

Identifying Impact Gaps



In this lecture we are going to look at identifying gaps in the effort when addressing the overarching wicked problem for the issue we are interested in. It is these gaps in effort that participants might want to focus on for the initiatives that they develop during this program. To develop an initiative that addresses an identified gap in effort we will develop a theory of change. How to develop a theory of change will be covered in a future lecture in this section.

Understanding the Problem Situation

- Learning about the problem
- Learning about solution efforts
- Identifying the gaps and lessons learned

Papi-Thornton, 2016, p. 21



As previously mentioned, research has shown that people that have been successful at addressing problems have a thorough understanding of the problem and the solution landscape before they design their initiative.

With an understanding of the problem situation by mapping the problem and solution ecosystems, changemakers are able to identify where there are gaps in effort that the initiative that they develop could fill.

Impact Gaps

- Overlooked areas, missing interventions, or opportunities for increased learning and positive change.

Papi-Thornton, 2016, p. 69



Impact gaps have been defined as overlooked areas, missing interventions, or opportunities for increased learning and positive change.

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Identifying Impact Gaps

- What could close the gap between the causal factors underpinning the problem and the current initiatives for addressing the wicked problem?
- What would be needed to create a better collective outcome from all of these solution efforts?

Papi-Thornton, 2016,



Types of impact gaps that a new initiative could address include.

Gaps between the problem ecosystem and the solution ecosystem – initiatives could be developed that close the gap between the causal factors underpinning the problem and the current initiatives for addressing the wicked problem?

Another impact gap that could be addressed relates to the coherence of the solution ecosystem. Participants could ask what would be needed, to create a better collective outcome from all of the existing initiatives in the solution ecosystem?

References

- Papi-Thornton, D. (2016). Tackling heropreneurship. Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship-University of Oxford,(Clare Social Leadership Programme).