

2009 Sustainability Conference

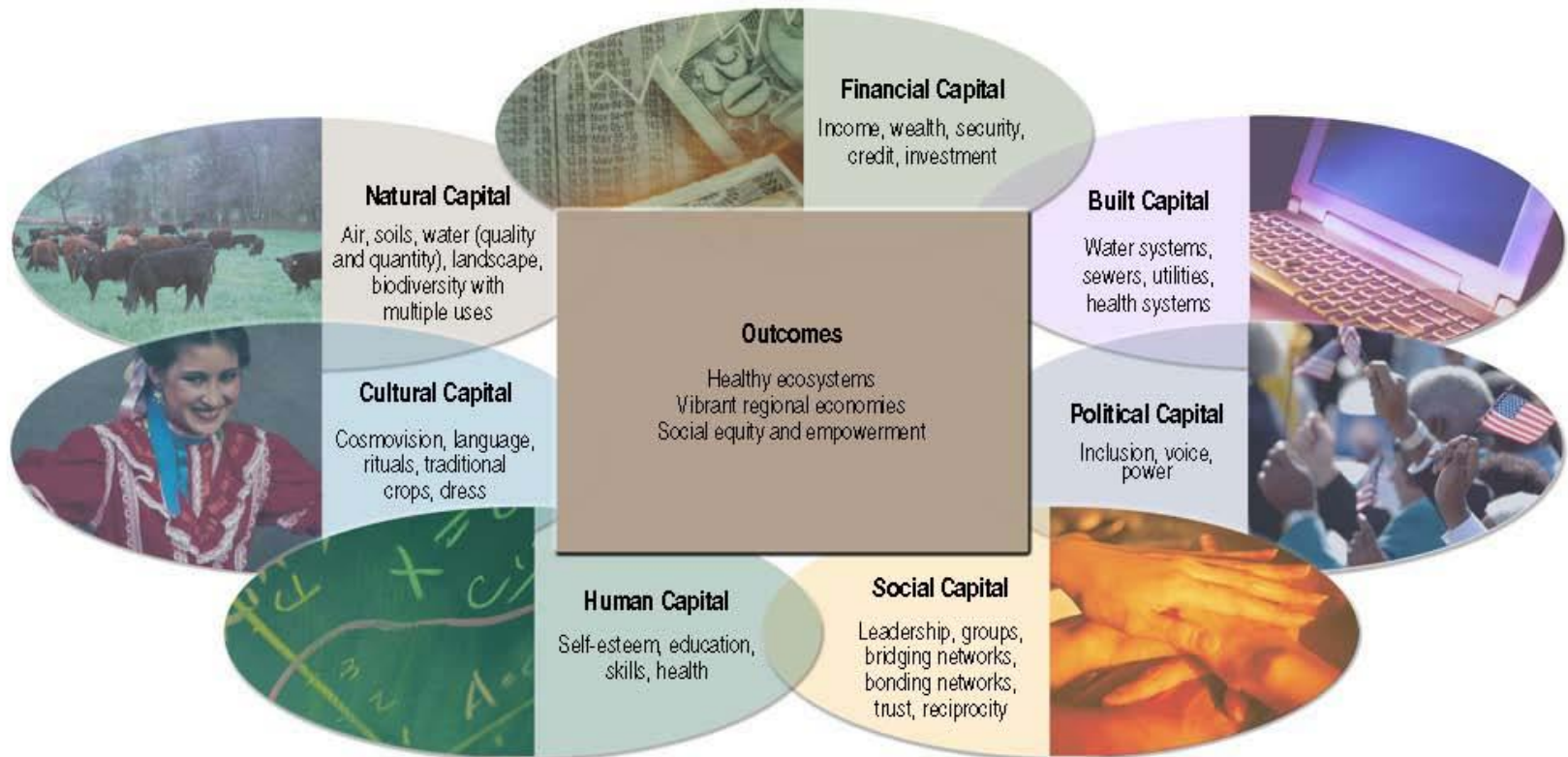
Kansas PRIDE

Healthy Ecosystems - Healthy Communities Program

Integrating Community Capitals into Water
Quality and Natural Resource
Preservation and Protection

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Community Capitals



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Process (how it gets done) → Products (what gets done)

- Concepts in Action: Healthy Ecosystems-Healthy Communities (HEHC) Program
 - engages community through networks of social capital
 - builds on community identity
 - outcomes are based on community-defined needs
 - creates new opportunities based on visions and values of stakeholders
 - ***offers multiple community capital benefits***
- End goal: community planning to protect local natural and built resources for a healthy, sustainable community

Framing a Sustainability Effort

Importance: create a personal (or group) image of what's important—the issue, the solutions, and rewards: *motivates to act*

● HEHC:

- Workshop and tour—hands on visioning experience that promoted natural resource protection through a real community experience
- Project provides a opportunity for:
 - Third-party “facilitated program”
 - Grant to “get something done”

Framing the Sustainability Idea

Extend framing to the community—they must recognize value and define sustainability based on visions and values in the context of their community.

- What are our community's assets?
- what needs to be done (*in our community*)?
- why is this an important issue (*in our community*)?
- how can we do it (*in our community*)?
- Use tours and networking visits with successful communities to motivate
- Encourage “self discovery” – natural resources assessments identify “what needs to be done” and creates **community owned knowledge and expertise**
- Provide assistance (“advisors”) to help teams understand “why and what is important”
- Use public forums to help citizens identify projects and explore “how it can be done”
- Provide back up support (service learning projects, grant applications, facilitate new partnerships) for extended period of time

What's the HEHC process?

A. Citizen Engagement

1. Work with key players to establish why water resource planning is important/needed in community.
2. Assist with stakeholder identification:
 - Who will support or be interested in a water quality/community planning project – who are they and why should they be involved?
 - Local, county, area-wide, state interest and support
3. Identify approaches that can be used to get people in community involved



What's the HEHC process?

B. Resource Planning

Communities develop a blueprint for water and natural resource assets:

- recognize assets and opportunities
- identify trends and activities that shape the community
- analyze community's link to the larger region's resources
- invite the perspectives of everyone in community to develop a plan for protecting resources

What's the HEHC process?

C. Characterize Natural Resources

Identify local natural resources found in community:

- What is the quality of each?
- Which are utilized and valued for recreational activities in community; who uses them?
- Are there any compromised or threatened in the community? Are citizens involved in any activities to address these situations?
- What natural resources generate personal income?
- Are there any wildlife habitat or protection activities in the community?



Assess Community Resources

Pilot communities assess their natural, built, and human resources

- Exploration of local resources: participate in natural resource assessments and presentations
- Work with local information sources: county conservation districts, local WRAPS programs (watershed restoration and protection strategy); NRCS; and universities to identify high priority issues for community's local resources and water quality.
- Use “resource advisors” help prioritize most important information to share with their citizens.

What's the Process?

D. Identify Action Plans

Public forum:

- Assessment report outs
- Review community's values and visions
- ID projects to move their community into the future
- ID projects which are suited for a water quality project

Consider how top projects enhance community capitals:

- Economic opportunities
- Cultural events/activities
- Social benefits
- Citizen health
- Environmental protection/preservation/restoration

Using and Building Upon Social Capital for Sustainability

- Stakeholders are the social capital
- Start with existing civic group(s) and local “champions” (*we started with PRIDE groups and “key people” they identified*)
- Conduct a facilitated stakeholder ID session to identify more stakeholders and resource people/agencies
- Use natural resource assessments, watershed meetings and workshops, and public events to build awareness and support.
- Continually evolving process: success begets success, bring in new stakeholders through each step of the process: educators, local government, county and state partners

Social Capital



Bonding: close ties that build community cohesion

Bridging: weaker ties that create and maintain “bridges” among organizations and community.

- Public forum identifies plans and projects—to bring their community in to future
- Facilitate sessions: ask citizens how they would expand top project ideas for multiple community benefits---result is new stakeholders, new resources =
- Build social capitals

Melvern, Kansas



- Water quality project idea was to build a hiking/biking trail on \$5000 grant that would:
 - Be a new recreation resource (human, social, natural, built, financial capitals)
 - Teach water quality appreciation and promote protection actions (human, natural, social)
 - Use for cultural events (human, social capital)
 - Use for educational events (human, social capital)

Mobilizing Resources



- Fact: \$5000 isn't much to develop 7 miles of River Front Trail!
- Challenge: how to mobilize resources to achieve goal?
 - Bonding social capital: local construction companies, community political system, civic groups, local experts and hobbyists, youth**
 - Bridging social capital: Kansas Corps, Westar Green Team, Corps of Engineers, State Universities and Service Learning Projects, KACEE, project team

Melvern Mobilizes



- Local expertise--NRCS agent: competitive mountain biker and Kansas Trail Council trail builder
- Community: 40 acres of 'city-owned land', willing local government, supportive local businesses, construction companies, producers and citizens
- Westar Energy, Kansas Corps (FHSU)
- Grants, Educators, WRAPS,

Results?



- Outputs:

- 2200 hours of volunteers' time on community planning and project (>\$30,000)
- 11 local educators/outdoor classrooms on trails systems/ 2 classes per year for 2 years
- 4 grant applications/3 new grants/cash contributions (>\$18,500)
- Surfaced ~ 1400' of trail to expand user access—726 tons of limestone screenings, excavated and lined
- 20 news stories, radio, TV reached 171,000 people
- New civic group: Friends of the Trail
- Community Health Program for youth

Results



- Over 100 people came to “haunted trail” event at \$2 each, Christmas event and trail opening event planned: (cultural and economic capital)
- Cleaned up old dump site (natural capital)
- Implemented 12 water quality BMPS
- Building new social capital for trail expansion project for economic opportunities (land owners, COE, WRAPS, Service Learning Projects, KDOT, KDWP)

Rossville, Kansas



Wanted to focus on public education about water quality and flooding

- Decided to build a rain garden—applied for and received 2 additional grants
- Service learning project with 2 graduate students to engineer and design rain garden
- Over 600 hours of community participation
- Library resources and public event to teach citizens how to build rain gardens
- Educators, students, citizens, contractors and local government supported



Results?

- Community has a public engagement and decision-making process
- Community has enhanced multiple community capitals, and continues success through social capital opportunities

“Remember the little boy we thought was going to be a problem? Well, he’s at every event we have and is always willing to help on the trails.” We are thinking of a way to help him become more involved in the trail.”—a new door and a new opportunity