



# Ripple Effects Mapping: A Participatory Strategy for Measuring Program Impacts

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# Overview of REM

- Participatory tool that collects qualitative and story-telling focused data
- Designed to evaluate community groups, coalitions, & similar types of organizations
- Uses variety of techniques to gather impact & involves aspects of:
  - Appreciative Inquiry
  - Mind mapping tactics
  - Facilitated discussion
  - Group reflection
  - Qualitative data analysis



# Assets of REM

- Creates a visual representation of efforts and impact
- Gives voice to a diversity of stakeholders
  - Including both program participants and those with different program roles
- Captures the session participants' firsthand experiences
- Identifies the activities that have developed – 'rippled out' – from a program or process.
  - These 'ripples' can be either intended or unintended outcomes from the programmatic work.



# Components of REM

## Using Appreciative Inquiry

- Positively framed questions to guide small group interview process
- Creates generative knowledge
- Focuses on potential for transformation

## Taking a Participatory Approach

- Designed to engage stakeholders during each step of the process:
  - Design, collection, & analysis

# Components of REM, continued

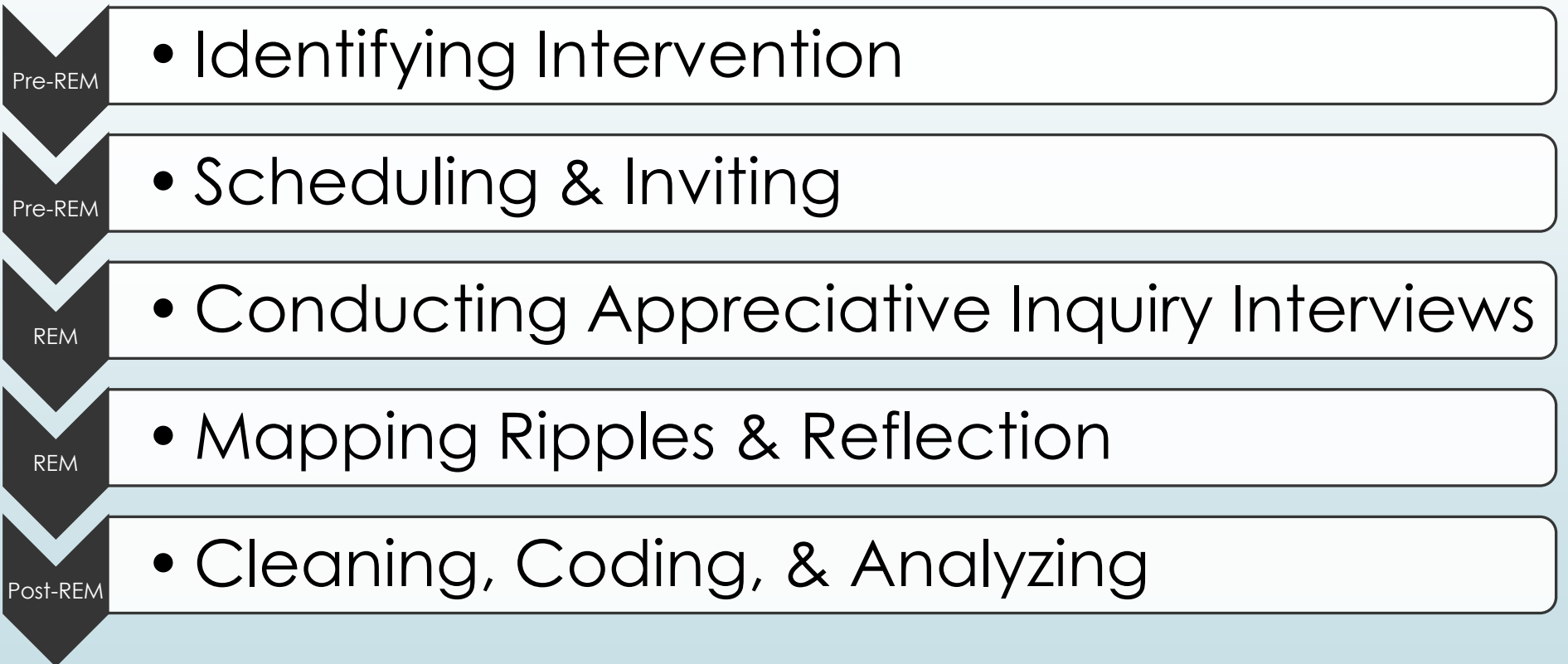
## Involving Interactive Group Interviewing & Reflection

- Process generates ideas collectively
- Provides opportunity to examine how program effects are interconnected
- Reflection also encourages accountability

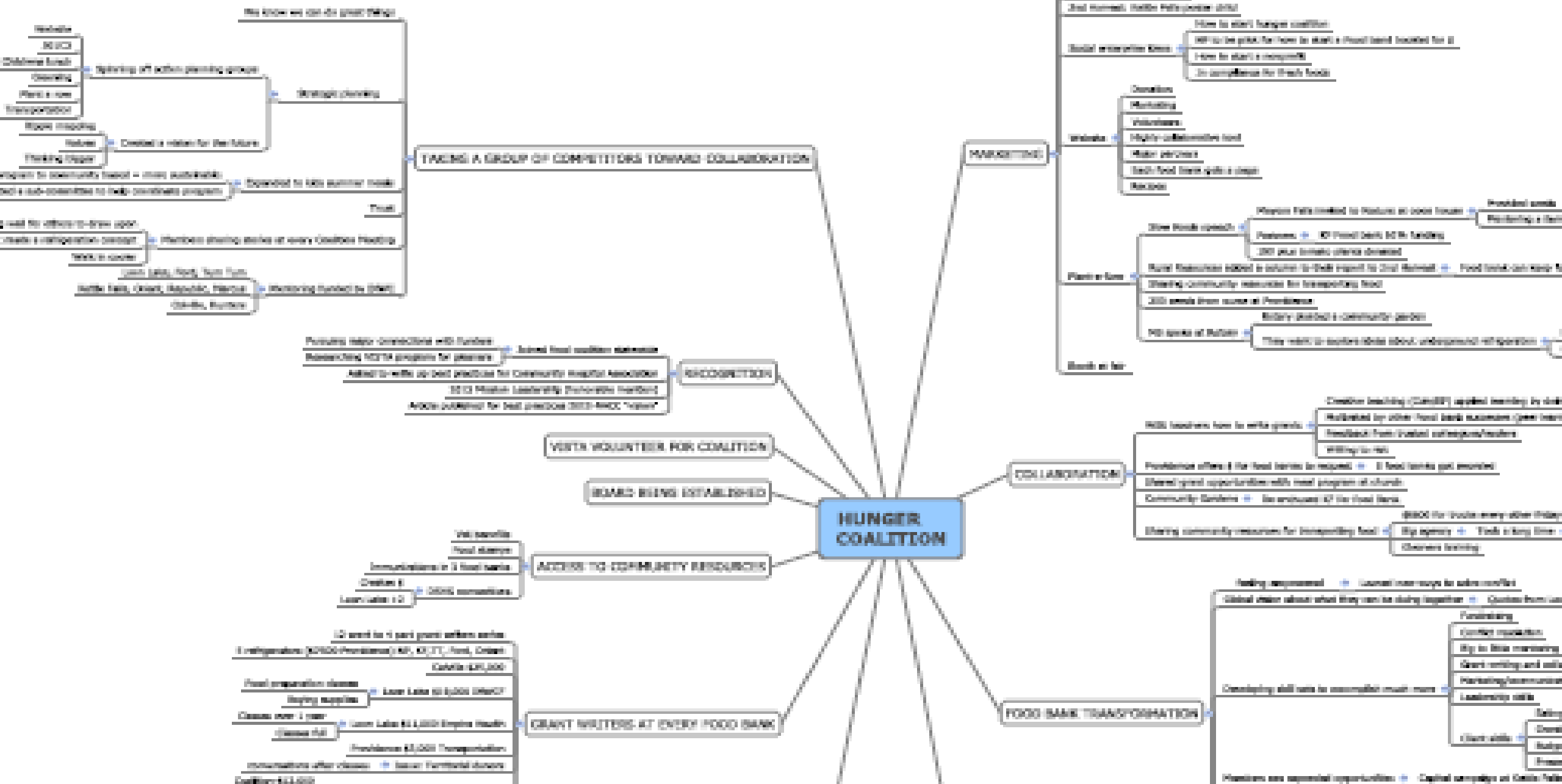
## Utilizing Radiant Thinking (Mind Mapping)

- Associative thoughts originate from center and then link to form integrated concepts
- Group process of diagramming out program efforts becomes map that displays a visual representation of resulting events and outcomes

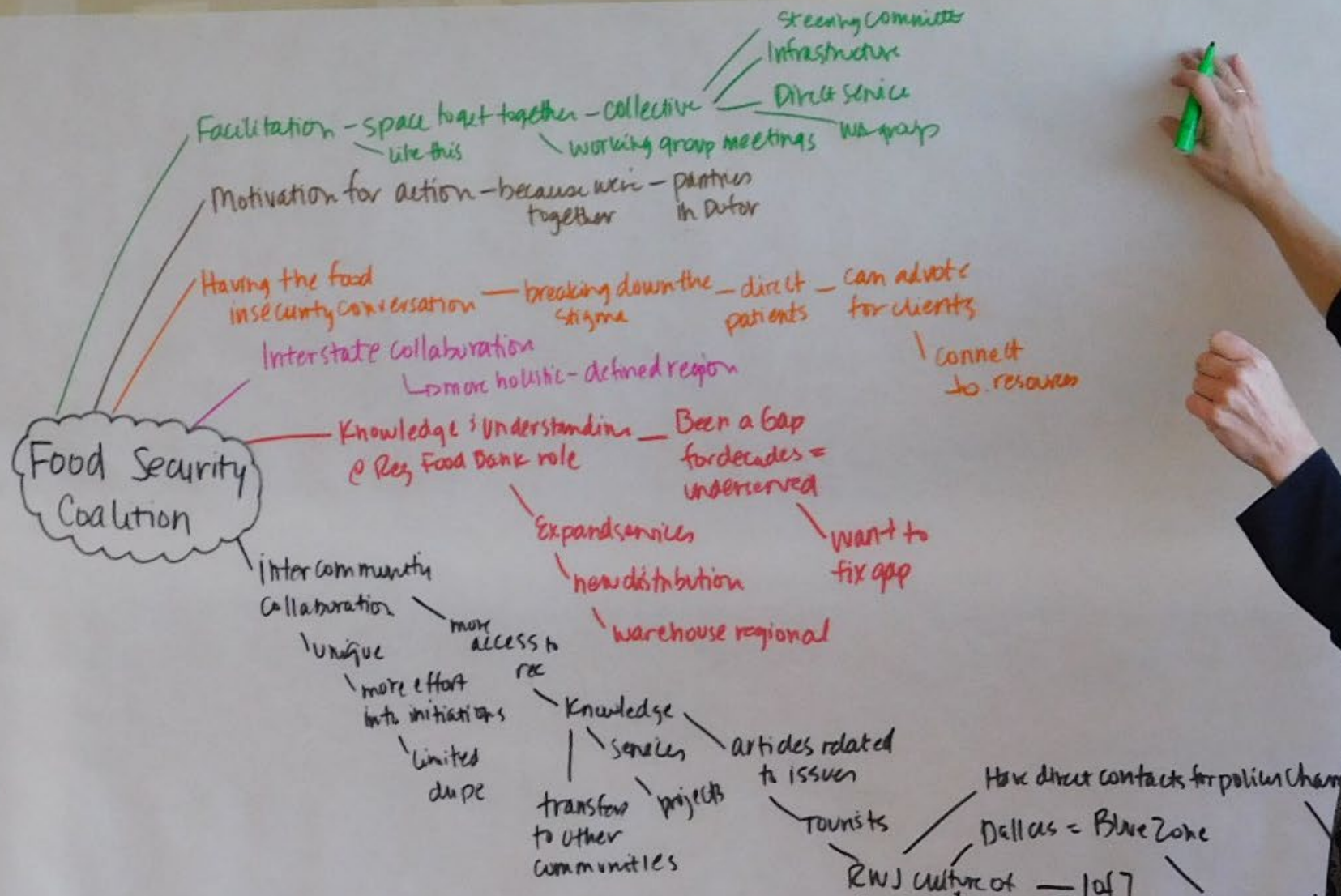
# Process Steps for REM



# Example of Online Map



# Example of In Person Map







# Participatory Challenges

- Process is one that evaluators, researchers, stakeholders, and others would like to do but are not following through
  - Time consuming
  - Can be expensive to execute
  - Complex
- Stakeholders may need to be convinced about *why* participatory is necessary and important
  - Pushback from grant funders, clients, and academics
- Often need to negotiate tensions between how participatory is designed and what those involved believe “should” be done
  - Whose voice matters?

# REM Case Study

- East Side Community Health and Well-Being Collaborative
  - Created to address the social determinants of health & how those conditions affect individual level health outcomes
- REM Session brought together over 20 partners to discuss:
  - What is a highlight, achievement, or success you've had based on your involvement with the East Side Health and Well-Being Collaborative?
  - What unexpected things have happened as a result of your involvement with East Side Health and Well-Being Collaborative?
  - What connections with others - new and/or deepened - have you made as a result of your involvement with the East Side Health and Well-Being Collaborative? What have those connections led to?
- The results of the REM session were used by the Collaborative in strategic planning to outline the next three years of work

Through the Ripple Effect Mapping process, you see new partnerships formed, relationships deepened, and a true sense of “collaborative” work being practiced. It's exciting to see what can happen next in the ripples ahead.