alcohol awareness workshop with speaker at local hospital.	Respect Team brought in speaker to school: Presenter with a true story that changed the life of one girl on drugs in high school	Respect Team planned and implemented a mock crash: ☆ Star for most significant change Worked with a lot of people News coverage	Police, National Guard, emergency, schools, hospitals used facilities, actors, life flight, parents and community members, entire student body, Respect Team
(H) Wellness Day at middle school: Healthy foods to overall wellness, arts, physical, healthy cooking, substance abuse, self-esteem	(B, C, S) Collaboration with “Healthy Small Town Hills” [mostly adult group] (B, N, P, F, H, S) Service-learning and community leadership school class; Respect Team	Youth no longer in limited school groups; learned youth-adult partnerships [service-learning class instituted because of previous Respect Team project results] △ Triangle for new relationships	Public groups Service-learning class

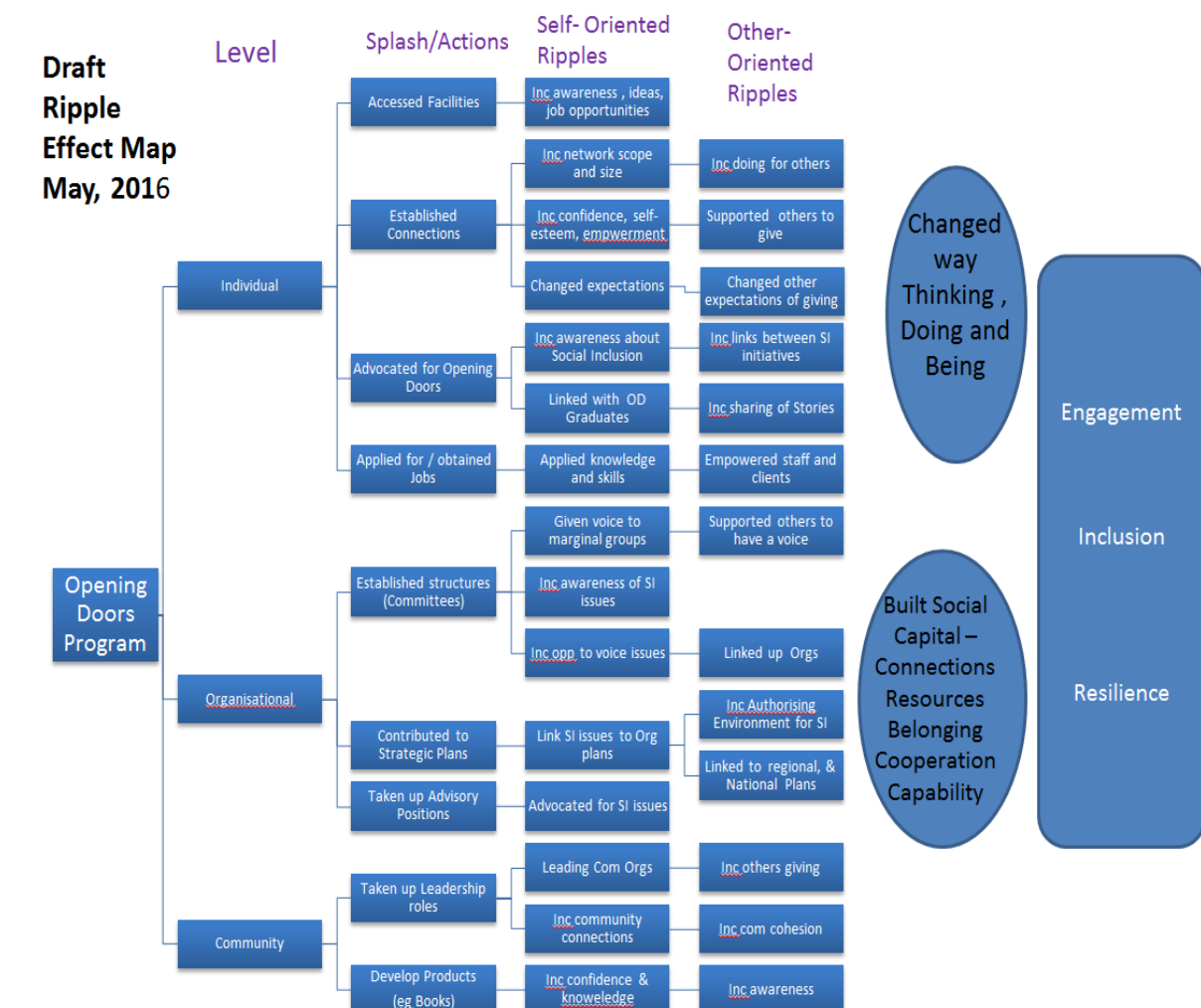
Appendix D: Community Capitals Framework

Appendix B. Handout used for Ripple Effect Mapping exercise: The seven types of community capitals

Types of capital	Definition	Examples
Natural	The quality and quantity of natural and environmental resources existing in a community	Parks, lakes, rivers, wildlife, forestland, farmland, mountains, and other natural resource features
Cultural	The values, norms, beliefs, and traditions that people inherit from the family, school, and community. Also includes material goods produced at a specific time and place (such as paintings, books) that have historical or cultural significance	Cultural events/festivals, musical heritage, libraries, museums, multi-lingual populations, historical associations
Human	Attributes of individuals that provide them with the ability to earn a living, strengthen community, and otherwise contribute to community organizations, to their families, and to self-improvement (Flora, Flora, & Fey, 2003). It includes access to education and knowledge development, training and skill building activities, and efforts to build and expand local leadership	Formal and informal educational institutions, workforce training programs, adult and youth leadership programs, lifelong learning activities
Social	Connections existing among people and organizations that help make things happen in the community. Includes close ties that build community cohesion (bonding), as well as weaker ties with local and outside people and organizations that help promote broad-based action on key matters (bridging)	Activities that build trust among people and groups of different races and ethnic backgrounds, citizen involvement in community discussions and events, community celebrations or parades, involvement in civic and service groups, organizations that link diversity of people and organizations together
Political	The ability to influence and enforce rules, regulations, and standards. Access to individuals and groups with the power to influence decisions. Participating in civic discourse on difficult public issues. Laws and regulations that support sound community/economic development	Elected and appointed government officials; citizen participation in issue forums; congressional representatives and staffers; political organization leaders; voting rates in local, state, and national elections; local/state laws and regulations
Financial	The variety of financial resources available to invest in local projects or economic development initiatives. Efforts to build wealth to support community development activities	Community foundations, grants, micro-loan programs, revolving loan funds, community development financial institutions, banks
Built	Represents the infrastructure of the community – the basic set of facilities, services, and physical structures needed by a community	Broadband and other information technologies, utilities, water/sewer systems, roads/bridges, business parks/incubator facilities, hospitals/healthcare buildings, main street buildings, housing stock

Sources: Flora and Flora (2008); Flora et al. (2003); Jacobs (2011a, 2011b, 2011c, 2011d); Flage and Hauser-Lindstrom (2007); Emery, Fey, and Flora (2006).

Appendix E: Initial Draft Ripple Effect Map (May, 2015)



Appendix F: Reflections on Creating a Culture of Social inclusion

Graduates Comments	Committee members Comments
<p>Culture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it can be a dividing force • need culturally valued dialogue <p>Values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respect • pride • integrity • stand for acceptance • she'll be right • free from prejudice • shared values • celebrate diversity • multicultural society <p>Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it's about what you do not say • how you treat people • its history • unspoken mindsets • aware of exclusion • welcome • creating a space/environment • an inviting space • habits • exclusion • engagement • like-minded • shared value • creates a platform; <p>Symbols:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stories/narratives • wheelchair access • CALD awareness • reconcile; <p>Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it's about connections • it's about networks 	<p>Culture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • culture is diverse and based upon love of humanity • equality and equity of race, religion, background and circumstances • people are free to reach their full potential <p>Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being appreciative • individuals have a place • commitment to making a difference • acknowledging and celebrating differences/diversity • acceptance of difference • empowering • values that bind • embracing others • understanding differences • valuing lived experience of people in community • spirit of care • missing others - being misses <p>Symbols:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feeling included – being an insider • celebration of diversity • sharing of food <p>Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ideas are explored • focus on strengths • strengths, talents are valued and celebrated • openness • focus on where biggest diff can be made • equity • listening to and hearing stories • making friendships, relationships, knowing neighbours • providing opportunities for voices to be heard • process is important • time to reflect • responsible • equal opportunity – being able to participate <p>Systems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work supported by government values, policies and funding • dynamic and open systems